

PTSA Meeting Minutes: Wednesday, January 21, 2009

The meeting was called to order by PTSA president, Molly Jackman, at 7:15pm

A. Announcements:

1. **GIFT WRAP Sales**: Sandy Patterson, treasurer of the Gift Wrap fundraiser, reported that income from the holiday gift wrap was \$13,345.00. That figure does not take into account costs for materials. Although that number is down from past years, it is still very good considering the state of the economy and the fact that we competed against 4 days of free gift wrap at another location in Westfield Mall.

**A giant thanks to ALL volunteers, especially during the last few days of the sale when crowds were very heavy. There were new parents and lots of wonderful student wrappers!**

**Volunteers are needed for Valentine's Day from February 10-14 and for several days around Mother's Day as well.**

Finally we are looking for a committee of volunteers to take over the bow-making for next year's fundraiser. There are several steps in making the bows and storage of the bows is also needed. Please contact Chris Grewell at [CillyGoose@aol.com](mailto:CillyGoose@aol.com) if you are interested in helping with this.

2. **AFTER PROM**: Jennifer Tripodi reported on the upcoming After Prom. Einstein has hosted this alcohol and drug free event for over 15 years. It is FREE to all seniors and a guest; they don't need to attend the Prom to attend the After Prom. It is held from midnight until 5am, directly following the prom.

Jennifer reports that much has already been done to begin the planning and volunteers have already been contacting her to help with all aspects of the event. However, **LEADERS are needed for several committees, including Baskets, Games, Prizes, Kitchen/Food, Communications and Treasury.**

**A planning meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 27 at 7:30pm at the school. Please contact Jennifer Tripodi if you are interested in helping out at [Jennifer.M.Tripodi@Lmco.com](mailto:Jennifer.M.Tripodi@Lmco.com)**

3. **A TASTE OF EINSTEIN**: Debbie Brody and Cynthia Schnedar reported that the Taste of Einstein is scheduled for March 6 from 6-9:00pm. It will include a great variety food and wonderful performances by Einstein students. The cost is \$5 per family unless you bring a dish to share.

Volunteers are needed, both parents and students (who can earn SSL hours). Please contact Debbie at [debrajbrody@earthlink.net](mailto:debrajbrody@earthlink.net) or Cynthia at [cynthia.schnedar@mac.com](mailto:cynthia.schnedar@mac.com)

4. **COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS:** Spread the word about this great after school program. It offers tutoring, physical fitness, discussion groups, mentoring, and a snack for both boys and girls. Every Wednesday includes a special event such as laser tag, movies, plays, etc. The purpose of the program is to build responsibility in our students.
5. Molly Jackman ended the announcements with a call for greater effort from us all to reach out to more and different people to get involved in the PTSA.

**The February meeting, on Tuesday, February 17 will include a speaker about gang awareness.**

- B. The State of Einstein report hosted by Principal James Fernandez and a variety of staff members including Dr. Tamitha Campbell, Ms. Kimberly Williams, Mr. Brian Thomas, Ms. Amy Conner, Ms. Lori Leister, Ms. Mildred Charley-Greene.

1. Mr. Fernandez offered some general updates before the presentation:
  - a. There will be budget cuts this year, though at this point he is not sure of the details
  - b. Staffing for next year has not been finalized
  - c. The county has eliminated the "Literacy Position", however the staff development teacher position will remain
  - d. The county will no longer pay for junior PSATs but they will continue to pay for sophomore PSATs
  - e. As of January 21, 68 of 365 seniors will NOT graduate because of incomplete HSA requirements. This number WILL drop as a group took the necessary tests during last week's exam schedule and more are scheduled for the spring tests
  - f. Currently 11 students have waivers for the HSA tests
  - g. Unfortunately, Einstein leads the county with the highest freshmen ineligibility rate. The administration and staff is working to decrease this number especially by focusing on building and strengthening bonds between struggling students and teachers.

A parent suggestion was made to improve communications with the middle school feeders. How can our middle schools find out how their students do once they've moved on to high school so that they can strengthen their programs to meet the needs of rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders?

- h. An experimental classroom will begin second semester. In an effort to offer a learning environment that better supports students who struggle to rise to their full academic potential, Einstein will offer one 10<sup>th</sup> grade Honors English class composed of African American and Hispanic males. Students enrolled in this class were selected based upon their leadership qualities and their scheduling availability.
- i. Finally, Mr. Fernandez is currently making his way through various classrooms to discuss the upcoming SAT and ACT tests. He discourages students from taking the March tests,

which often offer new questions. Instead, he recommends the May or June test dates and reminded parents about **the FREE Triumph program** offered at Einstein to improve test scores 200-300 points. **Look and listen for upcoming reminders of the Triumph program on the Einstein website, in a ConnectEd message and in a letter from Mr. Fernandez.**

2. Various staff members then offered reports in a number of key areas and below are some highlights to their presentations. **Full details of the power point presentation will be available on the Einstein website.**
  - a. HSA Data: We do not currently meet our Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), however the deadline to meet the requirements is still several months away. Einstein administrators and staff are confident that will intensive student support in test preparation that the AYP will be met by the deadline.
  - b. AP/IB: Goals include both increasing the enrollment in both AP and IB courses and boosting the students' scores on the standardized tests. Even if students do not receive a passing grade, their experience in going through these courses will definitely benefit them in preparation for college.
  - c. SAT Scores: The number of students taking the tests increased, which is great, but the increase in students had a negative impact on the overall test scores. Now, however, the average scores are rising. Students have FREE access to the Triumph program through Einstein which boasts a 200-300 point increase in test scores.
  - d. Attendance: Currently, Einstein has a 95% attendance rate, which is attributed to the new attitude of respect and responsibility that has been encouraged at the school along with improved and increased security. The staff continues to work on maintaining accurate attendance. If you have questions/issues about your child's attendance, please contact the grade level administrator:  
Ms. Kimberly Williams: 9<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Mr. Brian Thomas: 10<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Ms. Charley-Greene: 11<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Ms. Jasper: 12<sup>th</sup> Grade
  - e. Loss of Credit: It is important that all parents and students know that they can appeal an LC (Loss of Credit). The process to restore credit involves completion of various forms with parental/student signatures, teacher approval and student compliance with requirements to complete the class.
  - f. Suspension Data: Last year at this date 123 students had been suspended. This year, that number has decreased dramatically to 12, which is obviously a tremendous improvement.
  - g. Eligibility: Please see Mr. Fernandez' comments above (1g)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm.

Submitted by Mary Murphy

Secretary of the PTSA