

September 11, 2009
Room 101N
Mamaroneck High School

PT Council Minutes

Meeting was called to order by President Cindy Habig at 9:20am.

I. Welcome/Goals

- a. Cindy welcomed the group to the first PT Council Meeting of the 2009-2010 school year. Acknowledgement of the day as one we will all remember. Reminded of the horrors of that day but how we came together as a community and helped each other through it.
- b. Role of PT Council: Cindy described the role of PT Council – it is a vehicle to give perspective, information on a district wide level so that we can operate the best way possible. It is also a bridge between our district and the larger PTA organization. Our goals are to increase understanding of the broader district and community beyond just the neighborhood schools – giving a broader view and a bigger context.
- c. “Getting to Know You” exercise
- d. Meetings: The high school will be our home base for meetings (Paul Fried will attend many of these meetings), however we will also visit the different schools throughout the year (6 times are scheduled so far) where those Principals will speak about their buildings. We will work with Dr. Fried and the Administrators and SEPTA to discuss specific goals to enhance the understanding of the whole district beyond the individual schools.

II. New Business

- a. Leadership Night October 5th: to educate extended leadership circle. This will be an active meeting (schmooze, talk, eat) which will discuss overall leadership and talk to execs and other PTA committee heads about leadership and the support needed to be successful.
- b. Dues and Calendar Costs: Dues are \$792 per school (6 schools), \$320 for SEPTA and \$423.50 per school for Calendar Costs.

Calendar discussion: should outside entities be included in the district calendar? Throughout the 2009-2010 calendar, RADAR gives parenting tips – should this be allowed? Since they are included, should they help defray the cost of the calendar by contributing to the overall amount? Negatives: opens the door for other outside entities, makes the calendar seem even more crowded than it already is; Positives: may help with the cost, any parenting tips in our current environment can be very helpful. Editorial decision to be considered for next year.

III. Dr. Fried

- a. Smooth opening this year – Principals have all reported that their buildings are operating well.
- b. Staff came in before Labor Day this year; last week had a Professional Development Day for the entire staff. The day started with a key note speaker that discussed getting to know the students beyond the class time – building relationships between students and teachers. All teachers attended 3 workshops and then there was a panel of speakers for the closing discussion.
- c. Future meetings: we can bring in questions from parents or PTA executive boards that he will answer. Will keep us informed of district wide initiatives and topics of interest.
- d. This will be Dr. Fried's last year in the Mamaroneck School District: leaving with mixed emotions – still a lot of work to be done. Have enjoyed working with Board of Education. Have developed district goals and objectives and are now using data to measure whether these have been met. Created building objectives in each school that support district objectives. Have also raised expectations of Department Chairs to promote district objectives. In addition, the teacher evaluation plan (APPR) uses district and building objectives to set plans for the year.
- e. Cultural Perspective: Good cooperation between the Board of Education and the Teacher Association and connection to Municipal leaders in Larchmont and Mamaroneck. There is a good feeling in the district right now.
- f. Reason for Leaving/Thank You: After 38 years in education – leaving Mamaroneck for personal reasons. The NYS retirement system allows for retirement, while still being allowed to work in this field

(outside the NYS school system). As dictated in contract – gave 1 year notice of retirement. Appreciates all the hard work we do for the district and strongly believes that parent participation is a huge factor in the success of the students.

IV. Old Business/Updates

- a. Partners in Education (PIE): Rina Beder explained how this book group project has moved to more of a collaboration within the district between parents and administration (teachers). The pilot program kicked off in July for all teachers and executive PTA board members – reading and discussing “Surely You’re Joking, Mr. Feinman.” Using the book as a forum to discuss educational issues, the event was a huge success with very positive feedback. The parent-teacher interaction exceeded all expectations and the feedback indicated that they would like to have these more often and even open them up to the entire community.
- b. Directories: Laurie Lee said the directory CDs with all the relevant information will be available to all the schools earlier than usual. Murray and Chatsworth schools use their own information that they have on file but are hoping that their files match with data on the CD so they can use that information going forward.
- c. School Board: Rick Marsico
 - i. Role of Board Liaison: to be a presence in the school (attending meetings and events) – known to parents, administration and PTA and be available should issues arise in a particular school. The board liaison will help keep lines of communication open between the school and board.
 - ii. The Boards biggest responsibility is hiring a new Superintendent this year. Decided to engage a search firm for the following reasons:
 - 1. Highly confidential process – need someone to perform the administration functions necessary
 - 2. Network of contacts is greater than the BOE would have access to
 - 3. They will develop a profile of a Superintendent based on our needs and criteria – what is important to the community and the district (include participation of all community members).

iii. Timeline: will hire Search Firm by end of September. By March, will have finalists (may include site visit) and a decision should be made in April.

d. Field Information: After the bond was defeated (which included the field work), community supporters approached the Board again – they went back to designers to redesign project and reduce the cost. The modified proposal is for \$1.7 million for a redo of Memorial Field. It will allow space for a track (although a track is not included in the proposal) and will also allow for lights to be added at a later date. A public/private partnership has been developed for this project including money set aside for field improvements that has been held in the Capital fund. The rest of the money needed will be raised privately. We will still have to go through a public bidding process on the work as well as state approvals. Hopefully the project could start in 2010.

V. Communication/Public Relations: Debbie Manetta reported on the new District wide emails that are now being released on a monthly basis. These emails will cover new events and district wide (and community) information. One of the big goals this year is to reach out to non-parents in the community and engage them with the schools.

Meeting adjourned at 11:20am.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Herbsman

In Attendance:

PTC: Cindy Habig, President, Melany Gray, Co-President; Kristine Budill, Treasurer; Laurie Girskey and Jean Meyerowitz, Communications, Laurie Lee, Technology, Rina Beder, Legislation/ Teacher Institute, Liz Liscio, Diversity, MHS: Lynne Buly, Sherri Rozansky, Co-Presidents.

HMX: Carla Obalde, Co-President.

Central: Jennifer Malherbe, Pam Buchmueller, Co-Presidents.

Chatsworth: Joan Capaldi, Laura Livaccari Herzig, Co-Presidents.

Mamaroneck Avenue: Jennifer Vaccaro, Lisa Boren, Co-Presidents.

Murray Avenue: Tracy Owen, Ann LoBue, Co-Presidents.

SEPTA: Amy Lieberman, Cecilia Absher, Co-Presidents.

District: Debbie Manetta, Director of Communications.

Board of Education: Richard Marsico, Vice President.

Guests: Paul Fried