

SES PTSA Board Meeting Minutes, March 6, 2007

Members: (those in bold were present)

Doug Wells (president); Kristen Calhoun (president-elect); Nancy Church; (treasurer); Beth Azar (secretary); Claire Irvan (membership coordinator); **Melinda Patterson (fundraising); Lisa Bauso (fundraising); Neeley Wells (volunteer coordinator); Katie Smith (volunteer coordinator); Jennifer Freda-Cowie (teacher support);** Courtney Lobo (teacher support); Caryn Corwin (parent education); Cindy Ewers (parent education); Robin May (teacher representative); **Rebecca Wagner (teacher representative); Anna Goldrich (member-at-large); Mario Galindo (member-at-large);** Meg Stalnaker (member-at-large); Beth Waltz (member-at-large)

Also attending: **Sarah Taylor**

The meeting began at 7:00 pm.

Dates for future Board Meetings

Board members agreed to hold two more Board Meetings this school year, each the week prior to General PTSA meetings.

The first will be **April 3 at 6:30 p.m.**, the second will be **May 9 at 6:30 p.m.**

General Meeting Focus

April

The April General Meeting will highlight a discussion by Kathy Keller Jones on screen time; a talk by folks at Jean's Farm on curriculum issues related to the farm and about the summer camp; a speaker from Safe Routes to School.

May

The May meeting will highlight elections for the PTSA Board; a presentation on the 4-H exchange program; and approval of next year's budget.

Site Council

Due to questions about the role of Site Council and PTSA in decision-making at the school, Sarah will type up a list of priorities and present it to PTSA. The general concept is that Site Council will decide from a curricular point of view what the priorities are and go to PTSA for funding of those programs not covered by the general budget. Nancy asked that this list of priorities be presented before the April Board Meeting.

Neeley said that Cindy is creating a flow chart to diagram how decisions and funding should be handled between Site Council and PTSA.

Budget

There was a general discussion of the PTSA budget for funding teacher requests. The general agreement is that teachers who want funding for new curriculum-based programs should make those requests to Site Council or Sarah. Once the program is approved, Sarah can then request funding from PTSA. **Nancy she'd create a form that Sarah can send to PTSA saying that a curriculum request has been reviewed and approved and asking for funding.**

Board members also had a long discussion about budgeting for the future so PTSA can predict better what teachers/programs will need for the year. Mario suggested that there be a template that allows for flexibility, but that also gives PTSA a framework to plan with.

Sarah said she would talk to teachers about communicating better not only what they plan to do with students throughout the year (in terms of field trips, etc.) but also about communicating more clearly to parents about requests for money and realizing that there is a risk of burn-out when requests come too frequently.

Neeley suggested that the fee form be worded more clearly to say that parents who pay up front should ignore requests for money later in the year and that those who can't pay up front will be asked to donate on a case by case basis for things like field trips.

Nancy said she would make a spreadsheet to document marine biology scholarships and provide it to teachers and/or parent volunteers coordinating these trips.

PTSA Support for Programs in Need

The board **voted to pay for Sara Wagner to help with Spanish classes** for the end of the year. Nancy will pay her up front once she receives the paperwork.

Board members discussed funding Kathy Keller Jones for the rest of the year. Her limited term has run out. Doug and Neeley wanted to check on the legal issues around PTSA paying for her services. **Sarah will check with the district about the legality of PTSA paying Kathy.**

There was also a general discussion about the programs Kathy is providing and general consensus that the middle school parenting meetings are very worthwhile but that the other classes only benefit a very small cross section of parents and that those classes could just as well be parent-led or that those parents attending could pick up the cost.

White envelopes

Sarah suggested that white envelopes be stuffed in individual classrooms. Room parents in each classroom could be responsible for picking up the packet of materials from the office and the room teacher and stuffing that room's envelopes. In the middle school, this could be done by middle school interns. There was general discussion about how to make this work efficiently. It was generally agreed that we shouldn't invest in more envelopes because they aren't returned. Rather, materials could be stapled together and put in folders or envelopes that stay in the classroom.

Belmont Market

Neeley spoke about showing the school's concern for the shooting at Belmont Market. **PTSA board members voted to donate \$100.00** as a good neighbor show of support for the market.

Bus Seat Belts

Neeley spoke about a desire to show the school's support for the installation of seat belts on buses used for school purposes. She suggested that the PTSA write a letter stating that on trips that require freeway rides we won't use buses that don't provide seat belts.

There was general discussion about this issue and whether we feel comfortable making this kind of statement. If we don't use buses, it would mean using lots of parent-driven cars and that may be more dangerous in the long run. **Neeley agreed to research the issue further and come back to the Board with a recommendation.**

Survey

Neeley suggested that PTSA put together a survey to test the mood of parents and have them weigh in on where they want to see the school's priorities focused. **Beth and Jennifer agreed to work on the survey with Neeley.**

Lice

Jennifer asked that there be a better policy on lice notification. She suggested that there be a note put in the Messenger that give some background on lice and how it's spread and emphasizes that it is not something parents should be embarrassed about talking about. Sarah explained the current policy and agreed that a periodic general educational notice in the Messenger would be helpful.

Directory

Neeley gave an update on the school directory. She had decided not to print 600 hard copies this year, but to send those with electronic capabilities an electronic version. Those without computers were sent hard copies.

Nancy questioned whether this was the best method. **Nancy volunteered to work on the directory next year to help get it out earlier.**

Staffing

Sarah gave a brief overview of staffing changes for next year. She will be adding a full-time vice principal; a .5 literacy expert; .75 math and technology certified position; .5 Spanish for K-8.

She also plans to move K-2 special education downstairs. She'd also like to clear out the "maze" to provide more space.