

September 18, 2015
Mamaroneck High School

PT COUNCIL MINUTES

I. Pam Buchmueller called meeting to order

II. Introductions of all PT Council Members, Debbie Manetta and Melany Gray

III. Approval of Minutes from May 15, 2015

IV. Treasurer's Report (Pam Buchmueller)

- a. Presentation of Proposed Budget
- b. vote - budget passed

V. Welcome from School Board Liaison (Melany Gray) -

- Her door (and cell phone) are always open for questions and concerns
- Board continues to ask themselves if they are meeting the needs of our community
- SPACE is an issue, as is meeting demographical needs
- Debbie Manetta also reinforced to call on her for any questions or concerns

VI. After School Club (ASCs)/Background Checks

- Tina Maresca shared that the district no longer does background checks for outside vendors. The district used to provide fingerprinting and background checks and charged \$100 to do it, but the PTA is not allowed to do it. We are not sure why this has changed, but PT Council agrees that this still needs to be done, and we need to figure out how. It was raised whether BackYard Sports, who recently merged with Next Level, may be able to either provide this service for us or direct us to someone who can. It was agreed that fingerprinting should be the standard. Pam Buchmueller will ask Meryl Rubenstein for more information and direction.
- It was also agreed that it should be made clear that the PTAs are only coordinating the provision of ASCs and that they are not running them, thus explicitly clearing them from any liabilities.
- Kim Tucker pointed out that some vendors are shared between schools, so we should think about sharing the cost of checks.
- A list of approved vendors will be obtained from Antonella Kaufman (STEM)
- April Lewis said that the State can issue a Certificate and Chatsworth has gotten them in the past
- Tina Maresca asked why teachers can't teach these clubs and Sarah Coady pointed out that the teachers work until 4:00, which obstructs them from teaching after school clubs.
- Pam Buchmueller concluded there is more work to be done on this.

VII. PTA Membership Procedures

- The State PTA, as of this year, is requiring all chapters to submit the names of all of their PTA members online, manually. Pam Brandman pointed out that this is a huge burden. Murray has 488 members this year. She also questioned how much money goes to the state vs. our PTAs. \$4 of each members' \$5 dues goes to the state. She also has concerns about privacy when names are given.
- Joan Capaldi has concerns that going forward, more personal information will be required, which will severely decrease PTA participation. She feels strongly that a strong stance should be taken quickly, to protect security and the credibility of our PTAs.
- Tina Maresca was told that the State PTA would send 4 emails per year to PTA members.
- Melany Gray pointed out that we are a part of the state PTA because they provide insurance.
- Pam Buchmueller will talk to our Regional PTA chapter and report back.

VIII. October Leadership Coffee

- We decided to stop doing the October Leadership Coffees. The amount of effort and time Dr. Shaps put in wasn't proportional to the attendance.
- Tina Maresca suggested we invite the Exec Board of each school to attend when their school hosts. The idea was enthusiastically embraced by the Council.
- Pam Buchmueller also asked all Presidents to ask their Principals (or another staff member in the building) to speak at the meeting if possible.

IX. Update from Dr. Shaps

- SPACE - is a growing concern. Projections dramatically underestimated the number of students we have this year. By 2019, MHS will have 1800 students. New buildings are going up in our district. Dr. Shaps and the Board continue to think forward.
- The District poverty rate is 18%. We continue to work to meet the needs of these students.
- Teacher evaluations - Dr. Shaps vehemently disagrees with how the state is handling teacher evaluations. He is applying for a waiver, which buys us as much as a year to create an evaluation plan that is acceptable to both our district and the state. Hopefully by then, the State will have changed their position. Dr. Shaps stressed that our current evaluation procedures work very well, with over 3,600 observations in classrooms each year. The new accountability system is a dead end. It would undo a lot of the good things our evaluations have accomplished and continue to foster. Dr Shaps also supports a 3-5-7 grade testing schedule vs. testing every year. He believes that this shows growth more effectively. He stressed that schools must have local control.
- STEAM - many new programs focus around STEAM including: Sheldrake programs, a 3 year tech program at HMX, at MHS a 4 year design program and a new culinary arts program, 6 computer science classes and more music staff for grades 3-5.
- This week, the White House recognized MUFSD for Excellence in Hispanic Education.

X. Parent Involvement Committee (Melanie Gray)

- We get Title I funds, which require us to have Title I parents to be involved in our schools. Melany will continue to keep us informed as to how we can help to accomplish this.

XI. Other Business:

SEPTA - Liz Paras and Sandy Wu

- Thank you for attending the SEPTA Breakfast and for your ongoing support.
- Liz asked Presidents to put the link to join SEPTA on their PTA homepage.
- Oct 6 is the first program of the year, for High School parents.
- Instead of hosting a coffee at each of the six buildings, this year SEPTA will do two “night caps” - evening meetings. One in the Fall and one in the Spring.

“Time Out Update”- Opt-out Movement

- Miran requested an update on the fallout of the demonstration and raised that the District or PTAs should come up with a statement or provide websites where people can get more information. She pointed that we need to make sure we are all on the same page and getting the accurate information about this movement. It was discussed that there is a fine line between providing information and endorsing a particular position and the language needs to be thoughtful and clear.

Audit Notifications - Pam

- Please forward all audits to Miran if you haven't yet.

Snacks

- It was decided to no longer serve snacks at PT Council meetings.

Time Out Update

- Miran asked for an update on the Time Out staged last Spring. Can we impact teacher evaluation decisions at the state level? How? Pam and Kim will reach out to Gail Julie to ask.

Motion to Adjourn - Miran

In Attendance:

PT Council

Pam Buchmueller, President
Kim Tucker, President-Elect
Miran Robarts, Treasurer

Unit School PTAs

Joan Capaldi, MHS PTA President
Jenny Ransom, MHS Presidnet Elect
Tina Maresca, HMX PTA President
Jackie Emmet, HMX PTA President-Elect
Krista Williams, PTA Central President
Melissa Perez, PTA Central President-Elect
April Lewis, Chatsworth PTA President
Jackie Shurslep, Chatsworth PTA President-Elect
Pam Brandman, Murray PTA President
Melanie Kraut, Murray PTA President-Elect
Sarah Coady, MAS PTA President-Elect
Liz Paras, SEPTA President
Sandy Wu, SEPTA President-Elect

District

Melany Gray, Board of Education Liaison
Debbie Manetta, Director of Communications
Dr. Robert Shaps, Superintendent of Schools