

PTSA MINUTES
February 16, 2007

Attendance: Ruth Kabel, Janice Kagenski, Julie Forgaard, Jennifer Starr, Kristen Berry, Jill Russell, Susan Holroyd, Mary Kay James, Janis Louzek, Lynn Goldberg, Kara Tulley, Regina Kozsan, Merle Carrus, Janet Listowich, Tammy Campbell, Karen Roberts, Pat Goyette (17)

1. Introductions: The meeting was called to order at 8:40.
2. Review of Previous Minutes: Janet Listowich moved, Kristen Berry seconded, and all voted to approve the minutes from January.
3. Principal's Report: Pat Goyette requested feedback from parents regarding early dismissal v. delayed start. With mixed feedback, most preferred the early release schedule. Early release pros included consistent morning routines, students having time to get a "jump" on the next day's homework, increased time to ski, and a calmer atmosphere in the school. Delayed start pros allow students to "sleep in" and have a more leisurely start to the day. Both systems have some degree of confusion as to start/end times which could be eased by including specific times on the school calendar.

Professional Development: The DOE will be doing an onsite visit 3/21 and 22. A 12-person committee will tour.

A grant-funded consultant, Heidi Hayes Jacobs, offered feedback and assistance to teachers regarding curriculum mapping. Her comments were direct, and she was insistent on excellence across departments. Mapping is a system which has replaced the lesson plan books of old, and involves monthly planning, review, and coordination among teachers to ensure all key components of subject areas are covered with each student regardless of team affiliation. Complementary software will be used, which is best when it encompasses the entire K-12 spectrum, but beginning at the Middle School level and expanding outward both directions to the High School and Elementary levels is a worthy endeavor. At this point the trainers are being trained who will then be able to pass along their knowledge.

The ICT (Integrated Computer Technology) plan is moving along. Reading and science presentations are approaching and so far, results are impressive. Students are producing tangible evidence of their computer literacy in the areas of Word Processing, Spreadsheets, Presentation Software, and Web design. All Webpage design activities are internal; there is no Internet posting option available to students.

The 6th grade transition program is beginning, which will include math/reading testing, foreign language placement, teacher input sheets (both academic and social recommendations), and parent input. As was the case last year, parent requests for specific teachers or teams are strongly discouraged. Teams are fluid, may not have the same teacher grouping, and are very different from one year to the next. Instead, parents are encouraged to describe their individual child and his/her needs and learning style which will be considered during placement. 6th grade parents of special needs children will meet on 4/3 in the library along with case managers and paraprofessionals, and additionally when the entire 6th grade parent group meets on 4/5 at 6:45 with the teachers and administrators. A letter to 6th grade parents will be delivered the week after vacation.

No information is yet available about the 8th grade high school transition. Information is forthcoming from HBHS.

NECAP scores were extremely positive. In the 8th grade, writing scores for the state revealed 49% at the “proficient” or “proficient with distinction” level. HBMS scored 59%. Reading scores were 62% for the state, 81% for HBMS. Likewise, state math was 56%, HBMS 82%. A specific item analysis will be conducted to look for error patterns or indications that curriculum changes or specific areas need additional attention.

NAEP (National Association of Educational Progress, aka Nation’s Report Card) will be administered to 183 randomly selected 8th graders. It is a 90 minute test which does not provide individual results.

The NECAP (New England Common Assessment Program) will pilot an 8th grade science test. Again, no individual results will be provided, but this pilot is designed to provide the testing agency with general information about the test itself as they improve it for future administration.

The NWEA (North Western Education Association) test will be piloted at the elementary level. This is a computer-based, instant-results test which was planned for the Middle School, but cut from the budget.

Pat shared her feeling that until consistent curriculum mapping happens, testing is not productive. Decreased instructional time is an ongoing concern for teachers and administration alike. We continue to share a cooperative and positive relationship with the High School. Specifically, the Math departments were highlighted as being an area in which both HBMS and HBHS are collaborating to ensure smooth transition, and sufficient skill development. Previously, students with superior cognitive abilities were accelerated through the math program into the High School, but they were often found to be developmentally mismatched in terms of work habits and the ability to conceptualize what it was they were doing. Solving the problems was not enough without being able to grasp the underlying purpose. Currently, evaluation is ongoing.

In the past week, students have been coming to school without coats, in shorts, and wearing flip-flops. Pat has counseled students that when they go to DC, they are expected to dress appropriately for the weather. They will be leaving the hotel in the early am, not returning until close to dinnertime, and unable to retrieve belongings during the day, so dressing in comfortable layers with appropriate footwear is critical. A parent commented that girls typically buy new shoes for the trip and end up with painful blisters after the extended walking that is done.

The coop schools were able to meet the 4.8% budget increase required by the Budget Committee. Most concessions were made at the High School and Central Office. The High School had initially requested 2.5 additional teachers for next year, and instead has cut the request to 3 separate .6 teachers (Chem, Bio, and English) who will each be allowed to teach 3 classes, instead of 5 classes allowed for a full-time teacher.

Warrant articles for 2 double-wide portables at the High School leased for 2-3 years, and funding for technology upgrades will be discussed this evening.

There is an informational hearing on 2/26 at HBMS to discuss SB2, which will be presented as a warrant article. Pat has worked under both systems and has found that SB2 decreases the amount of “educated” voters. Instead of participating fully in the discussion of issues and spending articles, typically few people attend hearings and there is no opportunity for compromise from the floor. A parent pointed out that SB2 does allow for more people to vote who could not ordinarily attend an evening meeting, because all votes are conducted in all-day

polls, but it also allows a small minority to control the voting because articles are developed in the poorly-attended hearings. She pointed out that as in Amherst, an SB2 town, it is very difficult to pass budgets because there is no opportunity to have questions answered.

The donation of \$6925 has been deposited and Pat will check to see whether previously approved music items have been ordered. A Band fundraiser for Yankee candle had been approved prior to the donation being given, but all proceeds from the fundraiser will go to purchase additional band items. Large band equipment pieces run in the thousands of dollars per item, and typically are not funded in the annual budget, so outside funds are necessary to continue to grow the programs.

There are presently 229 students going to Washington DC, with 24 staying behind. Funds have been dispersed to offset scholarship and miscellaneous costs for both the group going, and the group remaining who will participate in daily activities and field trips. There was a discussion of funding for future trips since this is the first year the cost of the trip per student has exceeded \$500. Various suggestions were offered for fundraising, and will be looked at again as plans are made for next year.

A parent brought a concern about a request for funding for 7th grade science dissections. Pat pointed out that the budget allows for 4 dissections per year, and the additional request is to offset the costs for 3 supplementary dissections which enrich the science experience for all students. The request is strictly voluntary, and parents can choose to contribute a suggested amount, more, less, or none at all.

4. Superintendent's Report: Richard Pike had to reschedule his visit due to a meeting with the Commissioner of Education this morning. He will attend the March meeting.
5. Treasurer's Report: There are currently 222 PTSA members. The Magazine Drive had \$56.38 income, and Box Tops \$123.57. The \$6925 donation from last month was deposited.

Expenses of \$100 for DI registration, \$1700 for lacrosse goggles, \$200 for yearbook ad, and \$249.30 for the 8th grade Generations luncheon, left a balance of \$23,794.17, which will be drawn down by the amount of the donation as soon as the bill arrives.

Taxes have been resubmitted.

6. Events:
REFLECTIONS: There were 10 entries, and winners will advance to the state ceremony next Thursday. Good luck to all!

7th GRADE BBQ: Jill Russell is collecting information and volunteers.

8th GRADE CELEBRATION: Kara Tulley reported on the recent organizational meeting. Work has been split and delegated. The celebration will be on June 15, and a FAQ sheet has been prepared to answer questions. It will be distributed at the DC info meeting.

PARENT ENRICHMENT: There is a Drug and Alcohol awareness workshop planned for April. Students may be included if they can be provided with age-appropriate alternate activities with the Dare officers and Tracy Dunne while parents are attending the presentation by Bill Quigley.

GENERATIONS: This program has been offered since 1992! Help is needed in coordinating and staffing the 3/23 luncheon for the 7th grade Generations. 2 people are needed for registration

at 7am. Donations of food and beverages is requested to supplement the \$250 budget. Contact Susan Holroyd if you are interested at sbolroyd@charter.net or give her a call.

7. Committee Reports: NOMINATING: 3 people who will not be members next year are needed to gather names to fill open positions next year. Currently, 2nd VP, Secretary, Volunteer Coordinator, 7th & 8th grade Hospitality, Membership, and Publicity are open. Contact Ruth Kabel or Susan Holroyd if you are available.

STAFF APPRECIATION: The Decadent Dessert event scheduled for Wednesday is postponed until next week 2/21. If you planned to contribute desserts, please save them for next week.

8. Other Business: Iris Realmuto maintains the websites for the Hollis, HBMS, and HBHS schools. She is requesting a contribution of \$150 split between the 3 schools to purchase Adobe Acrobat. Iris continues to maintain the websites despite the fact that she no longer has children in the Hollis schools. Merle Carrus moved, Janet Listowich seconded a motion to spend \$50 which was approved.

The recent dance/game room was a huge success. Kimberly Rizzo-Saunders requested an expenditure to purchase 12-14 games which would be stored in the PTSA closet and used for future game nights. Tammy Campbell moved, Julie Forgaard seconded motion to spend up to \$250 to purchase a variety of games.

The Women's Club has rescheduled their meeting to 2/21. All Hollis/Brookline women are invited to attend a presentation by Amy Dumont, head of cardiovascular services at St. Joseph Hospital. The topic will be women's health issues. Child care will be provided for \$5/family beginning at noon. The meeting will be at Faith Baptist Church on Wheeler Road.

8. Next Meeting: The next meeting will be on March 16 at 8:30 am. In case of a bad weather DELAY, the meeting will be rescheduled to 10am-12pm on the same day. In case of a school CANCELLATION, an attempt will be made to reschedule for the following Friday, but is subject to room availability. Notice will be posted on the school website for detailed information. Note: The April meeting will be on 4/13, which is a change from the typical week. All 6th grade parents are especially welcome to come and see. Please spread the word!

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn Goldberg