

MADISON MIDDLE SCHOOL
PTA Meeting Minutes
Jan. 10, 2007

In attendance: Valerie Forshaw, Peter Sullivan, Liz O'Hagan, Kate Donahue, Cindy Katske, Regina Dougherty, Theresa Bulan, Judie Galaty, Lori Hayes-O'Brien, Jill Ellen, Diane Pikikero, Monica Welch, Lynn Cammarota, Cathy Hallas, Kathleen Pekera, Betty Denny, Leigh Ann McCabe, Gayle Lovello, Vicki Tesoro.

Meeting Called to Order at 7:32 pm.

Secretary's Report: Motion made by Monica Welch to dispense with reading of minutes, seconded by Jill Ellen, unanimously accepted. No changes or omissions. Nov. Minutes were approved unanimously. Minutes are available on Madison Middle School website. Thank you mail was read from Robbie Weiner, Peter Sullivan and Valerie Forshaw.

Principal's Report: Mrs. Forshaw

ENRICHMENT:

- **Civil Engineer** – came in Dec for 8th graders – school to career focus – traffic situation and showed kids how to use algebraic equations to determine optimum traffic pattern taking into effect sequencing and timing of light changes. Kids loved it!
- **Program for Grade 8 re: Respect** –THS students came and talked about things like Discrimination, Bullying, Sexual Orientation. It is sometimes more meaningful for kids to hear about these things from other kids rather than adults. Peter Sullivan will be attending CS workshop to further promote these attitudes. In the same vein, the staff met with **Anti-Defamation League** to discuss and promote awareness.

FUTURE EVENTS:

- **Science** for all grades: Motion, Machine, Weather & Chemistry to be given by the Franklin Institute of NJ.
- **Interactive Shakespeare** – April 13 – Romeo & Juliet for 8th graders
- **Poetry Slam** – April 12 & 13 - writer works with 6th grade students in their classes. Val was impressed last year when boys stood up and read their own poetry. Very well done.
- A group of students will be going to **Quinnipiac Univ.** with the counselors to take part in Leadership training.
- **CMT's** will be held for two weeks this year with testing Tues thru Friday, one test per day. Kids will be less stressed and most of their day will be normal routine. March 6 – 9 and 13 – 16. Law changed so that tests can begin earlier than 9 am. This makes it easier for all involved. Mrs. Forshaw

requested that we have our children to school on time, with a hearty breakfast eaten at home and well rested.

BUDGET: Intervention counselor – stayed in the budget process so far. This fits in with the goal of Social & Emotional learning with a two prong approach: Crisis Intervention and being pro-active to avoid crisis situations.

Board approved 4.9% budget increase this year. Decrease in health care costs and fuel – savings of ½ million \$ - will be used to offset next years needs – buy text books. Staffing projected to stay the same at Madison; students projected to be +10.

COPYING: Marcella wanted to express gratitude from the teachers and staff to all the volunteers who have been helping out with copying material. It's a tremendous help to them.

Asst. Principal's Report: Peter Sullivan:

- **Geog. Bee** – took place Friday, Jan 5. Kevin Crossley was the winner.
- **Bio Tech** club is prospering
- **Basketball** : Boys team 6 & 0 Girls: 2 & 4
- **Gingerbread Club** – took place before the holidays.....Boys and girls involved in making these.
- **FCS** – Mrs. Saunders stayed after school three days a week to help some students make gifts for their families. They used extra material and supplies that she had.
- **Knowledge Masters** – came in 1st in CT and 29th in the Nation.
- **Junior National Honor Society** – induction will be Jan. 24
- **Spelling Bee** will be in mid Feb. at Long Hill
- **Armistad** preparation has begun – meetings at Sacred Heart – the students will re-enact the actual trial in late spring.
- **8th Grade Transitioning to HS** has begun. First meetings with parents and 9th Grade counselors took place this week. Chris Brown attended and introduced how he plans to implement the Underage Drinking Study grant. Two prong approach: Community Awareness and Gathering Data. Lena Payne will be helping him with this. He had a sign up sheet available for people interested in helping with a Focus Group. Many more meetings will take place between HS staff and 8 grade students so they will feel very comfortable by Sept.

Staff Rep Report: Liz O'Hagen: **K.A.R.E.** Club went to sing at St. Joseph's Manor for the holidays. They also raised \$6,000 for Toys for Tots. Kids get very involved and feel good about themselves. Shows them that they CAN make a difference in the world.

Treasurer's Report: Theresa Bulan reported that as of 12/31/2006:

Checking:	\$19,872.90
Dedicated Savings:	5,932.51
Reserve Savings:	<u>2,582.60</u>
Total Accounts:	\$28,387.60

Magazine Drive is not meeting expectations. Money will still be trickling in until March. We may need to consider another fund raiser – perhaps just to support Grade 8 activities. Officers will meet on Jan. 19 at 9 am to discuss ideas. It was noted that Hillcrest does the Magazine Drive but also asks families for an up-front donation of approximately \$30/year. Several ideas were offered for additional fund raisers: Wine Tasting/Art Auctions, Auctioning items made by the kids; Flannel pants sale (to be sold at a profit) tied in with some way for the kids to earn a way to wear them to school once a month.

Other Committee Reports:

Holiday Concerts – Cindy Katske reported – concerts were well attended and were phenomenal. Kids have shown a lot of musical growth.

Parent Visitation Day- Judie Galaty - went smoothly. Many thanks to parent volunteers who manned the door. Office personnel as well as many parents were appreciative of this step towards keeping the school safe.

Parent/Teacher Conferences – Liz O'Hagen reported that it went well. All slots filled up. Teachers loved meeting with the parents. Both Liz and Mrs. Forshaw emphatically stressed that they are open to meeting parents any time to keep the lines of communication open. Parents can call, e-mail or request an in person team/teacher meeting at any time not just on conference days.

It was noted by Cathy Hallas that perhaps the signs directing visitors to the Office/Nurse etc. need to be replaced with additional, larger, more visible signs. As it is now, people don't notice the small signs and wander around.

Pig Races – Val Forshaw - went well. Golden Eagle Marching Band came to participate. Madison's percussion section started the race with a drum roll.

Cultural Celebration – Kate reported for Naila Haroon – in display case outside the Library – 1st culture is India. Next one will be Italy. Mr. Schmidt will be introducing phrases in the language in the announcements each day.

TPSLD – Monica Welch & Betty Denny reported – Past meetings were well attended with a lot of new faces. Next workshop - **Jan 18** "Some kids Learn Differently: Related Services & Accommodations in the Classroom" 7 pm Frenchtown Media Center. Panel of OT, PT, Speech, SW and Psychol from several schools. **Feb 8** workshop will be about Transitions. Starts out general and then breaks into four separate groups covering transitions from: pre-K & K to 1, 5 to 6, 8 to 9, 12 to College. **March** workshop will be about IEP and PPTs.

School Beautification: Kathy Pekera reported that two landscapers came and took a look. Soil needs to be tilled. Past plantings have died. No use planting more if soil can't be tilled. Two major issues are starting the project by readying the soil which is expensive and the need for regular watering. Budget was

discussed a little. We can still do the pots which are already paid for. Last year the plants in them lasted quite a long time and looked nice.

Bulletin Boards: Kate, Cindy, Val & Peter commented on the spectacular job Cathy Hallas is doing with the photos. Cathy reported that she wants to include student achievements in addition to school/class events. Val will arrange to have a notice be put in teachers mailboxes once a month reminding them of this needed coverage. Cathy provides disposable cameras to Peter Sullivan who can dispense these as needed.

Father's Club: no news

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Health Fair April 25 – Kate reported - Chaired by Lisa Valenti, Julie Buck and Sally Kenler – Wed. Apr. 25 all day.....Phil Pacelli is faculty rep.

Stations include: Nutrition; Moving; Stress Reduction incl Yoga & Kick Boxing; Sports Injuries; Back Health; Steroids; Breathalyzer; New Alcohol Laws; St. V's – hopefully healthy vs diseased liver & jar of fat; ACR – skin damage machine for face; Got Milk Station; Germ control; Trumbull Counseling Center.

Book Fair Feb 6 & 7: Judy Galaty sent around a sign up sheet for volunteers to sign up for certain time slots. Students usually attend Fair during their class LA periods.

Ice Cream Social Feb 28: Jill Ellen reported that they started contacting volunteers who signed up to help with this event. Still have to coordinate with Lorraine in the cafeteria to make sure she will have everything needed for this.

New Business:

- **THS RENOVATION: Vicki Tesoro** – looking to create a committee of parents to promote this project and secondly to help get parents and citizens out to attend meetings where this issue will be discussed/decided. Jan. 29 Council Meeting will focus on this with Ray Baldwin attending to speak about it. The Committee will hold its first meeting next Thursday at 7:30 pm.

School is now 35 years old and infrastructure is crumbling. Only HS in area that has had nothing done to it. There was an oil leak over the break, and this will cost a great deal of money to clean up. Heating, Cooling and Electrical systems are obsolete. How can our students compete without learning the latest technology. School can't add White Boards or any other computer related equipment since electrical system can't handle it. Our children will be going from Elementary & Middle Schools that have more technology to a HS that is behind the times. This can affect their test scores for college etc.

On the surface the school looks fine in that it is kept clean etc. However, if you tour the building and look more closely, you will see the problems. Tours can be arranged so parents and citizens can see for themselves that this needs to be made a priority by the town.

- **Nominations Committee:** Jill Bohn & Wendy Mezzanotte are the committee. If anyone is interested in being an officer or has any questions about what is involved, they should contact Lori Hayes O'Brien.
- **New Fundraising:** see Treasurer's report for ideas discussed.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:09 p.m.

Next Meetings: March 14, 2007 & May 9, 2007 at 7:30 p.m.

Calendar

Feb 5-7 Book Fair

Feb 19-23 Winter Vacation

Feb 28 Ice Cream Social

March 23 Spring Dance

March 6 – 9 and 13 – 16 CMTs