

**SOCSD PTA Council Minutes**  
**Monday, April 4, 2011**  
**Tappan Zee High School Library**

**Meeting called to order:** 7:10 p.m. by Michelle Jones.

**Attendees:** Michelle Jones, Kathy Mart, Pamela Aguilin, Ron Shapiro, Trish Bakker, Orli Irgang, Micki Leader, Mary Paul, Vicki Caramante, Marcela Stern, Jane Anne Casey, Moira Byrnes, Karen Mignone, Jean Dennehy, Anne Marie Kugelman, Pat Waffenschmidt. Guest: Judy Hurban.

**Minutes:** March 7, 2011 minutes approved (with minor revisions).

**Treasurer's Report:** Given by Kathy Mart. Council spent \$300 on postcards, flowers (for Denise Jensen), and Project Graduation donation. Funds will also be set aside for Year-End Celebration on June 6. Michelle Jones added that Council will pay for the pins. (see attached budget for full details).

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

- **Board of Education Budget Retreat** – a second retreat is scheduled for May 4th since the budget was reported during the first retreat.
- **Human Resources Position** – new candidate will be selected on May 4th.
- **Academic Competitions (National History Day, Science Olympiads)** – the past several years there has been a Mentor Program for Science Research. This program is very limited now due to the explanation that there was a lack of interest and not enough students participating. There will be a Curriculum Council Meeting this Thursday, April 7, to discuss this program. Units should encourage students to participate and should ask parents with students who did participate to step up and advise Dr. Mitchell about the value of this program. If a student is discouraged, encourage parents to speak up and attend the Curriculum Council Meeting.
- **Staff Changes Due to Budget Cuts** – ECP Program (three year old students) will be run by contractor and four year old program will be run by the District. Jeannie Carr will split time  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$ . Dr. Mitchell is currently moving forward on three year old program to go through the contracting process. Vicki shared that there are currently approximately 50 students in all of ECP. Mary Paul advised that approx. 21 FTEs are being lost in all SOCSD; Kathy Mart added that the breakdown is 13 teachers, 6 assistants,  $\frac{1}{2}$  administrative position, and .5 non-instructional. TZHS will lose one full-time position.

**Unit Report – SEPTA (given by Orli Irgang)**

- Next meeting will be held May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Unit Report – SOCES (given by Vicki Caramante)**

- Next meeting will be held Wednesday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 a.m. at Cottage Lane
- Nominating Committee – has slate ready to be presented on April 13 and voted on May 11.
- We the People Multi-Cultural Day – was a great event; 21 countries were represented. Sheila Chin did a wonderful job and it was very well-attended. Three or four SOCES teachers attended this year.
- TZE Garden – with Pat Waffenschmidt's assistance, the garden has been passed on to a new set of volunteers. WOS is also planting beds; one class/grade is piloting the program. The gardens will be used in different ways to enrich the students.
- Publishing Center – WOS and TZE are piloting new programs. WOS Press is using MS Publisher, a program already included in the MS Office Suite, not in an online forum. Over the past few years, Class Moms coordinating the publishing work, which was done by parent volunteers on a class-by-class basis with student pull-out for editing, writing, etc. This year, we are piloting new technology where the parents can access the templates and materials online. Anne Kugelman inquired if this would still require parents to step-up to participate. Vicki advised that principals and teachers are still very supportive of this program.

- SOCES Website – Jean Dennehy commented that the SOCES website is very well done. Vicki advised that Daniela Hoag created and helps maintain this website with the Corresponding Secretary.

**Unit Report – SOMS (given by Moira Byrnes)**

- No March meeting; Next meeting schedule for April 12th at 7:30 p.m.
- Slate is ready – two Vice Presidents, one Treasurer, one Recording Secretary, one Corresponding Secretary are in place. President position still open. Michelle advised that the slate should be voted upon and they should continue to look for someone to fill the President position. Procedurally, the unit should move forward without a President in place and that the two Vice Presidents should fulfill those duties until a President is found.
- Spring Party – was held April 1<sup>st</sup> – 70-80 kids; lower attendance due to conflict with St. Catherine's Fashion Show on the same evening.
- Musical "*Music Man*" will be presented this coming weekend.

**Unit Report – TZHS (given by Mary Paul/Trish Bakker)**

- Janet O'Shea Presentation was fairly well-attended; felt she did not "dig deep enough".
- Fundraiser Dinner – will be held tomorrow evening at Del Arte Restaurant
- Blood Drive – was a great success; double the amount of students donated than expected. Melissa spoke to students.
- Photographer Selection Process – still ongoing; we are looking at Coffee Pond Photography.
- SEPTA Update – our unit discussed the SEPTA topic and are in favor of a special education committee at the PTA level.
- Nominating Committee – currently one position open. Slate is ready for April 11th.
- Project Graduation – is up and running; we are getting volunteers; this is a great event to volunteer for middle schoolers; running Thursday, 11:00 p.m. to Friday, 5:00 p.m. Trish Bakker advised that a great response has been received from the business community for donations, etc.

**Other Business:**

- **Discussion and Vote: Committee for Special Education on Council** – Michelle advised that 20 minutes has been allotted on the agenda for this topic (15 minutes for discussion and 5 minutes for voting).
  - Micki Leader recapped from the last Council Meeting and advised that SEPTA has been struggling for the last six years and that the amount of work within the unit is overwhelming. There are presently 36 members, which is less than two percent of families that are reached out to via the annual mailing (cost is approximately \$600 for this mailing). Response only reaped only 14 additional memberships. She further advised that it is very costly to operate as a PTA unit to manage treasury, membership and other duties.
  - Orli stated that she believes it is better for SEPTA to function under Council because it would be work if SEPTA was to function under three separate units. She believes that as a member unit of Council they would be better able to reach their members.
  - Marcela stated that SEPTA has failed to attract or get volunteers to do the work for SEPTA; this is a resource for parents but it very difficult to get them to step up and help with the unit work. She further shared that she believed that structuring SEPTA as a sub-committee under Council will give the unit access to the support it needs.
  - Micki stated that they have been very successful in securing good speakers.
  - Michelle Jones advised that each Council member would be given two minutes to state their opinion without interruption. The following was put forth by each member:
    - Trish Bakker – shared her opinion that SEPTA has not been successful as a separate unit. She believes that SEPTA should function as a PTA unit at each level to get the message out to parents and that it would be easier to reach parent at each level. She also stated that SEPTA is not attracting parents as a resource and that it's her belief that SEPTA is better as the unit level.
    - Anne Marie Kugelman – passed on commenting at this time.

- Kathy Mart – if SEPTA is not working at the present, how can you be successful by reaching out through Council?
- Pat Waffenschmidt – stated she is on-board with SEPTA at each level broken down by age bracket, which would be much for beneficial.
- Ron Shapiro – supportive of SEPTA but cannot see how it could be done at the Council level?
- Karen Mignone – chose to pass on comments at this time.
- Pamela Aguilung – shared the success that the Gifted and Talented Committee has recognized with a structural model at each level, particularly with regard to leveraging resources and support of SOCES & SOMS. Offered to help SEPTA by sharing information, resources, support, etc.
- Mary Paul – stated that SEPTA is not working in the present form and that something else is needed; however, parents don't come to Council for help; being on Council would "be missing the personal touch".
- Vicki Caramante – my job is to be certain that each unit will have a successful committee; as SOCES President, I am committed to seeing that the special education population is served.
- Moira Byrnes – I can't imagine how to get it all done; it's a huge hurdle as a separate group but if attached to individual units, you will have closer contact with parents in need. At the SOMS level, we will ensure that SEPTA will always have time on the monthly agenda.
- Jane Anne Casey – voted against SEPTA at the Council level when first proposed; we need to go back to what works; make use of technology; go to the parents at the level that they need you; reach the parents in need and don't worry about the actual structure.
- Jean Dennehy – I believe SEPTA will be more beneficial as a sub-committee under each unit. You will be able to hear more on a global level; SEPTA will have a lot more without a lot of administrative pressures.
- Micki Leader – Micki advised that she has a son with special needs and that she has been part of this committee for ten years and there have never been enough people to do the work; she believes it makes sense to put SEPTA under Council.
- Judy Hurban – stated she has been on the SEPTA Board; if SEPTA were to dissolve, then she believes it would be best to put SEPTA committee at each level.
- Orli Irgang – made a motion for SEPTA to be a committee on Council. Micki Leader seconded the motion; all other Council members voted against motion; motion denied and does not carry.
- Michelle Jones – recommends that member of the Executive Committee should discuss.
- Moira Byrnes – confirmed that Council has voted not to bring on SEPTA to Council.
- Michelle Jones – advised that SEPTA needs to decide if they will dissolve or not.
- **Nomination Committee Report** – Ron Shapiro reported that the slate is signed with the exception of the President level; the committee will continue to look to fill this position (see attached). Michelle Jones advised that Council will vote on the slate at next month's meeting as follows:
  - President - Open
  - Vice President – Jean Dennehy
  - Vice President – Gail Rogo
  - Treasurer – Lisa Connelly
  - Recording Secretary – Christine Brew-Mitchell
  - Corresponding Secretary – Patricia Stark

Michelle suggested that units are in touch with Council Vice Presidents about planning 2011-2012 meeting dates if no President is in place.

- **K-12 PTA Partnership Initiative on Drugs & Alcohol in SOCS D Update** – Mary Paul advised that an email was sent out to see what is being done; policing area; kids congregating; more parents are aware.
- **Budget Card Copy** – Michelle advised that the budget card copy is not yet available; Michelle will send out for vote at next Council Meeting on May 2, 6:30 p.m. The agenda will be to vote on slate and the postcard. Every unit should go back and advise that budget is being voted on this Thursday, April 7th. Michelle agreed to bring the postcard draft to the May 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.
- **PTA Unit Best Practices** – Michelle asked each unit to bring “Best Practices” to share at the next Council Meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 9:00 p.m.

Pamela Aguilin  
SOCS D PTA Council Secretary  
Date Approved: May 2, 2011