

Joel Barlow High School PTSA

Minutes: Monthly Meeting, September 13, 2011

The September meeting was called to order at 9:37am by Jen Wastrom. The following attended the meeting: Jean Tompkins, Peggy Palmer, Kate Freeman, Mary Ellen O'Leary, Michelle Falcone, Susan Discipio, Paula Schwear, Vicky Zaleski, Susan Selleck, Cheryl Frier, Karen Marchetti, Terri Jennings, Sara Sobel, Jennifer Salkin, Pinky Han, Casey Levene, Susan Kaster, Paul Coppinger, Morag Grassie, Jacquie Wargo, Heidi Armster, Gina Pirone, Chris Kearney, Laura Gibney, Nina Heller, Katrina Esocoff, Carrie Kulawitz, Lauren Cunningham, Lisa DiCamillo, Jamie Prusak, Sharon Giannicchi, Diane Knapp, Lisa Colasante, Joan Winter, Cornelia Hurwitz, Sheila Corr, Alice Smith, Lauren Ashton, Maria Shapiro, Janine Johnson, Hollis Barickman, Paula Panos, Mary Ann Sheehey, Patrick Higgins, Candy Wood McAdam, Suzanne Kramer, Sarah Ota, Stephanie Gregory

Gina Pin introduced the new superintendent of schools Dr. Bernard Josefsberg

Approval of June Minutes: (O'Donnell/Frier)

Officer Reports:

Treasurer-Mary Ellen O'Leary

We are doing really well with about \$9000 in our bank account.

President-Jennifer Wastrom: Our membership numbers are a little lower than last year. We are extending the deadline until Open House on October 5.

Because Irene cancelled the JBHS program, "So now you have a freshman...", the PTSA will be offering a freshman parent program on Tuesday, September 20 at 7pm in the Media Center. The PTSA transition team (high school moms) will be there to answer all your questions. The list of "Frequently Asked Questions" (and the answers) will be distributed.

Program date has changed Now will take place September 27

This year, the PTSA will channel people to oversee the subcommittees by having 4 Vice Presidents:

Kate Freeman, VP of Communications

Peggy Palmer, VP Nominating

Jean Tompkins, VP Ways and Means

Michelle Falcone, VP Cultural Programs

There are 47 members on PTSA Board which is a huge leap in participation! The members are from both Easton and Redding. Jen thanked everyone for stepping up.

Secretary Report-Laurie Bruhin

Copies of the June Minutes are on the PTSA table; monthly minutes will be posted on the website.

VP Reports:

Kate Freeman, VP Communications: October 15 is the Homecoming Dance. Students usually dress very casually for this. Kate suggested that we make this more of a dressy evening with girls wearing dresses and boys in shirt and tie. Kate contacted Coach Brian Swift who heads FalcoNation. It has not received the final approval yet to be changed.

Jean Tompkins, VP Ways and Means: 14 passes were sold for Macy's Shop for a Cause day which was at the end of August. The passes were \$5 each and shoppers received 10% off the majority of Macy's goods. August is a very bad time of year with people on vacation. Irene probably made a negative impact, as well. We don't know if it will be offered to us again but participating in this fundraiser in the fall or pre-holiday could yield big results.

Faculty Report- Assistant Principal Gina Pin: Gina started her report by telling us about how much she appreciates the relationship that the parents and teachers/administration have built together. She thanked us from the bottom of her heart. Especially the delivery of food and drink to the office during the aftermath of Hurricane Irene.

Three changes that are going on in the high school:

1. Students are attending the dances in bigger numbers. This is a good problem to have. We will need to sell tickets in advance where in the past they were sold at the door. We may also have to change the location of the dance to another place in the building. No tickets will be sold at the door.
2. The budget approved a new parallel network to be used throughout the school. In the next few months, it will be up and running. It is the JBHS public network which will allow students to get information in many ways. We need to teach students the proper way to access the information. With this change, the policy about using smart phones, ipads and laptops will updated. Students will be allowed to use these devices when it is advised by the teachers.

Parent Portal will be the place to obtain information about student grades and attendance. The steering committee is meeting tomorrow to plan how to implement this system. It is already being used in other Easton and Redding schools. Our JBHS website is being looked at to be changed to an easier system. It does not have final budget approval yet, but it is very close to having it.

3. During Open House, the "Joel Barlow Marketplace" will be set up in the upper gym. This will be the place to go to support JBHS booster clubs, the senior class and other clubs by buying their merchandise. This is a way the administration can support these important groups. This was just decided yesterday so we need to get the word out. For more information, contact Gina Pin gp@region9ps.org

Brief Committee Reports

Arts Foundation-Peggy Ordway, Sharon Giannicchi, Toni D'Agastino

Beautification Committee-Cheryl Frier, Priscilla Twombly, Casy Levene. Please let them know if you have any ideas to beautify the school, either inside or out.

Caring Committee-Jean Tompkins, Ellen O'Connor. Jean told us that Mary Ann Messe passed away over the summer, mother of senior Rose Fenwick. A donation will be made to the music department in her honor.

Focus Newsletter-Sarah Ota.1st deadline Sept. 27 5pm

Hospitality-Open House-Joanne Sezon, Laura Gibney. The list of volunteers seems short this year. Please volunteer!

Membership/Buzz Book-Joey Davey, Sharon Giannicchi, Lisa Burghardt, Jean Tompkins

Mini Grants-Reghan Diaz

PTA Council- Kim Breda, Mary Dale Lancaster

PTSA Listserve- Alice Smith Jen praised Alice's creative use of Constant Contact.

Publicity- Sarah Ota, Terri Jennings, Lisa Colasante. They are working with the Pilot and the Courier to publicize what is going on at the high school; already arranged coverage of the 9/11 ceremony on 9/12.

Reflections-Cornelia Hurwitz, Jacquie Wargo. This year's theme is "Diversity is..." Encourage your kids to enter.

Staff Appreciation Luncheons-Nancy Fontana, Candy Wood McAdam

Transition Advisory-Amy McKeon, Kate Freeman: Reception set for 9/20 at 7:00 pm.

Volunteer Coordinator-Arlene Darrow, Joan Winter; Joan handed out volunteer lists to committee chairs during the meeting.

New Business- none

Next Meeting: October 11, 2011 in the Media Center

Topic: Naviance

Meeting Adjourned at 10:11am

Guest Speaker: Patrick Higgins, New Dean of Students

Mr. Higgins has over 20 years of teaching experience and was Coordinator of the PSAT, SAT and AP testing at Ridgefield High School. He was hired in July. He discussed many topics which included: senior privileges, tardy policy, student cell phone use, detention for not doing homework and the policy that no student can leave school without prior permission. He emphasized reading the attendance policy discipline section (pages 44-67) of the student handbook and contacting him with any questions.