

Richard Montgomery High School PTSA Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2007

Kate Savage brought the meeting to order at 7:45 PM.

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

1. Pedestrian Safety – Mr. Carrasco reported that the meeting with the Rockville city officials in front of the new school building went very well. Everyone seemed very concerned about the traffic on Fleet Street. There are 2 blind spots making it especially dangerous for pedestrians. A pedestrian overpass was suggested and it was pointed out that with the ADA accessibility requirements, it would likely be cost prohibitive.
2. Every 15 minutes program – RM is working with the City of Rockville to implement a meaningful program. Kate Savage met with the Chief of Police. Mr. Carrasco wants to expand the program beyond the concerns with drinking and driving. He has had to suspend 2 students recently for alcohol abuse.
3. New building – Mr. Carrasco reported that significant progress had been made on the new building. In light of the recent progress, they have changed the date to begin moving from November to October.
4. HSA testing changes – Mr. Sunshine reported that beginning in May 2008 the number of BCR's and ECR's was being reduced. By May 2009, the BCR's and ECR's will be eliminated on all HAS tests. The changes are intended to address the speed at which the tests can be graded and results returned to teachers so they can make changes to curriculum to address issues.
5. School crisis plan – Mr. Reed reported that he reviewing and preparing emergency plans. RM currently has fire drills once a month (they had 2 in September). He explained the difference between Code Blue and Code Red, the former used in cases such as a medical emergency and the latter used for a complete lock down situation. He explained that in the event of an evacuation, everyone must be at least 50 feet away from the building. If the evacuation involves hazardous materials, then everyone must be 300 feet away from the building. He has prepared the parent-child reunification plan. All of the plans will require modification with the move to the new building.
6. High School Plus – Ms. McCall explained that there is no more evening school for students that need to re-take a required class. The new program is after school and is free to all students. Summer school will still continue with a cost.
7. Transcripts – Mr. Carrasco addressed the recent confusion over the cost of sending transcripts. He noted that only the first 3 (series of 3 for a given school) are free.
8. Lunch passes – Mr. Carrasco said that all students would be getting their ID's this week and they will begin enforcing lunch passes next week. September 26th is the ID photo make-up day.
9. Student body – The current student body size is 1,942.

Kate Savage gave the President's report. Kate discussed the follow items:

1. Every 15 minutes program – Kate wants to make the program a year-long event including planned initiatives such as advice for private parties. She wants to educate students and parents on underage drinking prevention.
2. Executive Board update – Kate reported that Ann-Marie Bocus has been nominated for the vacant third Vice-President position. The position must be posted prior to the PTSA voting for any of the nominations.

3. Parent Panels – The parent panel sessions will begin in October prior to the next PTSA meeting from 6:30 – 7:30 PM. The first panel will be “Everything you wanted to know about RM.”
4. Practice SAT/ACT – The practice SAT and ACT is scheduled for September 29. The cost is \$10 in advance per test and \$15 at the door. There will be a follow-up and distribution of scores on October 13th. RM has invited QO, Churchill, Wootton, and Rockville High School students to participate. Josh Sunshine noted that the PSAT is on October 17th and is free to 9th and 10th graders. The cost is \$13 for 11th graders. RM has 26 National Merit Semi-Finalists this year.
5. Back to School Night – Back to school night went smoothly and was well attended.

Kate continued with the Committee and Liaison reports.

1. Grants Committee – The PTSA sets aside \$4000 in its budget for staff to use for the benefit of the students. Staff members apply for grant money. Ten applications have been received thus far.
2. SGA – Rosa Greenberg announced that the SGA Club Fair will be held on September 26th. On September 28th, the SGA is sponsoring the Walk for Homeless from 11:40 – 1:40 PM in Elwood Park. Proceeds will go to the Stepping Stone shelter. There will be free Carmen’s Italian Ice.
3. Homecoming – The SGA is in the process of finalizing the ticket sale policy. Rosa noted the need for parent volunteers for dance set up and chaperones. They need 8 parents per hour for the duration of the dance.
4. Pedestrian Safety – Rosa and the SGA have been working with John Hall, Lance Simon and Kate Ostell on the issues surrounding pedestrian safety around RM. Rosa and about 50 students attended the testimony in front of the Rockville City Council on Monday evening, September 17th. The “walk-around” the new school with the City Council and candidates was prior to this meeting. Rosa said that she thought it was a very valuable event with many officials recognizing the issues and concerns. The press attended, as well, which will make the issues more visible and widely known to city residents.
5. Membership – Gail Rothberg reported for Bonnie’s behalf. Gail reported that the PTSA currently has 353 members, 32 of whom are staff.
6. Boosters – Ralph Lary introduced the Vice President of the Booster Club, Kevin Brooks. Ralph reported that the Booster Club is currently focusing on membership, fund raising, and support of the athletic events. The concession stand was recently broken into and several cases of drinks were stolen. Ralph and Kevin attended a collaborative fund raising meeting to coordinate mutual fund raising needs across school organizations. Currently, all athletic teams are selling the Rocket discount cards.
7. Events – Liz Wheeler and Kathleen Cohan met with Mr. Carrasco to discuss the planned Gala event scheduled for December 7th at the school. They plan on having school tours, power point presentation in the auditorium, silent auction in the cafeteria, and a sock-hop in the gym. The money that is raised will first go towards the foreign language lab. The PTSA is still selling bricks, as well.
8. MCCPTA – Liz Wheeler reported that RM still has a vacant delegate position. The first delegate assembly is on September 25th. The MCCPTA meets the 4th Tuesday of every month. On September 20th there is a MCPC strategic planning forum at QO. Another one will be held on November 11th at Wheaton. On September 29th is the fall training provided by the MCCPTA. There will be 20 sessions through out the day and lunch will be provided.

9. Directory – Margaret Chao reported that she had received 220 orders for directories to be mailed. The total cost is expected to be less than \$3000. \$3675 has been collected for ads. The directories will sell for \$7 each or \$10 each if they are to be mailed. It will be going to the printer next week.
10. Grading and Reporting – A proposal to have some type of final test or project to do after students have taken the AP or IB exam for a given class has been discussed. If a test is considered, it would be a non-traditional test.
11. Post Prom – Kate announced that she has heard from several people that are interested in helping with Post Prom, but she is still in need of a Chairperson. The Prom is on a Friday night this year and the Potomac Community Center has been reserved for the Post Prom event. The total cost has been running about \$12,000.

Gail Rothberg gave the Treasurer's report. Gail reported that the PTSA has about \$6000 in a CD, about \$9000 in the building fund, \$13,368 in the general fund and \$11,056 in the Post Prom fund.

Old business/General announcements:

- 1) Giant and Safeway programs require that participants sign-up every year. The forms and/or links will be posted on the listserv.
- 2) Moving schedule is on the RM website.
- 3) Minutes from the 8/21/2007 PTSA meeting were approved with corrections.
- 4) RM drew the third position for selection of Graduation day and time at DAR. Mr. Carrasco said that his preference would be for a Friday morning.
- 5) The deadline for the next newsletter is mid-October.
- 6) Thursday, September 20th is a meeting about a trip to Greece and Italy over spring break. The cost will be approximately \$2000/person, which covers almost everything.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM. The next meeting will be on October 16th at 7:30 PM. The parent panel will precede the meeting at 6:30 PM.