

## April 2011 PTSA Meeting

The April meeting was called to order at 9:30 by Jen Wastrom. In attendance were: Melanie Glueck-Schloss, Jen Wastrom, Mary Ellen O'Leary, Lauri Harder, Anne Andrews, Jean B. Tompkins, Pam Robey, Joan Winter, Peggy Palmer, Annemarie Gaffney, Ray McGowan, Colleen Joyce, S. Robbie Peyser, Candy Wood, Jeanne Wendschoch, Cornelia Hurwitz, D. Frank, Elizabeth Melville, Heidi Armster, Heidi Erspamer, Chris Nuebert, Nancy Nelle, Cheryl Frier, Alice Smith, Reghan Diaz and Janine Johnson. From the Administration and Staff: Mr. Tom McMorran, Ms. Paula Panos, and Ms. Anne Kipp.

Approval of the March minutes (Tompkins/Andrews).

### OFFICERS REPORTS:

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

1. The results for the "Non-Event Fundraiser" and "Race to Nowhere" events have been finalized. All donations have been received and expenses paid. Note that \$2,500 of the "Non-Event Fundraiser" donations have been encumbered to the Caring Committee.
2. The "Proposed Expenses" in the right column of the budget sheet have been updated to reflect the actual expenses paid to date. In addition, the reserve amount was increased to \$3,000 to reflect the amount that will be set aside at year end. The "Focus" and "Administration Requests" line items have been removed. Both amounts are at \$0.

This will update allow us to compare actual income in the upper left column with what the PTSA expects to pay in expenses by year end.

3. The PTSA spent \$266.64 from the hospitality budget for teacher/staff appreciation during the week of the cancelled February break. As a result, we request that the budget be replenished with \$50 to meet the needs of the Palooza event.

RESOLVED, that \$50.00 (Fifty Dollars) be and hereby is allocated to the budget line item "Hospitality."

### PRESIDENT:

Jen shared a thank you note that was published in both the Easton and Redding newspapers from the Smuniewski family in appreciation of the beautiful reception organized by Jean B. Tompkins and the Caring Committee. Hats off to Jean again for a job well done.

We give every year to the JBHS Scholarship Fund and the Pam Goodpaster Fund, please consider making a donation.

We are starting to "canvas" for new faces to join the PTSA next year and would love to talk to anyone who may be interested. There are lots of rolls to take on, please go onto the PTSA website to check out job listings or email Jen with any questions.

Post Prom is being planned and is a huge undertaking with about 400 students usually attending. It is a safe place to go after prom and the kids love it. "This event makes Broadway look small."

The Transition Dance which includes 8th graders from both towns, had over 220 participants and this year included kids from area private schools as well.

There are 2 flyers on the back table. The first is from Mickey's Way who will be sponsoring a game at the Ballpark at Harbor Yard in Bridgeport on June 11, 2011. The second is for the Falcon Dash which is an obstacle course fundraiser here at JBHS on May 7th to support the Smuniewski family. If you are interested in either event please take a flyer from the back table or go to the JBHS website for more information.

The ERCC is a group put together to combat risky behavior in our 2 towns and they are now re-visiting their mission and need 5-10 parents to formulate a focus group. This would take approximately 2-3 hours, please see Joan Winter if you would like to get involved.

May 3rd is the Budget Referendum. Please be sure to vote.

#### HEAD OF SCHOOL REPORT

Mr. McMorran briefly told the group about his mother's experience with a gap year she took following her master's degree. He then passed out a handout and went over some details about the 2011-2012 budget.

He started by saying that "We are about the stimulation of the intellect, the cultivation of inquiry, the fostering of thoughtful behavior, the enhancement of a sense of wonder, the quest for truth. (from JBHS Guiding Principle) We hold ourselves to a higher standard than just good numbers."

He reviewed the current and projected enrollment for JBHS as well as a summary of the Region 9 budget and the recent history of Region 9 approved budgets. He explained the operating budget drivers, additions and reductions and also the debt service expenses. All of this information can also be found in a power point presentation on the ER9 website.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Arts Foundation - Phyllis Wasko: No report

Beautification Committee - Cheryl Frier reported that the sanctuary has an addition this year. Matt Goldberg, a senior at JBHS, is doing a Capstone Project and would like to put in a solar powered fountain in a small pond. We gave Matt \$250 to help with his project which is expected to be finished by the end of May.

Caring Committee: Jean B Tompkins was contacted by the senior class who is doing the Falcon Dash on May 7th to benefit the Smuniewski family. The Caring Committee donated \$200 and would like to request people to attend the event, make a donation, or volunteer to help. Please call or email Jean if you are interested.

Focus Newsletter: Lisa DeVoto: Jen Wastrom gave applause for another wonderful issue and said the next one will be the May/June addition.

Hospitality-Open House: Peggy Palmer: No report.

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

Mini Grants: Reghan Diaz: No report

Post Prom: Will be held on Friday, May 13th here at Barlow from 11:30PM-3:00 AM. Candy Wood spoke about the waiver which is important to have completed for any student planning to attend who is under the age of 18. Students do not need to have attended the Prom go to the Post Prom. There will be more interactive events this year and as always they could use help with chaperones, set up and clean up, as well as

food and donations. "This event can't be done without your help and many hands make for light work."

PTA Council: Kim Breda: No report

PTSA Listserve: Anne Andrews. No report

Publicity: Jen Wastrom. No report

Reflections: Claire-Ann Meskers: No report.

Senior Luncheon: Peggy Palmer suggested that they may need junior parents to take over.

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

Transition Advisory Committee: Colleen Joyce said they will be going to both middle schools next month to talk with 8th grade parents and help them navigate concerns about high school. She would like to gather a list of about 20 parents with students in all grades to be available to take calls from parents with questions. Colleen says it's an easy way to give back to your community as the committee has already developed several FAQ Sheets with answers to the most popular questions.

Volunteer Coordinator: Arlene Darrow and Joan Winter. No report

NEW BUSINESS: None

The PTSA meeting adjourned at 10:05. The next meeting will be May, 10 2011; Staying Safe on Prom Night- Police Chief Fuchs and Richard Colangelo, Sr. Assistant State's Attorney, State of Connecticut. Unique challenges that Prom and Post Prom present, including driving rules and other legal issues; sample strategies and scenarios for keeping our kids safe, and trends in alcohol and drug use. We will be soliciting parents' questions ahead of time in order to cover as much info as possible.

Program: THE GAP YEAR: What and why? Presented by Colleen Joyce.

Colleen started by explaining that the Gap Year is simply a break from the academic treadmill that our students have been on for the last 13 years. It is 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. This idea has been very popular in Europe for the past 30 years and with the higher cost of a college degree it is getting more popular in the United States.

Coleen gave the group a handout with information from the Director of Admissions from Harvard and also said that Princeton embraced this idea around 2008 and now has a "Bridge Program" in place for student wishing to take a Gap Year.

Colleen covered several aspects of what the Gap Year may provide for the student by saying they may be more mature and more focused, they may develop a sense of self worth through work or community service and they may develop a sense that they can make a difference. All of this would likely contribute to a much more mature world view when they enter college the following year.

Colleen accepted questions from the group after she covered the approximate costs of different programs and the concern about your child continuing their education after taking a year off. Colleen is happy to answer more questions and can be reached at ctjoyce1@gmail.com

Respectfully submitted,  
Lauri Harder  
Recording Secretary