

**SOCSD PTA Council Minutes**  
**Monday, December 6, 2010**  
**Tappan Zee High School Library**

**Meeting called to order:** 7:05 p.m. by Michelle Jones.

**Attendees:** Michelle Jones, Trish Bakker, Janet Dayson, Kathy Mart, Evan Karzhevsky, Pamela Aguilung, Ron Shapiro, Vicki Caramante, Mary Paul. Guests: Karen Mignone, Jean Clancy, Guy DeVincenzo.

**Minutes:** November 8, 2010 minutes approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Given by Kathy Mart. Council Budget as of December 6, 2010 was presented and approved. No big expenses were incurred; just the bond postcard. We will not host Flu Busters this year. Leo Club will be hosting this event but not with PTA (See attached budget).

**President's Report:** Given by Michelle Jones.

- **President's Meeting:**
  - **Dr. Mitchell Presentation** – gave presentation on video about pressure on our kids; Race to Nowhere?
  - **Teacher Classroom Pullout** – there was a discussion about teacher's being pulled out of the classroom, i.e. frequency, ½ day schedule, etc. Parents asking for more information on this subject. Need to determine if we support ½ day proposal; discussions should be had within each unit. Ron Shapiro inquired if ½ day is scheduled so that it counts as a full school day? Mary Paul advised that we need to determine if we want ½ days or full days and make them effective. Vicki Caramante added that the week of ½ days can often be a waste of time. Michelle advised that there will be a meeting in January with the principals on this topic.
  - **Race to the Top** – Dr. Mitchell will hold a joint PTA Meeting in 2011. Janet Dayson advised that this is an unfunded mandate and will therefore impact the budget. Vicki Caramante added that we have to do this, and will, therefore, have to pay for it. Michelle Jones indicated that this remains underdetermined as to how it will impact the budget.
  - **Tenure List** – Michelle Jones will follow up with Dr. Mitchell since we still have not received this list.
- **Council Meeting Sign-In Sheets** – Michelle Jones passed out copies of Council Meeting Sign-In Sheets for the past two years and asked all members to use this as a tool when making the slate for next year. If you have people on Council and they are not official members, we should be talking to these people and getting them to sign up as members.
- **Bond Vote** – Michelle advised that there was a typo on the bond postcard; it stated "Wednesday" and not "Tuesday". We must have "a lot of eyes" on a piece prior to printing and publication.

**Unit Report – SEPTA:** Not present for report presentation.

**Unit Report – SOCES:** Given by Vicki Caramante.

- **Fundraising Events:**
  - **Comedy Night** – was quite successful with over 170 attendees; 90 prizes were awarded and the comedians were well received. Debi Nelson and her team of volunteers did a great job on this event. It should be noted that planning typically begins one year in advance. Net profit was approximately \$4,500.00
  - **Family Fun Night – Movie Night** – Toy Story 3 will be shown on Friday evening. No entry fee will be charged; snacks will be for sale.
- **After School Enrichment Program (ASEP)**– will be commencing during the week of January 24, 2011 for a six-week duration; established companies only (with proper insurance credentials) will be running the classes; prices will vary. Rec Games is still under review. The entire program may take a different structure next year. A discussion ensued about whether or not we should create a Best Practices document to put forth a policy on decorum. Trish Bakker suggested we draft, publish, and use a Code of Conduct for all our PTA leadership members. It would be read and signed by each leadership member. It was further suggested that we take this idea to the respective units for further discussion about developing a policy or statement. It would reflect well upon the PTA as a whole. Council would then take a vote on putting forth this policy for each unit. The goal of this policy would be to establish accountability for actions when acting on behalf of the PTA. It would establish a code of morals/ethics. Vicki recommended that we also review the NYS PTA Resource Guide for additional guidance.
- **Membership** – 453 as of December 6; 60 staff members and 2 additional waiting in TZE mailbox. Paul Whalen signed up. We also gave all members a car magnet with their paid membership.
- **Welcome Back Breakfast** – we hosted two of these events; Kristan Bridges spoke at TZE.
- **Executive Board Meeting** – we will be hosting another Executive Board Meeting in January. We will be sitting down with our Committee Chairs in January to plan for next year.
- **Nominating Committee** – three VPs are in place.
- **General Meeting** – will be held on Wednesday, December 8 at WOS. The principals are on the agenda to review the CTP4 & Fountas and Pinell testing results and how they will be utilized.

**Unit Report – SOMS:** Given by Evan Karzhevsky.

- **Next Meeting** – to be held on December 13, 2010.
- **Character Education Meeting** – Alice, Evan & Chip Foley will be bringing this to the District; Surveys will be developed and sent to students and parents on bullying to determine further programming needs.
- **School Store** – Clothing Sale is under way; drawstring bag is a big seller; it is on the District website. Kathy and Bonnie will be running the dances for the rest of the school year.
- **Nominating Committee** – no answers as of yet; will be replacing all positions, including Lisa Buroso.
- **Membership** – 290 as of December 6; 50-60 staff members.
- **Founder’s Day Nominating Committee** – Bonnie Bello is putting this together for the unit.

**Unit Report – TZHS:** Given by Mary Paul.

- **Joe Ehrman Presentation** – received a poor showing on presentation on cycle of men and women and the stereotypes. Girls (bulimia, etc.); 25 students attended and did have good staff showing.
- **Membership** – Jennifer Amos working to get teacher memberships. She has done all possible to help support this effort.
- **Character Education** – 67 kids participating in the Heros & Cool Kids Program; 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders are currently participating in training; they will be mentoring 6<sup>th</sup> graders.
- **School Photography** – school photos are currently linked to the yearbook; Life Touch has had customer service issues and we have been unhappy with them. Trish Bakker indicated that Life Touch is linked to all units and yearbooks. Vicki Caramante advised that we should sit down with several photography companies and look at different options. We should look at by unit, different needs of each unit, etc.

**Other Business** – conducted by Michelle Jones.

- **Bylaws** – should be sent to Michelle Jones.
- **Founder’s Day Nominating Committee** – should have 1-2 nominees; 15 online and 5 people have stated that they did not want to speak or make a presentation; we should put blast together; if no one makes a presentation, then PTA Council will make the presentation. Trish Bakker inquired if we can accept nominations after the holiday break? Michelle Jones advised that this most likely would not be possible. She also indicated that 16 is a good number of nominees.
- **Janet O’Shea Presentation** – will be given on January 18<sup>th</sup> on Depression for SOMS and TZHS. This presentation is schedule to be held at TZHS. Ms. O’Shea is the author of the manual for teen suicide in Rockland County. Michelle indicated that we need to put all these items on the calendar and plan out; the earlier people know about these events, the better attended they will be.
- **Arts in Education** – Vicki Caramante advised that NYS has tightened up the guidelines. Evan added that we need to start working with administration. Michelle added it was always a science co-cert. Evan further stated that it would be much easier for us to not go through BOCES, however, we will not get grants if we don’t go through them. Evan further indicated that this is a lot of work. Michelle advised that when she did this, there was a meeting and you go through the process, get the contracts, and go back to get if you need more. STAR is an organization that can help with assemblies. No one is going from our District; recommended that we go online and see all the programs. Michelle further recommended that we go through the BOCES business office for contracts, have a meeting at the beginning of the year for planning. Evan advised that we are required to write long essays/justifications and then we were denied. Michelle again recommended that we reach out to BOCES and get the STAR information. Vicki added that the State Education Department advised that we were not doing our submissions properly; \$31,500 for our entire District; SOCES pays half; STAR planning is done in June. Michelle also advised that STAR has a List Serv and a website.
- **Nominating Committee** – Michelle advised that we need a Council Member; Trish Bakker agreed to represent Council. A slate was put forth: Executive Board – Trish Bakker; SOCES – Ron Shapiro; SOMS – Anne Marie Kugelman; TZHS – Jane Anne Casey; SEPTA – Orli Irgang. Vicki Caramante put forth a motion to accept the slate. Approved by all.

- **Founder’s Day Update** – Seta Tunell was not present; Michelle Jones gave a brief report. There was a meeting held right before this Council Meeting. All items are on-track. Tappan Fire Department will once again do the honor guard; High School student will sing the Star Spangled Banner; SOCES student will lead the Pledge of Allegiance; Nominations are continuing to come in.

**New Business:**

- **“Just Between Friends” Website Demo/Presentation** – given by Jean Clancy. Jean provided a thorough overview/demo of how SOCES is currently utilizing this website program to manage unit membership; the service provides full data management, importation, no user fees, all data in one place, ease of use, good customer service, support and online guidance. All members agreed this is a very valuable tool to manage membership data. TZHS unit will be transitioning to this program in the near future.
- **Guy DeVincenzo Presentation** – Guy joined the meeting as a guest representing the Board of Education. Guy advised that District leadership and PTA Council should be more involved in long-range planning activities. He believes it is a very important partnership between home and school. Guy also indicated that he does not typically hear all the details so he was pleased to join this meeting and hear all what is going on at this level.

Vicki advised Guy that the Saturday workshops that were done in the past were very valuable; she also advised that most people with small children don’t come out to the regular BOE Meetings unless there is an important issue on the agenda. Guy advised that PTA Leadership Reports should definitely be provided at BOE Meetings.

Michelle talked about Race to the Top and advised Guy that while the District is cutting programs, we as a District must find the funds to pay for the training for this program.

Guy advised that we must discuss this at budget time; must ask not to cut certain things; we must come and complain when important issues must be discussed. We should conduct surveys to gather information and presentation it to the Board; we need to focus on accomplishing more at Leadership Meetings, i.e. how can we partner better?

Michelle stated that the goal is to get more feedback and information to the Board; we need to do more, make more of an effort to come together and work as partners.

- **Code of Conduct Policy** – as indicated above under the ASEP information section, we have agreed as Council that we should create and have “on-hand” a Code of Conduct Policy. For the next meeting on January 11, we will discuss the following topics: Code of Conduct and Insurance. Each unit will bring Committee Chairs to hear the discussion on these topics. Michelle Jones motioned to create a Code of Conduct Policy. Vicki Caramante seconded the motion. A unanimous vote was taken in favor.

During our next meeting, Vicki Caramante will explain how committees are now formed, Chair roles, etc.

- Ann Marie Uhl, Board of Education Member, will be our Board representative at the January 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- SEPTA – Michelle indicated that SEPTA has asked for a waiver for insurance. The question was raised as to whether SEPTA should be a committee on SOCS D Council?

Michelle Jones motioned to adjourn meeting at 9:10 p.m. Agreed by all. Meeting adjourned.

Pamela Aguilin  
SOCS D PTA Council Secretary  
Date Approved: January 10, 2011