

Minutes of the Hill Middle School PTSA October 6, 2009

Call to Order: Jody Eriksen called the meeting to order at 7:02pm

Attendance: Danielle Smith, Lynda Barker, Katherine-Marie Cummings, Debora Garcia, Nancy Spring-Eplry, Stacey Rammsey, Marcy Reeb, Allan Davenport, Kathy Birkett, Char Freedlund, Anne Ruden, Cari Shanahan, Jody Eriksen, Alicia Burns, Laura King, Laura Falk, David Dragon

Special Guest: Kathy Birkett, District 204 Superintendent, gave a brief presentation to the PTSA. Highlights include:

Three Areas the school district will be focusing on include:

1. Student Achievement: Looking at every individual student along with ACT growth
 2. Finances: 9.2 million deficit this year; citizens financial advisory committee was formed to recommend ways to cut expenses and how to manage deficit
 3. Communication: Strengthening community and business connections; increased attendance at local school events. Ms. Birkett reiterated that she will respond to any communication and try her best to attend requested events.
- Moving into the beginning stages of testing with ACT for national learning standards. Currently ISATS (based on state's standards) rank Illinois standards in bottom 20% of all states. District 204 students average 80% on national SAT tests. District will not ignore state test but will change to a national test by 2013/2014. Three test students take are Explore (8th grade), Plan (10th) and ACT (11th). The Explore test is a predictor of ACT score.
 - New changes with ACT include a shadow plan at 9th grade (idea of where kids are at) and 6th & 7th graders will take the Explore test (scores will not go home-only used to make decisions on curriculum help for the 8th grade Explore test)
 - Quality core curriculum: formative and summative assessments that are aligned with ACT and look at whether info. is being duplicated.
 - High School testing this year will be on 1 day: Oct. 14
 - Professional Development Wednesdays – used to look at testing scores of individual students and opportunity for teachers to discuss curriculum areas
 - Finally, Ms. Birkett strongly reiterated that the district has not been happy with the busing situation and that it is not up to 204 standards. Mr. Davenport stated that all students, including walkers, are held in school when buses are late to keep all students safe. Situation has been improving with only 1-2 buses continuing to be late.

Minutes: September 2009 minutes approved as read.

Presidents Report: Several areas discussed:

- School board is pairing every school with a board member to act as a liaison for any issues/questions to take to the board; our liaison is Mark Metzger
- Food Service Clarification: PTSA can use an outside source for PTSA events only
- Hill Daily Announcements: Only for short term (3-4 day) announcements; all other news/informant info should go into the monthly Hill Street News
- Bulls/PTA Appreciation Night: Illinois state PTSA has partnered with the bulls with discount tickets for upcoming games in November. Info. will be in daily announcements
- Open Volunteer Positions include: Dine Out coordinators (Nature's Café), School supply Kits, Career Day (March), Market Day Parent Helpers, Spring Plant co-chair and 8th grade party

Membership Report: Current count stands at 930 students/adults which is a little down from last year. Will actively promote PTSA at upcoming school events (table present at both curriculum nights). The directory is in the works-will only be given to PTSA members; non-members can purchase for \$5 or they can join the PTSA and support the various student programs for \$10 (and also receive the directory).

Treasurer Report: PTSA dues and yearly insurance has been paid. New reimbursement sheets have been made up. An added cash policy is that no person may leave with cash from an event - it must be counted by 2 people and sheet must be signed by both. Anne is recommending we switch from Quicken to Quick books which will cost about \$300. It will give a more fluid transition between future treasurers. Anne will check to see if it available online. A motion was given to take \$300 out of Ways & Means contingency fund to purchase the Quick Books. The motion was seconded and approved.

Administration Report:

- Breakfast program is starting at Hill on 10/26. Students need to sign up ahead of time and a sheet was sent home this week. If you sign up you must eat every morning; not just 1-2x per week. Al will send out a recorded message clarifying this. Currently 18 kids are signed up.
- Hill received a visit from a middle school in Mendota on 10/5. We were applauded by the school for support from the teaching staff.
- A simple mission statement has been approved. It states: Work together, Learn together, Grow together. Complete info. regarding the new mission statement will be sent home soon. This statement will go along with the mural idea headed up by Ken Markowitz and one of the art teachers. The

idea is for students to paint what they believe the mission diagram will look like so all students will know what it is about. This will be used as a marketing ploy to get students to join United Colors of Hill. Permission slips will go out soon.

- Culvers Night is set for Nov. 19-more info. to come home soon.
- Red Ribbon Week was originally slated during the week the Explore test will be given. It will now be moved back – date tbd.
- Ms. Stoehrmann had a baby boy on Sunday. Miss Ridgeway will be subbing as the assist. Principal in the interim and a new gym teacher has been hired to replace her.

Faculty Report: No further information to report.

Student Council Report: A new council was recently elected. No representative was available tonight.

Ways and Means:

- Market Day is going smoothly and comparable to sales to last year. Hill will be getting a new rep. from the company.
- Apparel: a table will be at gingerbread junction and will feature items wrapped as presents to hopefully help sales. Also looking into pricing for clear water bottles to sell. Shorts will be discontinued and 2 non-gender specific t-shirts will also be available
- Campbell's labels (2000) have been sent in; there is a helper to assist in counting all labels. Ideas are being generated to make it easier for parents/students to drop off labels (extra bins, etc.). Also looking into purchasing Campbell's cookbooks and selling at gingerbread junction. Box tops are also being counted as the deadline to send in is the end of the month. Money received from boxtops may be used to purchase a new staff coffeepot.
- Another fundraising idea brought up is partnering with eScript with Dominic's Shopper cards-Debora will look in to.
- Gingerbread Junction has everyone in place and proceeding on schedule.
- Concessions will begin on 10/7 at the football/volleyball games. Goal is for students to help with parent supervision. Reminder will go out in daily announcements.
- Dine Out for Hill will be run by Lisa Cox and Laura Morris. Upcoming Culvers night set.
- Also looking into other restaurants to partner with 1x/quarter. Looking into partnership with Nature's Café for a spring ice cream social with a scheduled school event.

Service:

- Directory will be printed for free (\$1000 value) in exchange for back cover advertising of printing company.
- November teacher conference lunches will be run as last year.

Educational Enrichment:

- Red ribbon week has no chair this year. In past money has been spent on pencils and bracelets for students. Idea brought forth about using the money for assemblies that have a 'drug-free' theme.
- Assemblies – 4-5 have been narrowed down for the year including a program for financial planning for college for adults. Suggestion to have this program before a PTSA meeting to encourage attendance. It was also suggested to check into the Star Raiders Drug Free program from WVHS.
- Reflections is moving along well. The due date has been extended and some teachers are giving extra credit for students who participate.
- Hill Hero Breakfast-date tbd. May need to move location due to breakfast program starting.

School Representative:

- IPPC reported that ACT scores are up from 23.4 to 23.8. Also student enrollment is up by 134 students and the districts business contract is up for bid next year.
- IPSN – Danielle reported that several fundraisers are coming up including a partnership with Meatheads on 10/21 & 10/22 and a Culvers Night/Photo opportunity have recently taken place. On 10/20 Kathy Birkett will visit the IPSN meeting-all questions may be submitted prior to Danielle who will forward on. New grants are available to all paid staff and Hill received several for word finding intervention programs. Finally, October is disability awareness month and posters will be up in the LMC.

Prior Business: A tabled motion for money to be donated to the startup PA PTA was re-motined and seconded. \$50 will be sent to the PTA.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Char Freedlund, PTSA Secretary