

SEPTA Executive Board Meeting - 9/14/09

7:30pm Call to order

I. Introductions

- A. Explanation of School Board Liaison by Nancy Pierson
- B. Overview of what SEPTA is.
 - 1. Board
 - 2. Membership
 - 3. Only PTA spanning from Pre-K through 12th grade and transition upwards
 - 4. SEPTA is in all the schools
 - 5. Mission is to help all kids and kids with special needs
 - 6. Tremendous faculty involvement
 - 7. Monthly Executive Bd meetings
 - 8. Regular dialogue with the administration
 - 9. Here to support one another

II. Welcome Back Breakfast

- A. Barbara Lambert
- B. Will take place from 8:45-10:45 @ HMX 9/16
 - 1. meet parents
 - 2. hear from administration and partners in the special education process

III. Treasurer Report

- A. Denise Gleason
- B. Summary of Budget
- C. General membership vote on the budget will take place at the welcome breakfast
- D. Amy
 - 1. Need to consider what do we want?
 - 2. More money into grants
 - 3. More money into community based / family oriented programs
- E. Cecilia

- 1. Recently we have not done family based activities

2. Lots of speaker series, networking meetings for parents, monetary support for fun in the sun, but that is the extent thus far

F. Sally Cantwell

1. Need to find way to connect regular ed and special ed, even if it is hard

G. Rachel

1. Received grant money which was very useful and was then able to get additional funding from the district

H. Beth M

1. fundraising efforts and family activities

I. Cecilia

1. for example, fundraising family BINGO and committed the funds to Music Within

J. Sandi

1. It is important that if there is a community builder activity, it needs to be separate from a fundraiser, to avoid any isolating factors

2. This should be a line item in the budget

Years ago there was a family pot luck and it only served one segment of the Septa community, but it was a great and accepting atmosphere.

G. Proposing \$1200 towards these activities, not committing to spend it, but to place it as a line item.

1. Executive Bd vote goes out to general membership on Wed

a. Motion: Michele G

b. Second: Germaine

Approved all yes votes

IV. Programs

A. Patty & Lisa

1. Three principles in selecting programs

a. survey in the spring

b. how can we get crossover speakers to broaden awareness and build knowledge

c. how can we partner with the district in a positive way, can the district lead workshops

2. Top one on the survey was reading

a. 10/21 Demystifying Dyslexia

free speaker, how do you make the diagnosis, what does my child need, what are practical tips for parents on a day to day basis

b. Dr. Dreyer (NYU) ADHD/ADD revisited

Diagnosis/what it looks like, approaches to parenting, approaches at school, possible treatments and strategies for positive behavior at school and home

c. Donna Goldberg (librarian) Broadening subject for everyone and practical approaches to teaching organizational skills

d. Handling children's stress and anxiety, Dr. Caren Baruch Feldman.

What is it? How to cope? and When to get help?

e. Dr. Marcia Eckerd, Licensed Psych. Keys to Social Success. What can you as a parent really do at home and at school?

V. Road to College

A. Beth & Nancy

1. 10/29 Networking meeting for parents

Panel of parents who have been through the process

Things you need to know going into HS, e.g. Foreign Language Requirements, testing accommodations for SAT/ACT

Geared for students going for traditional path/traditional college

Recommended for parents of students 8th grade and up

2. There is another program in October, Tara Klein

Colleges with a difference, highlighting schools with a focus on special needs

B. Karen Gatto

1. Kristin Macaluso and the CIC office have 4 transition workshops and the dates should be available shortly

a. college readiness

b. OMRDD and VESID

c. Information on transitioning in general (1st meeting)

d. evening devoted to guardianship and legal/financial concerns for

parents

2. The theme of crossover is nice within the district because there are experts.

Workshops will be held on:

- Preparing for child's CSE meeting, understanding assessments/evaluations and how to share your information
- Language based learning disabilities
- Social competency is another area the district is looking at

3. In a way to better prepare workshops the district is considering a survey to parents to have a clear articulation about what parents need regarding social skills and competency.

VI. Diversity Outreach

- A. Adonis
- B. Meeting Wed 7pm @ HMX library
- C. How do we get Latino parents more active?
- D. Specific meetings regularly to inform on Sp Ed issues, rights and resources
- E. Ultimate goal is to increase involvement and partnerships in the community

VII. Networking Meetings

- A. Upcoming for elementary parents and secondary parents
- B. Transition meetings as well with Karen Gatto
- C. Meeting with Windward parents
 - Informal show of hands, about 10 parents on the exec board have/have had relationship with Windward
 - D. In partnership with the Dr. Minotti regular meetings to discuss what transition back in is like, why Windward for students? What can we learn from these parents? This will be open to all schools, e.g. Eagle Hill, because there are so many parents.
 - What happens there? Is it working? Can these students be easily integrated back into the district?
 - E. Also, Sally Cantwell is Windward PTA president: In Mamk/Scarsdale there is a large number of students in attendance.
 - At Windward, the PTA just gets parents to embrace each other

VIII. School Board business

- A. Nancy Pierson
- B. An area of focus for the School Board that relates to SEPTA is the superintendent search. Still currently interviewing search firms
- C. Dr. Minotti in a new role, the Bd is monitoring
- D. Support Annie Ward, in particular with RTI
- E. IDEA Stimulus Funds Committee
- F. Preparing for the budget and Special Education is a major piece
- G. Study sessions and Business meetings are all televised on LMC-TV

IX. Student Support Services

- A. Karen Gatto
- B. District happenings

- >want to follow up on the work of the Task Force
 - >CSE
 - >streamlining referrals
 - >stimulus package
 - >parent member training is upcoming
 - >504 presentation by Mike Lambert, 10/7
 - >coffee mornings- informal conversation for parents in various buildings
- C. Will follow up with Roni Kramer to see if she is holding similar meetings

X. New Business (Amy and Cecilia)

A. Would like to post exec board minutes on the website to help more people become informed

B. Any objections?

1. Michele: They would not be posted until approved?

2. response: correct

Board approves posting minutes

C. Like to keep meetings to 9pm end time. Future meetings likely more in-depth

D. Items for next meeting, 10/19 should be emailed to be added to the agenda

E. Debbie T: HMX Co-Op Camp, put on the table with the budget cuts. In order to exist there must be an administrator present, would like to thank Karen Gatto for stepping in and allowing it to run.

F. Deb E: Will SEPTA be introduced at back to school night?

>Cecilia: The only elementary school is Murray with the parent body as a whole.

We will be introduced along with the general ed PTA. Also, we have been invited to the Central PTA general meeting to discuss SEPTA

G. Lauren G: So many people have an attachment to the wording "special ed" so trying to explain what SEPTA is may de-mystify and how it may touch the community

H. Linda B: Thank you to Amy and Cecilia. The whole social skills issue also equates with the parent community and how we deal with it

I. Amy

a. Teacher Appreciation- Bookmarks

b. Hudson Valley Special Ed Center by state grant, info should be posted on their website. Program coordinator is the New Rochelle SEPTA co-president

c. See everyone at the breakfast Wed.

Motion to adjourn at 9pm

1st Barbara Lambert

2nd Patty Wolff

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Respectfully submitted, Jill Gressin-Locke, Secretary

Approved by vote of SEPTA Executive Board – 10/19/09