

September 2009 PTSA Meeting

The September meeting was called to order at 10:29 with an introduction by Jen Wastrom. In attendance were: Susan Dufour, Katrina Esocoff, Andrea Pritchard, Joan Winter, Kate Freeman, Reghan Diaz, Sheila Corr, Elizabeth Melville, Alice Smith, Katy Myers, Laurie Stone, Nancy Fontana, Pinky Han, Sachi Rochlin, Liz Spears, Joey Davey, Suzanne Kramer, Casey Levene, Arlene Darrow, Susan McNeill, Steph Belleveau, Cheryl Frier, Jen Wastrom, Darlene Sims, Mary Ellen O'Leary, Kim Ryan, Susan Kominski, Fran Ronk, Phyllis Rhodes Wasko, Lauri Harder, Kim Breda, Pam Robey, Lisa Devoto, Peggy Palmer, Candy Wood, Anne Andrews, Laurie Bruhin, and Jean B Tompkins. From the Administration and Staff: Mr. Tom McMorrان, Ms. Gina Pin, Ms. Paula Panos, Ms. Anne Kipp, and Mr. Mike Santangeli.

The June 2010 minutes were approved. (Smith/O'Leary)

OFFICERS REPORTS:

TREASURER: Mary Ellen O'Leary went over last years' budget and reviewed a few changes with the group. A motion was made to add \$200 to "PTSA Postage and Supplies," add \$500 to the "Beautification Committee," and add \$200 to the "Caring Committee." (O'Leary/Andrews)

PRESIDENT: Jen welcomed the group and thanked everyone for attending. She said the main goal this year is to have as many people attend the meetings as possible each month but also get through the meetings in 60 minutes or less. She also wanted to "brag a little" about the PTSA at Barlow and all it's great activities and will introduce later in this meeting all the wonderful committee chairs.

HEAD OF SCHOOL REPORT: Mr. McMorrان said we are off to a good start this year. We currently have 985 students with 385 participating in fall athletics. We have a new lab for the music department this year and have opened the sanctuary and are using all our space. We will be holding a dedication in honor of Jean M. Tompkins in April which will last about an hour or so. It is being coordinated with the music department and the Caring Committee. We also continue to work on aligning the elementary and middle school curriculum.

FACULTY REPORT: Mr. Mike Santangeli spoke about a new group called FalcoNation which is "committed to reviving school spirit at Barlow." He went over their fall plans and meeting times. He stressed that this group is wholly "student driven" and welcomes any student that is interested in joining. He gave a handout with details and an article on the back that was published in the Redding Pilot this summer.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Arts Foundation: Jen spoke for Phyllis Wasko and explained that this committee sponsors musical events with the help of Troupe de Jour. They have been raising money to go toward a new piano and they also provided paint for a new mural that was completed over the summer.

Beautification Committee: Cheryl Frier said that the sanctuary is all finished and now has 4 benches and only needs signs on the doors at this point. Please contact her if you would like to help out.

Caring Committee: Jean B Tompkins is the chairperson of this new committee and explained that they have two focuses. The first is "providing meals" for short term for Barlow families in need, which will be identified by administration and approved by family members. The second focus is acknowledging and celebrating milestones in the Barlow Staff's lives by sending a card of congratulations.

Focus Newsletter: Lisa DeVoto was welcomed as our new Editor, she is from Easton. The publication will be coming out every 2 months and her main goal is to publicize events at JBHS and events pertaining to the PTSA. Lisa proposed that we no longer print the Focus which will save us approximately \$1200 in printing cost. A motion was made to no longer print the Focus. (Smith/Palmer) Please send Lisa any pictures or announcements.

Hospitality: Peggy Palmer explained that this committee is responsible for refreshments for Open House, two transition dances and the Barlow Palooza. Open House is scheduled for October 6th, please feel free to donate baked goods or store bought goods.

Membership/Buzz Book: Joey Davey, Sharon Gianicchi, and Laurie Stone have been working hard this summer to enter all the data. Jean Tompkins showed us a mock up of the new and improved Buzz Book which will now be more of an information guide as well as a phone directory. The goal of the enhanced version is to increase membership in the PTSA and will now include sports schedules, information about Naviance and dates from guidance, information about the Writing Center, the Academic Center and more.

Mini-Grants: Reghan Diaz gave an overview of the program. Teachers or student groups are asked to submit proposals to obtain a mini grant and we will discuss each proposal and vote at the December meeting.

Post Prom: Candy Wood McAdam said the Prom will be on Friday, May 13th this year which means that they will have less time to set up. They will most likely need more man power to pull it together in a shorter amount of time. This group will usually start to plan in January. They have a tight budget but please plan to lend a hand because it's also a lot of fun.

PTA Council: Kim Breda is the new President of the PTA Council. Their goal is to keep the lines of communication open between the community, the Easton and Redding schools and also share ideas and information. the first meeting will be late September or early October.

PTSA Listserve: Anne Andrews will be the committee chair and asks you to send her any announcements and she will send them out.

Publicity: Jen Wastrom will be doing again this year.

Reflections: Claire-Ann Meskers is the committee chair and that will be coming up soon.

Senior Luncheon: Peggy Palmer and Kim Ryan are the committee chairs and will give us info as it comes up.

Staff Appreciation Luncheons: Steph Belleveau and Candy Wood McAdam will send out an email closer to the date asking for volunteers to bake desserts or donate water.

Transition Advisory Committee: Colleen Joyce will be the committee chair, for any particular transition questions please contact her at ctjoyce1@gmail.com

Volunteer Coordinator: Arlene Darrow and Joan Winter have gotten the forms from the summer packet and will be setting up committees as soon as possible.

NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

PROGRAM "A Conversation With Tom McMorran, Head of School"

Mr. McMorran started by saying he thought it was fantastic to see so many people wanting to be involved as it's hard to do in high school. He said we have a diverse group of students and the administration and staff is trying to find a way to meet everyone's needs. He thanked Jen and Jean for all their hard work over the summer. Please join the PTSA to get the Buzz Book if only to use to call other parents when your child will be attending a party at their house. He asked the group for questions and we discussed the due date of the Senior Synthesis paper.

Anne Kipp was introduced and explained the reasons behind the due date. We also talked about Community Service and different ways to contribute thru clubs at Barlow. The new Barlow school signs were complimented and the topic of pep rallies was brought up. Mr. McMorran said we have a couple each year and while he would like to have more we just don't have enough "extra" time in our schedule. Mr. McMorran said he has also been working on getting the accomplishments at Joel Barlow out to area colleges. He said they are aware that some of the top level schools seem to be trying to diversify beyond Fairfield County but it also has to do with more students applying for the same number of available admission spots. Each student needs to be well rounded and have several other accomplishments beyond high SAT test scores.

The meeting adjourned at 11:35. The next meeting will be October 12 @ 9:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauri Harder
Recording Secretary