

## **CARDEROCK SPRINGS GENERAL PTA MEETING – January 12, 1020**

Minutes from November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved.

### **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

Prospective Parent Tours -- Mr. Palmisano recently conducted a prospective parent tour for 8 students. Most were kindergarten students and interestingly, he pointed out, some are currently not in our school district but in the process of relocating (a couple of families were from the District). Prospective parent tours take place once a month.

Weatherbug -- Many questions regarding the Weatherbug station have surfaced which required additional research and consideration. Mr. Palmisano spoke to other schools/principals who had the system and it was not recommended for various reasons (they used it only to determine whether to go outside for recess, some teachers didn't know how to use it, etc.) After meeting with Stephanie Sola-Sole, from the CSES Foundation, and Sara Bhatia, PTA president, it was determined that this was not the most effective way to spend the PTA's \$7500 contribution. Instead, it was determined that the money will be used to purchase Net books.

NetBooks -- Netbooks are multiple computers centrally located on one portable cart. They are connected to a central computer, printer and have internet access. Some of the advantages are they're appropriate for all grade levels, there's little learning curve for the teachers and they're portable. The Netbooks allow flexibility in a classroom because you can work in small groups. At other schools, older children do a lot of their creative writing on them as well. Mr. Palmisano did research, spoke to other schools using them and had some of our teachers observe a 5<sup>th</sup> grade class from another school who are using them as well.

Notebooks would need to be purchased in coordination with Montgomery County technical department so there is support available when necessary. The hope is to vote on the Netbooks at the February General Meeting. All agreed this is a better use of the PTA funds.

Artists in Residence -- Liz Reiss will work with 3-5 grades to help students produce poetry. They may publish a book or do a reading as a result.

Science Fair --The science fair is scheduled for May 11. The science and technology committee is working on logistics and display possibilities. Grades K-1 will produce a class project. Grades 2-4 may work in a small groups and 5<sup>th</sup> grade will submit individual projects. The committee may arrange to have a scientist give a talk.

***New School Hours*** -- Parents surveyed overwhelmingly requested a return to our old school hours for the 2010/11 school year (8:50 a.m. -3:05 p.m.). Mr. Palmisano has communicated this preference to MCPS, but the final decision will be made by the county.

**Day Care Survey** -- Currently soliciting proposals and bids from various vendors to review. Parents on the recent school tour asked if we would have this available in the new school.

**Construction** -- A construction meeting is being held on Thursday. Ms. Kurinsky is currently in the process of ordering furniture.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**Treasurer's Report** -- The PTA currently has \$57,000 in the back. Recent, large deposits include Giant, Sally Foster, Book Fair and membership donations. Created a new category for school supplies, which hasn't been touched and will review with Mr. Palmisano to determine need.

**Book Fair** -- It was decided to move the book fair to the week of parent/teacher conferences next year (mid-November). Parents will already be in the hallways and Hanukkah is early this year.

**Bingo Night** -- Bingo night is being held next Thursday, January 21, at Pyle. From 6:30-8:30pm. This is really a kids' night and not a PTA fundraiser. The evening includes food, prizes, bingo cards, etc.

**International Week** -- We are still trying to organize a weeklong event and are contacting possible chairs to make this happen.

**Cultural Arts** -- On Thursday the Reptile Man will be at Carderock. Other events include an Improv, hip-hop and a sign language performance via story telling.

**Hunger Helpers Program** -- This seems to be part of many students' Thursday routine. The school averages 150-200 sandwiches/week.

**Community Service** -- Valentine's Day parties will include the next time for a project which is still to be determined.

**Whitman Cluster Rep Report** -- There is a proposal to erect a T-Mobile tower at Whitman on top a light on the baseball field. Whitman will receive proceeds from this. January 20 a community meeting and open house will be held to discuss this proposition. Whitman will be hosting Capital Steps as a fundraiser for their post-prom party.

**MCCPTA – Budget review 2010/11** -- The proposed budget for 2010/11 was a topic for discussion at this meeting. This is just the first step to an approval. There is a \$1.1m increase in overall spending with no new program but no new cuts. The process starts in Annapolis and that is where it is at this point. As a comparison, in 2004 the budget averaged \$16k/student whereas this proposed budget would average to \$16/student.

We can advocate and a community and as individuals by attending the Jan 20 meeting at 7:00pm. This is the second of 2 meetings where you can go and testify as a cluster and specifics are passed along to cluster reps. Individuals can email

Patricia\_O'Neill@mcpsmd.org to advocate/support our school needs i.e. specific programs, specialists and how you think their cuts would affect our school. It's important to make the letter personal and specific. Mr. Palmisano pointed out description "O" in the budget proposal as an example of specific cuts that could happen. Last year, Sara Bhatia and Ms. MacLaughlin testified on behalf of keeping our specialists – we got to keep one.

Mr. Palmisano, Sara and Jen will put together a list of how these proposed cuts would affect us. Ms. Veimeyer is an example of someone we would fight to keep. One idea to mobilize community support is via carderock.net with general guidelines such as those mentioned above.

Speaker -- The evening concluded with a parent education speaker, Carol Simpson. Carol is the Food Services Supervisor for the Montgomery Country Department of Education.