

## March 2011 PTSA Meeting

The March meeting was called to order at 9:30 by Jen Wastrom. In attendance were: Melanie Glueck-Schloss, Kate Freeman, Mary Decker Bottero, Arlene Darrow, Jen Wastrom, Mary Ellen O'Leary, Lauri Harder, Anne Andrews, Jean B. Tompkins, Margot Abrams, Pam Robey, Maureen Marini, Suzanne Dow, Joan Winter, Paula Schwear, Laura Cirelli, Peggy Palmer, Kristen McCain, Kim Babcock, Joanne Phillips, Fred Lovejoy, Kim Babcock and Leigh Hardesty. From the Administration and Staff: Mr. Tom McMorran and Ms Gina Pin.

Approval of the February minutes (Robey/Palmer).

### OFFICERS REPORTS:

**TREASURER:** Budget sheets are available in the back of the room for review.

1. The Treasurer reported that the PTSA had received a total of \$3,735 in additional donations through the end of February; these donations represent a total of \$1,235 in non-event fundraiser donations plus a single caring committee donation in the amount of \$2,500. Total expenses for the non-event fundraiser including printing and postage were \$550. The Treasurer and President thanked everyone who had contributed for their support.
2. Under the "Race To Nowhere" contract, the PTSA is entitled to recover its deposit of \$500 plus 50% of the proceeds from ticket sales. The \$500 deposit paid is currently shown as an expense under the Parenting Events line item in the budget.
3. The PTSA spent \$266.64 from the hospitality budget for teacher/staff appreciation during the week of the cancelled February break.

### PRESIDENT:

Jen reported that the "Race to Nowhere" screening last month was a big success. Over 300 people attended, approximately 30 of which were teachers. She is "really glad we did it as it started a dialogue which is continuing."

In February 85-90% of Barlow faculty gave up plans for a Feb. break and were here teaching. The PTSA brought in treats to show our appreciation of their commitment. The response was lovely.

The Region 9 Board of Ed and the Administration are currently working on the budget for next year. It is very important that the Budget pass; Jen urged everyone to help get the word out about the vote in May, and to go to the polls in support.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Arts Foundation - Phyllis Wasko: No report

Beautification Committee - Cheryl Frier: No report

Caring Committee: Jean B Tompkins said that her email is down so please call her if you need anything.

Focus Newsletter: Jen Wastrom for Lisa DeVoto said that the deadline for the next Focus is Friday.

Hospitality-Open House: Peggy Palmer tells us that she is all set with the upcoming Transition Dance.

Membership/Buzz Book: Joey Davey, Sharon Gianicchi, Laurie Stone. No report

Mini Grants: Jen for Reghan Diaz said she was so pleased that we were able to fulfill all grant requests. We got a very nice thank you note from Henry DelAngelo regarding the laptop initiative. They were able to purchase 2 laptops which will be a great help.

Post Prom: Jen reported that it will be held on Friday, May 13th here at Barlow. It is a massive undertaking with extraordinary decorating. Anyone who wants to help is welcome. This event is our gift to the students. We do a lot for the teachers but this event is totally for our students. Mary Decker Bottero went over the decorating plans room by room with details about set up and design. Please let her know at [mdbottero@aol.com](mailto:mdbottero@aol.com) if you have anything to donate or would like to lend a hand.

PTA Council: Lauri read report from Kim Breda: By consensus, we will have 2 meetings prior to the budget votes: Wednesday March 16 and Wednesday April 27.

Both meetings will be held in the Barlow Cafeteria Annex, with lunch, from 12:30-2pm. On March 16, Barlow Principal Tom McMorran will attend from 1-1:30 to discuss and answer questions about the Barlow budget, which will likely be finalized the prior evening at the Region 9 BOE meeting.

I will send reminders a few days prior to each meeting as a reminder, and to request RSVPs. Thanks so much for your interest and commitment. Kim Breda

PTSA Listserve: Anne Andrews. No report

Publicity: Jen Wastrom. No report

Reflections: Jen for Claire-Ann Meskers said that we sent three 1st place winners onto the state level in the categories of photography, literature and musical composition. That is very impressive and we hope they go onto the national level.

Senior Luncheon: Peggy Palmer and Kim Ryan. No report

Staff Appreciation Luncheons: Steph Belleveau/Candy Wood McAdam: No report

Transition Advisory Committee: Colleen Joyce gave a quick overview of the job and asked for anyone interested to please sign up.

Volunteer Coordinator: Arlene Darrow and Joan Winter. No report

NEW BUSINESS: None

The PTSA meeting adjourned at 9:55. The next meeting will be **April 12, 2011; Program - THE GAP YEAR: what and why?** An increasingly popular alternative to heading right off to college, a Gap Year is a year to re-charge, to follow a passion, to become immersed in another culture, or to find the love of learning again. Find out what college admissions deans think of the gap year, and how it is becoming an important part of the educational process at colleges and universities. Colleen Joyce, a private Gap Year consultant and mother of a successful Gap Year student, will explain.

TODAY'S PROGRAM: **The College Process Unplugged: Some Candid Moms' Perspectives On That Daunting Journey.**

We had a panel of parents that were briefly introduced by Jen Wastrom who served as moderator. Jen explained that this is a first- if we do it again, we might

change/broaden the panel – but this group was put together with Paula Panos/Guidance’s help...we didn’t want it too big. This process is scary, exhilarating – but above all else, very, very individualized and personal. There are no right or wrong answers here today. This will hopefully give you ideas, maybe some “do’s and “don’ts,” but our overall intention is to say...”Stay Calm. There’s a school/program/place for everyone.”

Jen started the program by asking a question and allowing each panel member to offer info/advice as to how it applied to their child's particular journey (athlete; fine arts/music/theatre/ ED or EA; using a college admissions coach (or not). The questions were as follows:

- 1) Did you use a consultant...why, why not? If so, what roles – specifically – did he/she play in the process?
- 2) How much of a role did the school’s guidance department/athletic department/theater department play in your process?
- 3) How decisive was your child about his/her choices at the beginning? in the middle ? at the end?
- 4) Did your child take the SATs, ACTs or both? Did your child take the Subject Tests (SAT 2s)
- 5) College Touring – about how many did you see, and what specific advice might you offer about that aspect of the process?
- 6) Can you share any insight into “Merit Money?” Academic or Sports scholarships that may have come your way; did your child apply for them, or do they sometimes come at you unprompted?
- 7) What might you do differently, if anything?
- 8) Closing Remarks: Your Personal Statement

A lot of candid and very valuable information was shared with the group and all of our panelists have agreed to have their email address listed in the next *Focus* for any additional questions.

#### HEAD OF SCHOOL REPORT:

Mr. McMorrان listened to the college panel and said that he feels that "basic life skill management will be the bigger problem for our students than academics and please know that it is perfectly okay for your student not to know their four year trajectory before they start college."

He also told us that work on the budget is almost done with an estimated 3.88% increase for Easton and an estimated 1.4% increase for Redding.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauri Harder  
Recording Secretary