

Germantown Elementary School PTA Minutes

February 2, 2010

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes were reviewed from the January 5th meeting and a motion to amend the minutes was made by Nelton Castro. In the Delegate/Cluster report, the following was added: *Possibility of GES to host NW Cluster meeting on May 10th. Ms Bryant will check room availability. Decision to hold a community meeting to inform the surrounding neighborhoods of the superintendent's recommendation for GES and how it can affect them.* A motion to approve the minutes was made by Jen Brill and seconded by Kelly Meredith.

President's Report

- Kimmi Photinakis reported that many students & parents were in attendance at PJ Reading night. Joe Romano was very pleased with the turnout and thought that we had a great bunch of kids. He enjoyed the night as much as we did. From the Magic Book & wand sales, the PTA earned approx. \$250. Thanks to Lorelei Castro for organizing such a fun night and to all our milk & cookie helpers...thanks to you too!
- Many preparations have been underway to ensure that our Community Meeting to discuss the MCPS CIP plans for GES is a success. Thank you to Mr. Castro for designing the flyer & to Mrs. Goldman for translating to Spanish. We have been trying to spread the word and asking parents to talk to neighbors/future GES families to invite them to come along. Any plans to change our current structure will affect more than just our current families so it's important to get as much community involvement as possible. Our next opportunity to report to Cluster Coordinators is Feb 3rd, so attendance and feedback from the meeting is critical.
- REACH week preparations are also in full swing. Please continue to stay on top of student's backpack mail that will include flyers, reminders, & things to do for REACH. Big participation = lots of funds for PTA. If this is highly successful, which it has the potential to be, we will be able to avoid additional fundraiser for the spring. Kickoff event is Feb. 9th at 9:30 am in APR, all parents are invited to attend.

Vice President, Fundraising - Report

- Jen Brill reported that we recently received a check for \$293 from Sally Foster. Any purchases made online at www.sallyfoster.com using our code – 679522 - will generate an automatic 60% profit back to us until the end of the school year.
- There are several bins of cookie dough still in the PTA freezer, \$15 each if anyone is interested. Flavors available: 2 strawberry shortcake, 1 white chocolate macadamia nut, 1 cranberry oatmeal, 1 café au lait brownie.
- I have started investigating an "earth friendly" fundraiser for the spring, in case one is needed.

Vice President, Programs – Report

- Marti Shields proposes a St. Patrick's dance to be held on March 19th - complete with DJ and prizes for the most "Green Spirited". In addition, she proposed researching the costs/logistics of a possible Ice Cream Social to be held on the family fun night of April

16th. Please send thoughts and/or comments on the possibility of having these events to marthashields4@hotmail.com or 301-706-5716.

Treasurer's Report

- See attached financial report.

Delegate/Cluster Rep Report

- Cheryl Qassis attended the MCCPTA delegates meeting on Tuesday, January 26th. A good portion of the meeting focused on whether the MCCPTA should support an emergency bill entitled Montgomery County-Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Waiver, which is designed to ensure the penalty (some \$46 million) incurred due to a budget miscalculation last year was not taken out of the current FY2010 budget. The resolution was introduced and voted on during the same meeting. After much heated debate, the delegates (including Cheryl) voted to pass the resolution. Also, two additional resolutions were introduced at the assembly. They include a proposed: Resolution to Propose Changes to the definition of "Serious Incidents" in Regulation COB-RA, as well as: MCCPTA Proposed Bylaws Amendment. These can be viewed at <http://mccpta.com/resolutions.html>. They will be voted on at the February 23rd Delegates Assembly.
- It was also noted that many schools are organizing Haiti relief efforts. The treasurer recommended that schools do not deposit donations in the PTA accounts, and then pay them out; otherwise you must count the incoming funds as income. A better solution would be to have checks made to the recipient organization directly.
- Nelton Castro, NW Cluster Representative, reports that a parent outreach program will be hosted by the Northwest, Poolesville, Quince Orchard and Seneca Valley Quad Cluster.
- **Parent Outreach Program: 10 Laws for Effective Parenting in the 21st Century**
Monday, March 8, 2010, 7:00, at Northwest HS Auditorium
Guest Speaker: Mr. Shaun Taylor, Para-educator of Shady Grove MS

Mr. Taylor is getting such positive reactions from people who have attended, that he been requested by Dr. Phil to appear on his show, as well as some other high-profile shows.

In this dynamic presentation you'll learn...

- How many text messages your child sends everyday AND what they say
- How to unlock your child's untapped potential
- How to use "failures" as an opportunity to bond
- Why you should never put a computer in your child's room
- How to EARN, not take the final word

The regular NW Cluster Meeting will be held 1 hour before in a separate room. GES PTA President and Delegate are welcome.

- **Trips to Annapolis:** A part of the MCCPTA advocacy this year will consist of trips to Annapolis based on Clusters as was done last year. Clusters have been assigned to groups in an effort to ensure maximum representation of each Delegate's constituents with every visit, Cluster Coordinators and Area VP's are tasked to maximize participation and to oversee their group's trip. We have been assigned to **Group 4** (Winston Churchill, Northwest, Clarksburg, Watkins Mill, Bethesda-Chevy Chase) on **Wednesday March 10th, 2010 (RSVP by March 3rd)**.

From Beth Kennington, NW Cluster Coordinator:

"We need all the support we can to SAVE STAFF POSITIONS AND TO SPARE INCREASES TO CLASS SIZES AND ELIMINATION OF MANY SERVICES in this fiscal year! Six months of this fiscal year have already passed. Looking at \$46M in cuts over the next six months will cause this school system dearly. For a brief look at what we could expect if the Emergency Bill does not pass, turn to page 17 of your Operating Budget in Brief booklets, and read all of the suggested ways for MCPS to save approximately \$40M on that and the following pages.:

Logistical Information for Annapolis Trips:

Car pools should target an 8:00 am departure time figuring arrival at 9:15am. Session begins at 10:00am and you want to make sure that everyone has time to get there before it starts. Our state legislators have been notified that MC parents are coming, and they will announce our attendance from the floor. This will be a great opportunity to tour the State House, meet with members of the Montgomery County Delegation, and remind everyone that we are here and watching. Everyone Must Have ID!

Anyone wanting to participate on these trips to Annapolis, please let me know, nlcastro@verizon.net

Committee Reports

- **Yearbook Committee** – Alexis Gerard reports that LoveNotes is underway. The campaign ends on February 9th with delivery of the lollipops during Valentine's Day class parties on the 12th. Additional forms may be picked up at the office. All "note" sales are used to lower the price of yearbook.
- Pictures are needed to help fill the GES yearbook. Parents/staff that have pictures from events this school year are encouraged to share. Please contact Lena Burleson at lenaburleson@yahoo.com
- **Restaurant Fundraiser** – Analisa Urcia reports that the PTA has made approximately \$650 from the last three fundraisers. The next fundraiser is February 10th at Red Robin Gourmet Burgers in Germantown. The time is from 5-7pm so come out and support GES!

- The *Spring Fair Committee* is looking for a few good volunteers to help with this year's fair scheduled for Saturday, May 1st from 2-5 pm. Please contact Aba Kumi at Aba.Kumi@ed.gov if you are interested in helping.
 - **Silent Auction:** 2-3 volunteers to seek gifts/donations for auction and manage auction during fair. I have a draft letter that can be used to seek donations.
 - **Bake and used books sales:** 2-3 volunteers to seek bakers and book donors; will coordinate delivery and set prices for sale items
 - **Volunteer coordinator:** 1-2 volunteers to coordinate student and parent volunteers; will arrange for middle and high school volunteers, assign to jobs and sign SSL sheets.
 - **Face painting and "tattoo" coordinator:** 2-4 volunteers or 1 volunteer to coordinate volunteers to work the booth.
- Lorelei Castro, *Cultural Arts* Chair, reports on...

R.E.A.C.H. (Reading Education Awareness in the Child's Home) is GES' first-ever reading campaign that promotes students to read 300 minutes at school and at home in 7 days. Students contact family and friends to support their efforts by sponsoring them for every minute they read. GES PTA will benefit from 60% of the proceeds. It's a wonderful opportunity for the whole GES family (teachers, staff, parents and students), as well as sponsoring families and friends to encourage GES students to read and have fun doing it. Prize incentives are awarded for their efforts. The R.E.A.C.H reading campaign schedule is as follows:

 - **Tuesday, Feb.9, 9:30am GES All Purpose Room - R.E.A.C.H. Kick-off Meeting** (20-30 minutes-*Parents Invited to Attend!*). Joe Romano returns to kick off R.E.A.C.H. week. Students begin to send sponsor letters to family and friends. All letters should be sent out by Friday, Feb. 26, 2010.
 - **Saturday, Feb.27 through Friday, March 5 - R.E.A.C.H. Week** at Germantown ES, where students read (or are read to) at home and school, for 300 minutes in 7 days. Each day during the school week, we will have a theme in which students will have fun reading and learning about the theme for the day. In addition, we will have trivia/contests each day for students to participate. Daily themes are:
 - **Monday, March 1 "Read All About It" Day** - Students read about positive, current events. We are in need of The Washington Post, Sunday "Mini Page". Parents, please save and pass these onto Lorelei Castro.
 - **Tuesday, March 2 Dr. Seuss Day** (and "Read Across America" Day) - This is Dr. Seuss' Birthday, where students will read a Dr. Seuss book. We may have a buddy day where 4th/5th graders will read a Dr. Seuss book to the younger readers, K/1st graders.
 - **Wednesday, March 3 Olympics and Sports Day** - Students read about the recent Winter Olympics and other sports.
 - **Thursday, March 4 "Read My Shirt" Day** - Students read t-shirts of other GES staff and students.

- **Friday, March 5 Mystery Reader Day** - Students must guess who will be their mystery reader in their class. Clues may be given to them each day during the week, leading up to this day.

Principal's Report

- Our after school clubs begin on Wednesday, February 10th. There are open slots for each club - yoga, multi-sensory math, math facts, science inquiry and homework.
- Welcome back to our speech pathologist Liz Johnson, who just returned from maternity leave last week.
- Report cards will be distributed for all students tomorrow, February 3rd.
- Our PJ Reading Night was a great success thanks to staff "readers" and trainers and the PTA's program featuring Joe Romano.
- Next month, environmental surveys will be sent via US Mail to various parents to gather feedback on GES - the instructional program, staff, climate, etc. In the past we've received very few responses. We'd like more parents to respond so we can get a more accurate feedback. Typically people respond to these types of surveys when they are extremely happy or unhappy. As with any organization, we are continuously trying to make improvements for the benefit of our students!!