

Richard Montgomery High School PTSA Meeting Minutes
August 21, 2007

Kate Savage brought the meeting to order at 7:40 PM. Kate welcomed everyone to the first PTSA meeting of the new school year. She solicited a motion to approve the minutes from the June meeting. The minutes were approved.

Gail Rothberg gave the Treasurer report. Gail reported that she recently received the books from Dale Ryan. She announced that she needed a few PTSA members to form a committee to audit the books from last school year.

Mr. Carrasco gave the Principal report. Mr. Carrasco discussed the following items:

1. Athletic Director – Mr. Carrasco hired Bob Mackey as the new Athletic Director.
2. New IB Coordinator – Mr. Carrasco hired Jennifer Hoover as the new IB Coordinator, vacating her position as Assistant Principal.
3. New Assistant Principal – Mr. Carrasco hired Josh Sunshine as the new Assistant Principal, replacing Jennifer Hoover. Mr. Sunshine came from Churchill High School where he was a teacher in the Social Studies department.
4. Mr. Reed, one of the Assistant Principals, is responsible for the new schedules and the new scheduling system.
5. Alcohol abuse – The school is working with the City of Rockville to curb teen alcohol abuse. The school will sponsor the “every 15 minutes” program again this year. Mr. Carrasco wants to broaden the focus of the drinking issue beyond just drinking a driving. Nicole Sosik is the administrative sponsor of the “every 15 minutes” program. (She is also the administrative sponsor for the Athletic Boosters.)
6. Staffing – Total enrollment in Montgomery County has dropped. The entire county has had great difficulty in finding qualified candidates for special education.
7. Media curriculum – As part of the new Sports and Event Management Academy, RM has hired a new media teacher who came from BCC.
8. Adult mentors – Mr. Carrasco is looking for ways to connect each student with an adult staff member. He wants to provide a support system and outlet for every student.
9. New building – Mr. Carrasco reported that they have a new Community Superintendent and supervisor over the construction. He recently toured the new building and most of the lighting, flooring, cabinets and some lockers have been installed. The kitchen equipment was due for delivery soon. Mr. Carrasco is closing school 2 days early over winter break (December 20 and 21) to allow teachers an opportunity to move their things to their new classrooms. After break, he is planning to have an orientation day for the students in the new building before classes resume. He needs to find \$22,000 to fund the outdoor seating. He was able to get the wiring in for the projectors and screens in the classrooms. He still wants to get a new amplification system for the classrooms. Every teacher will have their own telephone in their classrooms.
10. High School Plus – High School plus is an after school program on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 2:30 to 4:00 in Algebra I and English 9 for students who need to re-take these courses. The Health class is available on-line.
11. Parking at the new school building – The parking for students at the new school building will be done by lottery with a preference likely given to seniors. A parking permit will cost \$75 per year or \$37.50 per semester. There should be more available parking than RM students have had in the past.

12. Student ID – When student ID’s are issued, they will require that all students leaving the school during school hours, such as at lunch, to present their ID. Those students who have been granted permission to leave campus during lunch will have something on their ID’s that indicates they are allowed to leave school.
13. Time between classes – Mr. Carrasco said that he walked the building from one end to the other and has decided that 5 minutes between classes will be sufficient time for students to reach their next class on time. Currently, students have 6 minutes between classes.
14. Back to School Night – Mr. Carrasco is considering having a second Back to School Night in the new building to allow parents to visit the new classrooms and teachers.

Kate Savage gave the President’s report. Kate said that Cissy and Shirley did the Back to School breakfast for the teachers. Everyone thought it was great!

The PTSA newsletter is ready to go out and will be available on-line.

The Pedestrian Safety committee is working on plans for the new school building. Everyone is concerned about the proximity to Fleet Street, which is a very busy road with curves and higher driving speeds. They are trying to be proactive and anticipate what will be needed in terms of pedestrian cross walks, etc...

The PTSA is bringing back the informative parent panels from last year. They will precede the regular PTSA meetings for an hour beginning at 6:30 PM. A light fare of food will be provided to encourage attendance by parents coming directly from work.

The practice SAT and ACT will be provided on September 29th. The cost will be \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door.

The following committee and liaison reports were given:

1. **Membership** – Historically, there have been approximately 600 members in the PTSA. There will be a table at Back to School night encouraging parents to become members. The Directory will not be available before Back to School night in order to allow families to request that they not be published in the Directory.
2. **SGA** – Rosa Greenberg reported that the SGA participated in the annual teacher breakfast. They were busy planning for Back to School night in which they will sponsor the Club Fair. The SGA will be holding freshman class elections in September. Rosa announced that the theme of Homecoming had been changed to “Night on the Town.” Ticket sales will still be handled in a manner similar to prior years giving the seniors more tickets and having the first opportunity to buy tickets. Homecoming is on November 3rd with the game in the afternoon and the dance that evening at 8:00 PM. Homecoming week will include events such as the picnic and the student-staff basketball game. SGA is sponsoring a “Walk for Homeless” and will donate the proceeds to the Stepping Stone shelter in our area.
3. **Boosters** – Ralph Lary, Booster Club President, introduced himself to the PTSA. He briefly announced the general purpose of the organization as the group that supports all of the student athletes at RMHS. He said that the Booster Club is sponsoring a “Meet the Coaches” night on August 30th at which the new Athletic Director will introduce himself. He noted that the Booster Club sponsors scholarships for student, which are awarded in the spring. From feedback received from students that were interviewed for the scholarships, the Booster Club is initiating an effort to include students as club members. He wants to use the student-led sub-group to promote team spirit and, in return, provide benefits to the members such as free admittance to athletic events. Ralph also reported that the Booster Club had its first “Booster Bash” at the end of the prior school year as a way to thank everyone who had helped in any way to support RM athletics.

4. **Pedestrian Safety** – John Hall, Kate Ostell, and Lance Simon have been working on the existing safety issues as well as the future issues anticipated with the new school building. There will be a new traffic pattern in front of the existing school building that will present new safety issues for students on foot. The committee has been developing a plan to get a new traffic signal at Fleet Street and Richard Montgomery Drive. They are also requesting new pedestrian paddles requiring cars to stop for pedestrians crossing the road. Everyone is concerned with the new school building facing a 4-lane, windy road that carries traffic typically traveling at a high rate of speed. There is a meeting on September 17 of the Rockville City Council at which Mr. Carrasco, Kate, Lance, and John plan to testify. They plan to meet at City Hall at 7:15 PM. On September 18th, all of the city council candidates and mayoral candidates are invited for a walk through in front of the new school building.
5. **Back to School Night** – The PTSA is looking for volunteers to assist with Back to School Night. They need to know the number of tables required by the various organizations planning to set up for the event.
6. **Directory** – Margaret Chao has been working on the Directory. Directories will not be ready for Back to School Night. The deadline for ads and requesting the option to be excluded from the Directory will be September 14th. The Directories should be ready by the end of September and will cost \$7 each or \$10 each if they are mailed.
7. **MCCPTA** – Liz Wheeler announced that the Delegate Assembly is scheduled for September 25. MCPS strategic planning is scheduled for September 20th at Quince Orchard High School and October 20th at Wheaton High School. Fall training is scheduled for September 29th. The CIP forum is October 30th and the hearings are November 14th and 15th. The MCCPTA needs another delegate. They meet the 4th Tuesday of each month.
8. **Post Prom** – The PTSA still needs someone to chair the Post Prom committee. Amy Prywes is not returning.

Old business – Trudi thanked everyone for the fabulous Back to School breakfast.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM. The next meeting will be on September 18th at 7:30 PM. The walking tour will precede the meeting at 6:00 PM.