

**PTA Meeting at Carderock Springs Elementary: School Year 2006-07**  
**Tuesday, October 3, 2006, 7:30-9:00pm**

PTA Board Members in Attendance:

Kristy Keteltas, President

Lynn Gertzog, Karen Hutchinson, Lois Kramer, Deb Lang, Lucy Winkler and Yong Sun.

Sheryl Golub and Maxine Schnitzer were not in attendance.

Kristy Keteltas opened the meeting with the introduction of Matt Gertzog who would be moderating the discussion regarding math curriculum concerns.

**PTA Budget**

Yong Sun asked the parents in attendance to review the budget that was up for approval. Although we do have reserves, we would like to be working closer to the actual budget this year. A brief discussion of budget costs and fund raising projects followed. The parents asked for the next budget to please represent reserves. A motion to pass the budget was made. A motion was made to second that motion. The PTA budget for 2006-07 was approved.

**New Math Grouping Discussion**

A panel from the CSES staff consisted of:

Susan Thompson, Principal

Mary Pat Veihmeyer, staff development

Amy Fletcher, 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher

Shira Brown, 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher

With Matt Gertzog moderating

Mrs. Thompson opened the discussion with an explanation to how CSES decided to deliver the new math groupings. She expected problems in two areas: 1) A surprise element for parents, 2) labeling of students (student feelings). In regard to the second concern, teacher's names only will be used to refer to all math classes. She explained that CSES is held accountable to targets in educational achievement as identified by the county.

Middle schools want to identify students who can begin Algebra I upon arrival. Cluster representatives looked to the elementary schools for answers to this question. The driving factors in creating the new groupings were as follows:

- 25 students at each grade level were recognized as working on above grade level math skills.
- Parents voiced a need for a more challenging math curriculum.
- Support County targets already in place

- Avoiding “teaching to the middle”

Mrs.Thompson stressed to parents that they need to be sensitive to labels and avoid using them around the students. She also made a suggestion of having spring parent/teacher conferences in order to input more wisely when forming classes for the next school year. She also stated that the goal was to provide programming to match student needs.

### **Amy Fletcher**

Mrs. Fletcher discussed the structure of a typical math lesson. She explained that the structure looks the same among all levels. Pre-assessments are used by teachers to help formulate the lessons. Para-educators are present to assist the teacher in making extensions or review as necessary.

### **Shira Brown**

Mrs.Brown explained the use of exit cards to assess daily learning at the end of each lesson. The students will have different worksheets to take home, and care is being taken that the students do not realize this.

### **Mary Pat Veihmeyer**

Mrs.Veihmeyer explained that there is flexibility within each group.

Mrs.Thompson remarked that when a student shows understanding of grade level work with extensions, they could be promoted to the next level (of math groupings).

**At this point in the meeting, the discussion was directed by the moderator.**

**Q: What does the term “targets” mean?**

A: Mrs.Thompson explained that the county is using this term to refer to certain standards that should be achieved.

**Q: What is “Math A”?**

A: Traditional 6<sup>th</sup> grade math. “Math B” refers to 7<sup>th</sup> grade math and “Math C” refers to 8<sup>th</sup> grade math. The term “IM” refers to Investigations in Math, a course designed to challenge students before they are promoted to Algebra I.

**Q: What about basics? Are they getting skipped?**

A: Mrs.Veihmeyer answered that the curriculum spirals around and hits items as needed.

**Q: Can I have a brief overview of what is happening with the math groupings?**

A: Mrs.Thompson responded that if a student met 70% of grade level objectives and 70% of above grade level objectives, then he/she would be eligible for above grade level math classes. Once a student enters grade 1, he/she will begin differentiation.

**Q: Is “IM” being phased out? Are “Math A” concerns a problem at Pyle or Carderock?**

A: CSES students have always done well at Pyle, but only a few are being placed in IM. Compared to the cluster we did not have many. Algebra I by the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade is the goal.

Kristy Keteltas: We can advocate for less pressure by the county if needed.

**Q: What about gaps?**

A: Mrs.Brown responded that the gaps are not as great as you think.

**Q: How are the grade levels working together?**

A: Mrs.Veihmeyer responded that the teachers are planning together.

**Q: What is the parent’s role regarding how to support students?**

A: Please read directions on all homework. Visit the CSES website for accelerated or review activities to do at home.

**Q: Do I need a tutor if my student is considered on grade level?**

A: Mrs.Thompson responded that on grade level students will be given a rigorous curriculum because teachers can focus more on material presented and can also use extensions when needed.

**Q: Are doors shutting for students who are on grade level?**

A: Mrs.Thompson stated that if we have more students who qualify for above grade level groupings, we would adjust accordingly.

**Q: What paths of math are available?**

A: Please check the website for a pathways chart.

The moderator then closed the meetings with thanks to all for the questions and concerns.

Meeting Adjourned.