

October 15, 2010
Central School

PT Council Minutes

Meeting was called to order by President Melany Gray at 9:20am.

- I. Central School Presentation (Carole Priore and Joanne Hindley)
 - a. Staff Focus for the 2010-2011 school year is the “classroom environment.” We met in the coaching room – which serves as a model for the classrooms – it is a learning site and is there to help and support the staff. It is important that the class rooms:
 - i. Are designed to support learning
 - ii. Foster student independence
 - iii. Are an example for what we value about children’s work
 - iv. Have predictability and patterns (so students know where to go, where to get things, how to put things back)
 - v. Are designed to keep distractibility to a minimum (no “visual” noise).The building as a whole, as well as each classroom, should be a beautiful space for both teachers and kids. It should be organized and orderly and send a message about what the school is about.
 - b. Central School Values Mathematics
 - i. Working to create math murals throughout the building.
 - ii. Working with math coach who has helped design the murals – get students to see the math all around them.
 - iii. Stenciling math facts throughout the halls – students can be immersed in math.
 - c. Jed Baker – Consultant working on Social Skills
 - i. Jed Baker was hired by the district to work on social skills and sensitivity lessons (hired via last year’s IDEA stimulus funds).
 - ii. Working on a plan for recess time - working with lunchtime monitors/aides who assist in process. Also bring students into the experience to help their peers (“play buddies” – provide suggestions for activities, invite friends to play together).
 - iii. Students learn to accept differences in each other.
 - iv. There are play stations now in different locations at recess – monitored by the aides – children can choose to play at those stations (or not). Gives structure that some children need instead of feeling left out or having to ask to play with others.

- v. Physical Education teachers are also getting involved – teaching guidelines and rules for playing certain games so everyone knows how to play and what the rules are.
 - vi. Jed Baker is only at Central for a limited time, but will come back and check on how the process is working. He is working in all the buildings in the district – tailoring programs to each school's needs.
 - d. Yoga Ed
 - i. Program that brings yoga to schools – will be brought in for a week under the Physical Education Department.
- II. George Latimer
 - a. Debate will be on Thursday, October 21st at Mamaroneck Town Center. Any questions for the candidates should be forward to Celeste Sharpe. It will be televised.
 - b. Also wanted to attend meeting in order to show his appreciation for the PTAs and what they do.
- III. Minutes Approved (6/11/10 and 9/20/10)
- IV. Budget (Kristine)
 - a. Lowered school dues to \$640 this year, kept SEPTA at \$320. PT Council will take in approximately \$4,000. We will amend the by-laws to reflect the lower amount for future years.
 - b. Expenses: Calendar costs, budget/bond campaigns and Council expenses (i.e., retirement gifts, meetings, luncheons, etc.).
 - c. Budget is approved.
- V. School Board Report (Robin Nichinsky)
 - a. The School Board meeting on 10/19/10 will discuss test scores. Plans are moving forward to support students who need assistance.
 - b. The School Board has established a Finance Committee and they are also planning to establish a Citizen's Advisory Committee. Details still need to be discussed (hopefully it will be worked out at Tuesday's meeting).
 - c. New turf field at MHS is moving along – slated to be completed at the end of October/beginning of November.
 - d. Principal (HS) and Assistant Principal (Hommocks) searches are underway.

- e. Dr. Shaps spent last month going to all the different schools – meeting people and hearing issues.

VI. School Board Appreciation Dinner

- a. Melany suggested that we hold the School Board Appreciation Dinner (buffet) before a board meeting to get maximum attendance and so it won't require the Board members to go out another evening given their busy schedules.

VII. Westchester – Putnam School Board Association: Lisa Davis – Executive Director – 3rd year in this position

- a. NY State Legislature: has a reputation for being dysfunctional
- b. Background information: NY State Assembly has 150 members and the NY State Senate has 62 members. They are all elected every two years – so essentially they are always running for office. There are no term limits.
- c. Bills: Approximately 14,000 Bills get sponsored each year. Only about 2,000 actually get discussed and only around 800 get signed into law (7%). Being able to move Bills through is really important especially in education. However, even Bills that are about education often get held up in other committees including Finance and Labor.
- d. Board of Regents: Group of people who rule everything regarding education and more (i.e., libraries, nursing, museums, public broadcasting, etc.). They are volunteers selected by the state legislature (not the Governor). The Regents for our area are Harry Phillips and Sol Cohen (at large). The Board of Regents hires the Commissioner of Education (David Stienen), who runs the state board of education. The current Commissioner concentrates the most on “urban” pursuits (what is good for NYC) as does the Senior Deputy (John King) who is very city centric. The set-up is analogous to the school district: volunteer school board members set policy and hire the superintendent.
- e. There is nothing in the Federal Constitution that talks directly about education; however, the Federal government is certainly involved in education (No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top Funds). Federal government spends approximately 3% of their total budget on education. New York State claims they spend 34% of their budget on education. The suburbs see about 8%.
- f. Teacher Lobby in New York State and NYC were #2 and #3 in spending (Verizon was #1).
- g. Charter Schools don't have to worry about many legislative regulations that the public schools must deal with including the

Triboro Amendment, Wicks, tenure, etc. In addition, the state can't mandate certain policies in the public schools (i.e., longer hours) that charter schools employ. Studies show that 17% of charter schools do better than public schools.

- h. Charter schools impact local public schools because money travels with the child: the child's home school district must pay and amount for per-pupil expenditures for children who leave the district for a charter school. There is an application for a performing arts charter school in Westchester. Students who attend such a school would draw resources away from their home district even though the district typically would realize no savings. Recently, an application for a charter school in Ossining was denied because of concerns that it would pull more affluent families from the district.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Herbsman

In Attendance:

PTC: Melany Gray, Co-President, Jennifer Malherbe, Co-President; Past President: Cindy Habig; Lori Herbsman, Secretary; Celeste Sharpe, Legislation; Diversity: Debbie Trepanier; Communications: Pam Mizrachi, Technology, Laurie Lee
Central: Pam Buchmueller, Barbara Lambert, Co-Presidents
Chatsworth: **Laura Livaccari, Lisa Samson, Co-Presidents**
Murray Avenue: Ann LoBue, Liz Paras, Co-Presidents
Hommocks: Rina Beder, Rachel Goldman, Co-Presidents
Mamaroneck High School: Amy Rothman, Co-Presidents
SEPTA: Cecilia Absher, Co-President
District: Debbie Manetta, Director of Communications
Board Liaison: Robin Nichinsky
Special Guest: Carole Priore, Joanne Hindley, Lisa Davis

Approved: 11/15/10