

SOMS PTA MINUTES September 15, 2009

Meeting came to order at 7:30pm.

Bonnie Bello/Mary Riker approved minutes of last meeting.

Principal's Report – Karen Tesik

- Mrs. Tesik began by thanking the PTA for being so welcoming in her 1st days in the district. She is very excited about being here and working with our kids.
- Thanked PTA for Staff Breakfast on September 3rd after they returned from the Superintendent's conference in the high school.
- Beginning with their 1st homeroom class, students were introduced to “the 3 B's of SOMS”...
 - Be respectful
 - Be responsible
 - Be prepared

This is the “theme” of SOMS and will be communicated to the students often through posters, a school banner and classroom discussion. All behavior discussions with students will highlight this theme.

- Opening day went well, lots of coverage in the hallways to assist wayward 6th graders. Parent drop-off and buses seem to be working smoothly.
- H1N1 – School Nurse spoke to each class assembly about steps to take to avoid spreading/catching germs. If student comes to nurse and has fever, they will be given a mask to wear for the remainder of the day.
- New cafeteria vendor and food seems to be a big hit with the students.
- Recess
 - The basketball hoop purchased by PTA is not installed yet. Mrs. Tesik to follow up with facilities.
 - There have been some issues with bees. Exterminator will be brought in to find/remove hives.
- Security
 - There will be cameras installed throughout the building that authorized members of the administration will be able to access through any internet connection. Access is controlled and only authorized people will be able to view.
 - Effective immediately, all visitors to the building will need to show a driver's license or other official photo ID.
- If a student forgets something at home that they must have, parents can bring it to the principal's office. Student's name and homeroom should be on it. If student needs it before their lunch period they will be called to the office to pick it up; if not needed until after lunch, items will be collected and brought to the cafeteria and student will be called up to pick it up.
- Assemblies – kicking off October as “The Month of the Young Adolescent” (MOYA)

October is Month of the Young Adolescent, an annual international collaborative effort of education, health, and youth-oriented organizations. Initiated by National Middle School Association (NMSA), Month of the Young Adolescent brings together a wide range of organizations to focus on the needs of this important age range, ages 10 to 15. The key messages for the celebration are

- The importance of parents being knowledgeable about young adolescents and being actively involved in their lives;
- The understanding that healthy bodies plus healthy minds equal healthy young adolescents;
- The realization that the education young adolescents experience during this formative period of life will, in large measure, determine the future for all citizens; and
- The knowledge that every young adolescent should have the opportunity to pursue his or her dreams and aspirations, and post-secondary education should be a possibility for all.

Also entails encouraging service to community in this age group so Mrs. Tesik will be “Locked Up” for MDA and NJHS and all other school clubs will be encouraged to become involved.

Check out website for more information on MOYA.
<http://www.nmsa.org/moya/>.

Student Support Report – Dan Sullivan

- Thanked PTA for last year’s 8th grade trip breakfast.
- Kicking off fund raising for this year’s 8th grade with 1st assembly.
- Pool is open and swimming cycles during PE will start on 10/05. Each class will be told when their cycle will start.
 - Ron Shapiro raised concern about appropriate supervision in the locker rooms and was assured that supervision is in place.
- Late buses for clubs and office hours are on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and will leave the school at 3:30pm. There is a bus for each “area” of the school district.

Treasurer’s Report – Lisa Connolly

- Preliminary budget reviewed, adjustments suggested and approved, will be presented again at next meeting for final approval.
- Lisa has created an expense re-imburement form and requested that it be used going forward. She will work to have it posted on the website.

Board of Ed Meeting Report – Ron Shapiro

- District has received a Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) grant. This will initially be used to expand the foreign language offering in the high school with a focus on languages considered “critical” to the security of the United States – Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Russian and languages in the Indic, Iranian and Turkic families – possible expansion to middle school will be looked at.
- Grant will also provide a district wide “license” to Rosetta Stone website for use by all members of the community. More to come.

Special Events – Joy Ruggiero

- 6th Grade Welcome Social is Friday, September 25th.
 - Need parent volunteers to sell tickets - \$5 each – at 6th grade lunch on _____
 - Mr. Sullivan will organize faculty volunteers for “inside” the event.
 - Need parent volunteers for set-up, refreshment tables, hall monitors and clean up.
- Fall Party for all grades is Friday, October 23rd ...more to come.

Reflections – Lenora Mesibov

- This year’s theme is “Beauty Is...”
- Registration deadline – 09/29
- Submission deadline – 11/02

In addition, there is a National PTA Theme Contest that Lenora will be spearheading in the school.

Membership Report – Lisa Borusso

- 192 members as of 9/14/09
 - 60 staff members (largest number we know of, Lisa thanked Mrs. Tesik for encouraging the staff to join.)
 - 132 parents
- Ideas to increase membership:
 - Multiple tables at meet the teacher nights scattered around the school.
 - Need parent volunteers to man tables.
 - Forms at each PTA event sponsored throughout the year.
 - Non-member volunteers are given a “temporary membership” that we can use to gather info and then reach out to ask them to join.

President’s Report – Evan Karzhevsky

- Gift Committee
 - PTA wants to begin using accumulated funds to give a gift to the school twice a year
 - Faculty and staff would be asked to submit a “gift request” for something that they would like to have that would benefit the students in the school.
 - Gift committee will create a process for the submission, review and granting of requests.
 - Motion to establish committee was made by Moira Byrnes and seconded by Amy Bianco.
 - Michelle Jones volunteered to chair the committee and Moira Byrnes, Maureen Henry, Amy Bianco and Cynthia Scherf volunteered to serve on the committee.
 - Mrs. Tesik requested that process require that she review all requests before they are submitted to the Committee.
- SOMS Website
 - PTA would like to enhance our presence on the website.

- Mrs. Tesik volunteered to reach out the webmaster and incorporate the PTA page into her SOMS web pages.
- Kathy Mercedes volunteered to be the liaison on the PTA side.
- Teacher Liaison
 - To continue to enhance faculty participation in the PTA, the position of Teacher Liaison was suggested. Teacher Liaison would attend PTA meetings, be a part of the discussions and act as the voice of the faculty to the PTA and the voice of the PTA to the faculty.
 - Mrs. Tesik said there was at least one teacher interested and she would follow up.
 - It was suggested that maybe there could be a team of people who could rotate attendance at the meetings.
- Performing Arts Committee
 - Andrea Pecorino suggested formation of a committee that would support and enhance the faculty and administration for the various student performances that occur during the school year.
 - Mrs. Tesik supported the idea.
 - Motion to establish committee was made by Moira Byrnes and seconded by Anne Marie Kugelman.
 - Andrea Pecorino volunteered to chair and Lenora Mesibov and Evan Karzhevsky volunteered to serve on the committee.
- Condition of Auditorium facilities, lights and sound system
 - Concerns were raised about
 - Condition of the stage – floor needs repair; Mrs. Tesik will consult with facilities.
 - Sound and lighting systems – work well for every day needs for student assemblies, etc. Do not currently meet needs when there is a play or musical. Replacement costs are prohibitive. Research into possible modifications or enhancements needs to be done.

Motion to adjourn was made by Christine Zinna and seconded by Lisa Borusso at 9pm.