

September 20, 2010
Hommocks Middle School

PT Council Minutes

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

- I. Introductions
- II. Purpose of PT Council
 - a. Facilitate communication
 - b. Sharing info
 - c. Fostering a district wider view
- III. School Board Report (Robin Nichinsky)
 - a. New Superintendent with the experience, skills and personality to lead us into an exciting year.
 - b. Summer 2010 was extremely productive: building work included 60,000 lbs of duct work (Hommocks), new roofs (HS and Chatsworth), tarring, repairs, painting, new field at HS (to be completed in October), Maintenance, etc. The work came in on time and under budget. The custodial staff has been a tremendous help.
 - c. Currently looking for an Assistant Principal for Hommocks and a permanent Principal for the High School.
 - d. Tough year ahead – economy still not back, facility discussions, contract negotiations, creating a responsible budget (established a citizens committee and budget committee). However we will keep in mind our primary goal – to provide excellent education to all our students.
 - e. Meetings/Study Sessions were all televised last year. The differences have been blurred slightly between the two types of meetings, but this year the goal is to get them back on track. The purpose of the study sessions is to get into curriculum issues, business issues or have a deep discussion about a particular subject while the business meetings are more for presentations, approving contracts and informing the community about what's going on the district. Both the business meetings and study sessions are open to the public.

- f. Race to the Top: Not expecting much money from this since many NY school districts need the funds even more than we do.

IV. Technology (Debbie Manetta for Laurie Lee)

- a. Letter sent out this summer (with password) requesting that each family fill out the Emergency Contact information that is now online. So far only 50% have actually done it. We will put reminders in Friday Sheets, Tiger Bytes and Hommocks Express. Any new students will be getting the letter with their password. For those that may not have the technology at home, we will get names at back to school night so that we can follow up with them regarding getting their Emergency info updated on the system.
- b. The K12 system has replaced Connect Ed (tied into the emergency phone system) so it's really important that the emergency phone numbers get updated on the system.
- c. District goal is to have a comprehensive student list that everyone can rely on.
- d. CDs for Directories will be provided after Back to School nights (by 9/30). If the discs are given, the information may be incomplete.

V. Superintendent's Report (Dr. Shaps)

- a. Smooth start to the school year especially given the challenges with the construction.
- b. Construction project – incredible accomplishments. Only piece left to complete are the windows in Hommocks (already done 450 out of 900 windows). Extended workday (won't disrupt classrooms more than one time for the window replacement). Improved air quality (circulates 3x more air every 10 minutes). Still working on HS football field – decrease in parking spots has been an inconvenience.
- c. Impact of NY Education Commissioner's decision to "raise the bar." The proficiency scores (set by the Board of Regents) were not great and since these scores are a predictor of future success (for Regents and College Board tests), New York needs to improve them. By recalibrating performance based on new standards, there will be more help provided to those who need it. We will see a change in all the buildings across the district.

- i. Two jobs: 1) identify students and 2) develop an action plan to meet the needs of each student – understand the students needs who now fall below the standard and target instruction for each child
 - ii. NAEP (National Assessment) – looks at performance across all states (4th and 8th grade math and English) and compares states in terms of student performance (can also compare internationally). New York’s NAEP performance (which is below many states) demonstrates that NY need to raise the bar – aim higher and challenge students at every level.
- d. High School Principal search will move forward in the fall when we advertise the position. We will also search for a new Assistant Principal for Hommocks to start in January. This year we hope to formalize the recruitment process.

VI. New Business

- a. Playgrounds: In the past we have used private funding for upgrading the playgrounds. There is an initiative to go back to the last bonds and look at the old plans in an effort to improve the playgrounds. Health and safety issues as well as costs will be looked at.
- b. Race to Nowhere: Documentary that some screened last year about academic pressures. Interest to screen this year (in Oct), however we need to give a financial guarantee (\$3000). When originally scheduled there was no financial guarantee and we have no funds set aside in the district budget to allow for this. Consensus that this movie should be used to promote discussion and should not be seen without talking about the topic afterwards (and it’s a long movie to begin with so there would be time constraints). Maybe we could use it when it’s released on DVD to facilitate discussion since it’s an important issue that needs to be communicated. Want to support the Guidance Department who believes in this message, but not sure that just showing the movie without any discussion is the right way to do it.
- c. Stop and Shop Fundraiser: Encourage the registration of Stop and Shop cards by community to support district schools. There will be sign up tables at the local Stop and Shops on September 25th.
- d. “Meet the Superintendent” Meetings: The last meeting had a nice turnout (16 people). There are two additional meetings scheduled; another one will be scheduled during school hours.

VII. Workshops – October 4th

- a. Nancy Pierson and Rick Marsico will speak first and then we will break off into smaller groups (i.e., Treasurers, After School Clubs, etc.). If anyone has any specific ideas on other smaller groups (maybe health/nutrition, going green), we can include those too.

VIII. Other Announcements

- a. Meeting locations: note that we will meet at each of the district buildings throughout the year. The schedule will be posted on the website.
- b. Family Day (Cecilia): is September 27th. Encouraging everyone to sit down for a family dinner.

Meeting adjourned at 11:25am.

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
Central: Pam Buchmueller, Barbara Lambert, Co-Presidents
Mamaroneck Avenue: Tina Maresca, Co-President
Murray Avenue: Ann LoBue, Liz Paras, Co-Presidents
Mamaroneck High School: Sherri Rozansky, Amy Rothman, Co-Presidents
SEPTA: Cecilia Absher, Co-President
District: Debbie Manetta, Director of Communications
Board Liaison: Robin Nichinsky
Special Guest: Dr. Shaps

Approved: 10/15/10