

HBMS PTSA MINUTES **November 17, 2006**

Attendance: Ruth Kabel, Susan Holroyd, Maureen Lorden, Pat Goyette, Kimberly Rizzo-Saunders, Carolyn Jahns, Erin White, Patti Chilton, Tracy Moore, Anita Moynihan, Jill Russell, MaryKay James, Lisa Keehan, Shelly Bower, Julie Forgaard, Kara Tulley, Marianne Graves, Jennifer Starr, Merle Carrus, Cherie Wholey, Mary Thomas, Mary McCarthy (22)

1. Introductions: Ruth Kabel Introductions were made. Mrs. Goyette then expressed thanks for the Teachers appreciation luncheon held yesterday.

2. Review of Previous Minutes: Ruth Kabel October Minutes: Ruth noted that the (?) was Dr Lila Moynihan, who spoke about peanut allergies. Minutes will be edited. A motion was made to accept the minutes. The October minutes were accepted by all in attendance. Our secretary, Dorreen Mercer is temporarily unable to take minutes due to an arm injury. She is finding substitutes for herself.

3. Principal's Report: Pat Goyette

- EBSCO discussion:
 - Mrs. Goyette started with the topic of EBSCO which is a database used for research by the middle school students. A concern was brought to the administration by a parent concerning the content that students can access. This came up during a 7th grade project about stem cell research. During a search when the term 'stem cell research' was entered it brought up articles/ topics that included the word abortion in them. The 7th grade project was to include a debate on the subject of stem cell research, but was cancelled as a result of the concern brought forward. EBSCO can be used in school and accessed at home through the school website. Mrs. Goyette explained the EBSCO database is one of 3 that the school uses. The other databases are News Bank and Biography Resource Center. The High School uses the EBSCO database also with some add-ons. It is a database "warehouse" and does not access the outside web. EBSCO has 9 search choices and allows search of reputable scientific and historical journals. It is provided by the State of NH.
 - Mrs. Jahns shared information about the database including the research she conducted, visiting other schools to view the system in use, as well as speaking with numerous schools before it was implemented this year. She reported that she attempted to recreate the same search using the stem cell research terms but did not bring up the same findings. She used the primary search and middle school plus search. It was noted that it would be expensive to obtain an alternative database. Currently the 8th graders are doing science research from the space program through EBSCO. They are getting the information they need using the database.
 - The parent who brought the concern forward was in attendance and explained that they used the "topic search" with the words "stem cell research", and 4 of 5 topics that came up had the word abortion in it. She is able to recreate the search.
 - Resolutions: Mrs. Goyette encouraged parents to address concerns such as this with the faculty, Carolyn Jahns, or Carol Mace. EBSCO and the other 2 databases are the tools the students will be using for their research now and in the future. Mrs. Goyette noted that she is working on the school website to include a table of contents. She will include an "Issue" selection and can include a quick paragraph about awareness when searching with EBSCO. There is a user policy in place. She made a key point that the Middle School will not ignore an issue when presented. The administration will provide an honest opinion to seek a resolution. For use of EBSCO it is recommended that searches be conducted using either the 'primary

- search' or 'middle school plus search' options within the database. Mrs. Goyette has also recommended that when a teacher wants to enhance the curriculum with projects, etc. that age appropriateness be considered and that they send a letter home to the parents with an option for the child to participate or opt out. She has sent a notice to teachers to be vigilant about databases. Mrs. Goyette noted that there is a place and process for challenging materials used in the school.
- Mrs. Rizzo-Saunders explained that EBSCO is a warehouse like the periodical index for literature and lexile reading levels are used.
 - Principal's Report - Mrs. Goyette explained that she provides the same report to the PTSA that she provides to the School Board. The information follows:
 - One focus is to review special education model. She explained that students with 504 plans generally have lifelong physical or other impairment issues that may impact access to curriculum. One area to address is consistency in language used and plans. They started on the most recent professional development day inviting Dean Eggert to speak. There was discussion around the lack of consistency in grades K—12. The HBHS had Dean Eggert speak on the same day. Mrs. Goyette has shared this with the elementary schools in the district and Gail Paludi is planning to have him speak with their staff. The goal is to have everyone speak the same language when using terms such as accommodation vs. modification.
 - The specialists have re-identified themselves as the life skills teachers. They developed 8 strands that permeate all content areas and truly are life skills. Paul Picariello, Gayle Bottcher and Nancy Spencer spent numerous hours putting together a presentation about how they fit in the school. They presented their information Life Skills: The Real Unified Arts at the Unified Arts Conference sponsored by the New England League of Middle Schools.
 - Level One Team - LOT – has had training on curriculum mapping. In order to have curriculum mapping the appropriate technology must be in place. It will be presented to the school board. The presenter, Heidi Hayes Jacobs, makes an analogy that lesson plan books were the data warehouse for the 1940's 50's 60's and mapping is the current warehouse for instruction. The value of mapping is like the hub of a building, you can look at activities and see where they are being differentiated and have a means to evaluate and keep curriculum active. The technology requires teachers to start by inputting their own maps. For instance, Dave Bond is doing a new unit on volcanoes – by noting the state standard for NH at 8th Grade level, you can access lesson plans that are concurrent with our standard worldwide. Only the middle school in our district is really hooked on this. They believe the value is there and the mapping can be the vehicle for evaluating and reviewing everything they do. The Board members are coming on the 12th of February and Heidi Hayes Jacobs will be presenting it. Heidi Hayes Jacobs talked about weaving the literacy component into mapping and noted that with standardized testing, 40% incorrect responses are due to an inability to read. Tech Path is the most appealing system and there is a per pupil cost.
 - Veterans Day assembly took place and has become a tradition. The Chorus sang "Coming Home", a very touching song. The Band played. The Veterans were touched. Mrs. Goyette received nice responses from the veterans.
 - Mrs. Goyette presented information from the School Board Meeting: Budget process was discussed at the board meeting on Wednesday Nov 15. There were no budget committee members at the meeting. It is televised on the cable channel. It was asked that information about the meetings be put on the school website. The meetings take place in the Middle school multipurpose room. During this discussion Anita recommended that the website have a calendar of events which was thought to be a good idea. Middle School budget is increased with the part of the budget she can control at \$60,000. \$24,000 for math textbooks, \$23,000 to update technology via a

long-term plan, Teachers budgets decreases \$16,000, so it is up \$33,000. It is in good shape. Space issues were discussed. The high school is growing and they are currently at 97% capacity for 5 of the 7 periods. It is recommended that capacity be 80% so there is some flexibility. The Board is struggling with the budget. The school board generated a list – what could they do, if they are not talking more space. One option included keeping some freshman at HBMS. It could be accomplished, but would it be developmentally appropriate? There are a lot of open questions. Double sessions would be another option. Large group study halls, unstructured, with more students would also free up classes. A question was asked about real projections of class size. They are working from 2004 information. At the middle school they know that next year's class size will be down another 20 and both grades will be 220. The following year the incoming class size is 250 and then it is 191. The First motion at the school board meeting was to address the space issue with no bond and it failed. The next vote was for a bond to support the cafeteria issue only. The high school regains 2 classrooms with that option. PTSA discussion ensued around splitting the co-op. Approval of a change to split the co-op would be a 5-10 year process. Mrs. Goyette noted Board meetings are the 3rd Wednesday of every month. Parents are welcome to come. There are concerns about the cost of expansion. Question- why is the high school outgrowing their space? Mrs. Goyette noted the time projection was accurate as the HS was built it to support the present with the capacity to expand as needed.

4. Treasurer's Report: Julie Forgaard – Julie presented the current budget total \$32,824.61 – that figure does not include the magazine fundraiser expense. QSP.com is the website for continued magazine orders. PTSA taxes have been completed and sent in. Jean Filer would like to get a new shredder for the office and is asking the PTSA to sponsor the equipment. The shredders are between \$150 and \$179. Vote taken to approve spending up to \$200. Susan H. presented the request. Merle made a motion. Julie seconded it. All present approved the spending up to \$200. Mary M. asked if the school has received the \$ from Stop and Shop, Target and other venues that provide funds to the school through community/parent purchases. The PTSA gets information at certain intervals. Mary M. suggested communicating the opportunities like Stop & Shop, Target, etc.

5. Events

A. Community Conversations-Ruth Kabel

Rich Melillo presented 3 sessions on Understanding and Managing your Emotions. He has offered to have additional sessions if there is interest.

B. Generations-Erin White introduced herself as the health teacher. She coordinates a program called Generations Day. There are keynote speakers – 21 workshops where students and parents attend and can pick top 5 choices and will get 3 choices. The programs range from origami to project challenge (teambuilding). Grade level parents are invited to attend sessions with or without their students. There are separate days for 7th and 8th grade. PTSA/parents in the opposite grade level help with luncheon. The 8th grade session is on December 14th. PTSA -Kristen will be chairing the 8th grade luncheon. Hospitality will bring coffee for the morning. Ms. White asked for volunteers to help in the morning 7-8am with greeting, handing out schedules, coordinating late sign-ups. And also at the luncheon. Ruth passed a sign-up form around. Mrs. Goyette provided some history noting this Parent-Student workshop day has grown significantly and started with the school nurse DeeDee Adams coordinating it. Having 2 separate days provides a focus just on that grade level. The forums open doors of interest. PTSA has done a great job with the past Generations

6. Committee Reports

A. Membership-Patti Chilton – We currently have 216 members!

B. Staff Appreciation-Maggie Kerkhoff & Jill Russell Mrs. Goyette remarked that yesterday's staff appreciation lunch was wonderful and truly enjoyed by all the staff. She thanked the PTSA . Committee members present reported the lunch went well. They noted that since it was held in the teacher's lounge (vs a classroom) this year, it was more crowded and the room became hot. The Conference room was set up for dessert. The committee is working on documenting the process of running the staff appreciation luncheon, including amounts of food and space needs. Ruth will speak with Mrs. Goyette about space alternatives for next time. Susan and Ruth thank all the volunteers who helped make this such a success.

7. Other Business

A. Student dance/movie/game night-Kimberly Rizzo-Saunders - One of the things they try to do in middle school is to teach students to socialize appropriately. Some students are not developmentally ready and some are not comfortable with a dance. Currently, at dances, they use the band room as the down space and there are a group of students that generally use that space. The goal would be to bring in other students that might not attend with another option – games. Mrs Rizzo-Saunders will poll the students to determine which games they would like. The students would still pay the \$5 to attend. Chip, the DJ, provides his service at a very low price – dances are fundraisers and the money is used to offset the cost of fieldtrips and other events, where it goes back to the students. Mrs. Rizzo-Saunders would look at trialing it with the dance initially. There may then be the possibility of having a separate event night. She is looking for a donation of games from the PTSA. Julie F. noted she has spoken to parents in other towns that regularly have dance/games/sports events. Mrs. Rizzo-Saunders has seen a larger group of students that are not comfortable with the dance, some asking to call home. Initially there was not the space to have a dual event. Now, with the school expansion, there is the space. Dances are set in August. It depends on the availability of teachers and sometimes there is a date change. December 1st is the next dance – the Yearbook Committee is sponsoring it. Other dates are January 26 and March 30. The plan is to start with board games. Some members noted that have games they can donate or lend. There was a question about the music that is played. Mrs. Rizzo-Saunders discusses with the DJ, he does have a wide range and knows what the students are interested in. If there is concern with a particular song she can ask that it not be played.

B. Destination Imagination-Ruth - Merle and Ruth did an information session recently. There are some other students that are interested and they would like to start another team if there is adult support.

C. Bulletin Board – There are two boards- one in entry hall and one by the MPR for the students – this board has information on Dances, Sports Events, Generations, etc.

D. Memory Garden – this topic was discussed at a previous meeting to express sympathy for someone's death – Pat Goyette brought the topic of a memory garden to a committee. They met a couple of times and thought sending a card and a donation to the organization that the deceased family has named would be appropriate.

E. Other: Jack Agati spoke last night at the High School. He spoke about other issues in addition to The Empty Nest topic. He is a great speaker if people have the chance to see him. . Parent education presentations are listed on the school website. Student council will sponsor the giving tree on the 4th and the 12th. They are painting ornaments.

8. Next Meeting December 15, 2006 – 8:30AM in the Library Media room.
Susan, Ruth and Dorreen thank Maureen Lorden for taking the minutes this month!

