

Minutes: EGRPS Middle School PTSA

September 25, 2007

9:00 am

Welcome & Introductions

Andi Allen, President

Administrative Reports

Peter Stuursma, Principal

Peter deferred his report to later in the meeting, then introduced the Guidance Office Team: Steve Seth, Lisa Healey, Linda Rupke. The three counselors explained the division of work in the MS Guidance Office, with Steve being responsible for students whose needs are mandated, and Lisa and Linda having responsibility for the rest of the student population.

Steve also directs the STARS program for 6th Grade boys and 8th Grade mentors (modeled after the GEARS program) and explained about an additional mentoring program involving mentors from the High School for students in need of such guidance, for social or academic purposes. GEARS/STARS will begin later this fall, possibly in November. He noted that 6th grade participation *is not required* in order to participate as an 8th grade mentor. He needs 8th grade leaders.

Linda regards “prevention” as her personal passion in counseling, including in the area of preventing substance abuse. Linda discussed the particular challenges in choosing 8th grade mentors for GEARS—when even the mentors are at a developmental age when they need guidance themselves, and when the relationship between 6th and 8th grade girls is already fraught with difficulty. She welcomes any feedback on this issue. Linda thanks the Committee for the opportunity to go to Washington DC to work with Ros Wiseman. Linda also noted that anxiety is common for all students in MS and that she is available at any time.

Lisa reminded us about the MEAPS schedule, (8:00 – 10:00 block followed by a condensed full-day schedule), that not every grade has all content areas, and that the calendar will be put on the web site.

Peter then introduced Mark Linder, our new Police-School Liaison Officer.

Mark is replacing Ryan Holmes after he completed a three-year term. He is from River Forest, Illinois where he was a patrol officer and also had responsibility with juveniles. His task is to investigate crimes on school property, including at St Stephen’s and to act as a police resource for all the schools. His philosophy is to be present in the schools at lunchtime so that the students are aware of him. Chief Harold wants greater police presence at all the schools and he and Mark have been working with the principals to plan for this. Mark regards constant presence as a positive; the bike police will be around too. In response to a question, Mark indicated that he is skilled in watching for juvenile drug or alcohol use. In response to another question, Mark says he will be patrolling the parking garage in Gaslight Village as well.

Presentation on Bond Proposal

Kevin Phillips offered a presentation on the upcoming Bond Proposal.

Kevin explained the details of the proposal, including Turf Replacement (with establishment of a fund for future maintenance), construction of a Field Events Center (track storage, improved plaza, restroom, team rooms, concession, improved handicapped access, track scoreboard and sound system), an addition to the High School athletic facility areas (training/sports med room, pool bleacher expansion, auxiliary gym—only four of surrounding 75 high schools do not have a 2nd gymnasium), football field lighting improvements, press box with HC access, and restrooms at the Canepa tennis facility.

Kevin reported that the improvements will impact 4000 athletes per year, will improve practice timetables, will allow for better gym use, including for phys ed classes. They expect to complete the projects by Fall 2009. They have removed the proposal for turfing the practice field.

Tax implications: no increase in millage rate level—7.95 mills. The proposal would extend the existing millage 5 years. The School Board is very enthused and encourages a yes vote, saying the plan is good for our students, good for real estate, can take advantage of good % rates for construction and a good bidding environment among contractors now. Whether we pass it or not, the millage stays the same.

There is a Community Forum on 10/23 at the PAC at 7:30 pm.

Student Council Representative

Emma Hall, Student Council President

Emma explained about a new idea for students, the Spirit Can, and also that the first dance is on Friday from 4:30-6:30, and that plans are in place for Homecoming Week, with fun dress-up days for all.

Teacher Report

Kris Bratlie

Kris had no items to report at this time; please contact her with any concerns or items you'd like her to share.

Administrative Reports, continued

Peter asked everyone to send any topics of interest for PTSA meetings to Andi. He thanked the Exec Board and all volunteers for the Open House. He also thanked Diane Wood of the Garden Club. He reported about the Board of Education Retreat with the Principals of each school. They discussed academic improvement, and improvement of the school environment, always wanting to make the building work better for teachers and students.

Peter reported that we have increased some class opportunities, with the addition of Mr. Bier in the band department. They are planning to add another science teacher for the upcoming 5th grade class, which is large. He discussed communications (the newsletter) and technology in the school building, professional development needs for the teachers, particularly with the new technology, and emphasized the need for building cultural diversity opportunities.

Committee and Liaison Reports

Tara Clappison and Sarah Sweeney, Magazine Sale

Prize portion of the sale is now over. We may continue buying magazines all year and still get the 40% credit for the school. Prices are as good as most renewal offers that come directly from the magazine publishers. Encourage people to throw these away and to renew through the school magazine sale web site. They are working on an e-mail to send out, explaining this service to the community. Internet orders already at 2 times last year's amount.

There is a link on the main EGRMS page to [QSP](#).

We hold the sale right away in the school year to get ahead of other organizations—overall the committee thinks this is a plus even though it's a hectic time of year.

The committee thanks Peter for his enthusiasm as Principal and for motivating the students.

Winnie Brinks, Legislative Committee

Winnie indicated that new reps are still needed on this committee, and people willing to work on sending out e-mails regarding legislative updates. The purpose of those is to improve awareness of current legislative initiatives that impact our schools, to give information via Project Grass Roots to each school building, and to establish relationships with our representatives, *who are not educators and who need input from parents in the system*. If you helped with these e-mails, you'd be asked to get the word out and to contact legislators with your opinions. Talking points and suggested formats are provided.

Winnie reminded us of the link on the EGRMS main web page under [DISTRICT/LEG LINKS](#). Information is posted there about our legislators, the Leg Cmte meeting schedule, etc.

Winnie reported on the potential state government shut-down and what that would mean for EGR schools. We have contingency plans in place.

Old Business

May 2007 minutes will be available for review and approval at the next meeting.

New Business

We need ongoing help, to cover paperback books that were donated to the Media Center.

Language Program events are being planned: this is the first year that our graduates will have studied Spanish K-12.

Upcoming Membership Meetings

Tuesday, October 30, 7:00 pm in the Media Center. Note the evening time.

Tuesday, November 27, 9:00 am in the Media Center. Join us for coffee at 8:45.

No meeting in December.

Respectfully submitted by Jodi MacLean, Recording Secretary

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