

PTO Minutes
Tuesday, May 8, 2007
This is the Annual Meeting with Board Elections

- I. Meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. and introductions were made.
- II. Minutes of March meeting were approved.

Mission Moment - Tom shared a thank you note from a first grade class that was very appreciative of their PTO sponsored trip to a performance of *Peter and the Wolf*.

- III. Attendees: Karen Campbell, Pat Carroll, Kelley Craig, Valerie Currier, Heather Giandrea, Tom Gilley, Bill Green, Gwen Hall, Maureen Morrone, Chris Mosca, Gloria Nicholson, Brenda Pitcher, Allyson Ray, Deb Regan, Catherine Robinson, Tom Shepard, Melissa Skahan, Becky Sledjeski, Carin Wilson

- IV. Presentation: Chris Mosca, Principal, Greely High School
We were pleased to have Chris Mosca, the Principal of Greely High School at the meeting to discuss two very important on-going projects. The first being the implementation of an International Baccalaureate Program and the second, the renewal of our New England Association of Schools and Colleges accreditation.

International Baccalaureate

The research into the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program was born out of a desire to reach the approximately 35% of students who it is felt are not achieving their full academic potential. As a district, we are high performing, with 97% of our juniors having taken the SAT's this year. It's recognized that we don't need an elite program for elite children. Rather, the IB program offers an alternative path for those students who may not be challenged or motivated in the present curriculum.

An IB program is a scope and sequence of courses and experiences designed to explore in depth the customary high school subjects. It provides numerous opportunities for students to learn, through inquiry and questioning, how what is taught relates to their personal values and the perspectives of those in the international community. Students may pursue an IB diploma by taking the entire series of courses their junior and senior years, or they may receive an IB certificate for a single IB course taken. Currently, there are greater than 500 high schools in North America offering an IB program. We would be the first in Maine. The program was developed in the late 60's primarily for the children of international diplomats and those of business travelers. It has evolved into something for everyone and our goal is to prepare every student to access the program should they so choose.

In addition to being able to offer an alternative path to students, there are side benefits to instituting an IB program. Teachers returning from training have new and different ideas. The IB techniques encourage higher level thinking and creative problem solving - a move away from what some call "content regurgitation". Teachers come back from training excited and energized. The IB teaching techniques roll over into non IB classes benefiting all children - those inside and those outside of the program.

In summary, the International Baccalaureate Program is a good and sound teaching practice. Greely High School is in the process of training its personnel, updating its facility, developing the curriculum, and pursuing approval for the program. It is expected to be available by the 2009-2010 school year.

New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Accreditation

This accreditation is a voluntary process that we choose to participate in as a way to monitor the well being of our school as a whole. By taking part in the accreditation process we gain a valuable external lever for change and improvement. There are no state or federal agencies involved, rather committees are comprised of public school central office administrators, building administrators, and classroom and specialist faculty members. We completed a self-study and then a committee visited our school, attended classes, met with students, parents and teachers, and examined student work.

The results were very positive. While we're waiting for the official word, initial indicators are that we have a clear mission statement and the accompanying academic, civic, and social expectations that provide a sound foundation for decision making and the development of appropriate programs and practices. The committee does suggest that we strengthen the link between our goals and assessment. They also note deficient facilities which will be remedied by the recently passed referendum.

While we anticipate receiving accreditation again, we continue to work toward improvement as the NEASC accreditation process is an on-going project that encourages continual assessment and improvement.

V. New & Old Business

a.) We conducted our annual election at this meeting with the following nominees being accepted in the following positions:

Events: 2 year - Brenda Pitcher

1 year – Carin Wilson

Treasurer: 2 year – Kelley Craig

1 year - Val Currier

Volunteer: 2 year – Deb Regan

Secretary: 2 year – Shari Elder

Website: 2 year – Tyra Tarbox

Fundraising: 2 year – Gloria Nicholson

1 year – Becky Sledjeski

GHS Enrichment 2 year – Melissa Skahan

Leaving the following positions open: Publicity 2 year, Co-Chair 2 year, MIW/DRS Enrichment 2 year.

b.) Article 10 Section 2 of the PTO bylaws has been changed to add language that instructs PTO members to make sure they are clear when they are representing the organization and when they are speaking for themselves. For the protection of the PTO and its members this distinction should be made.

VI. Committee Reports

a.) Treasurer: Most grades have used their enrichment money by this point in the year, depleting available funds. As such, our treasurers made us aware of the fact that any expenses for the upcoming Touch-A-Truck event should be considered carefully as there is little cash available. We also decided to make the PTO budget available on the district website so anyone interested can easily access it.

b.) Fundraising: 120 Purchase Plus cards have been sold so far, 200 were given out during teacher appreciation week, and approximately 150 remain. The sales are lower than hoped and it's felt the

reasons are that it is a new fundraiser and it's been difficult to advertise to families at the higher grades (middle school and above). The cards will be on sale at future events including an upcoming concert at the middle school and the Touch-A-Truck festival. Looking forward, steps are already being taken for the Sally Foster fundraiser in the fall with a focus on increasing internet sales and ensuring we are credited for internet sales.

Touch – A – Truck: This was a major event to bring to our community and Gloria and her team have things well in hand. 22 trucks are scheduled at this time with the possibility of several more. All aspects of the event from publicity, to refreshments, to layout and numerous entrance gates are well in hand with the exception of volunteers. Gloria will be putting out additional requests as we near the festival date and it's expected that with more notification we'll be able to procure the 35-40 volunteers needed.

- c.) Events: Teacher Appreciation Week is in full swing. The teachers and staff have been enjoying the spas and later in the week will be receiving other goodies including bagels and coffee at the high and middle schools, gift bags, pens to attach to the lanyards received earlier in the year, and platters of baked goods. Gwen asked for more volunteers to help her and Shari move and maintain the spas. The last big push for this year is to supply the pies offered as prizes at the Memorial Day Race. A request for bakers will go out after Teacher Appreciation Week.
- d.) Website: The website is in great shape. This past month, we were pleased to be able to recognize one of our middle school students, Leah Wilcox, who is representing the state of Maine in the National Vocabulary Bee in Orlando, Florida later this month. It was agreed, that we'd like to continue to use the website as an avenue to congratulate extraordinary achievements in the future.
- e.) Publicity: The reader board will be used to re-advertise the PTO Purchase Plus Card to hopefully boost sales.
- f.) Enrichment: Since our last meeting there has been much enrichment activity. Barry Dana of the Penobscot Nation visited the 3rd Grade; the Kindergarteners went to a presentation of *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* at the Merrill Auditorium; Multiage and 2nd grade are going to the Desert of Maine; 5th grade just went to Boston and has a Funtown Splashtown trip planned; 4th grade and Multiage are going to Crescent Beach. These are just a few examples. Enrichment is really what the PTO is all about and it's nice at the end of the year to see the benefits our children reap from everyone's hard work.
- g.) Newsletter: Pat Carroll and Heather Giandrea who are both leaving their current PTO posts have agreed to job-share the newsletter position.
- h.) Secretary: no update
- i.) Co-Chairs: no update

VII. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.