

McLean High School PTSA
General Membership Meeting
May 11, 2009

The May meeting of the McLean High School PTSA was called to order by Susan Perla, PTSA President.

Minutes: The minutes of the April 13, 2009 meeting were reviewed and approved. The minutes are posted on the PTSA website.

Treasurer's Report:

Kathy Rugh presented the monthly budget report covering the month of April 2009. The Armchair and Escrip funds continued to trickle in again in April totaling \$676.95. The total expense for April was \$111.75. The balance on hand as of April 30, 2009, is \$35,873.63. Kathy also presented Dr. Jackson with a check in the amount of \$6,215, which represents additional armchair fundraiser funds received.

Student's Report:

Vanessa Bretas, Junior Class representative, reported that the Prom preparation is in full swing. The prom committee is still looking for a few good volunteers and chaperones for the dance on Saturday, May 30, 2009.

Principal and Staff Reports:

Dr. Jackson updated the board members on several activities occurred at McLean High School. She expressed appreciation for the wonderful treats and meals provided to the teachers during the Teacher Appreciation Week. The testing season is in full session – 1,600 AP tests are currently being administered and 3,000 SOL tests to follow in the coming weeks. Please encourage your kids to do their best; remind them why McLean High School was ranked #55 in the nation.

As for the staffing situation in the upcoming year, McLean got hit hard on the support side; this summer will be tough to manage the administration office. Spring is in the air and so is the Prom at McLean. This year, the prom will be held on Saturday, May 30th at the Westwood Country Club in Vienna. Parents please talk to your teenagers about the Prom safety tips.

Dr. Jackson announced that Colin Powell will be the guest speaker at the Graduation for the Class of 2009. She also thanked parents for all the support and commitments this past school year. Dr. Jackson introduced Crissie Ricketts as the new Director of Student Services effective June 1, 2009. Ms. Ricketts gave a summary of her background and long affiliation with McLean High School, and said that she was ready to take on this important job.

Guest Speaker – Jane K. Strauss

Susan introduced School Board Member Janie Strauss to the board members.

Ms. Strauss presented a few issues to the board members this evening. She discussed the budget cut of \$171 million for next year and the areas where it will impact the most, such as classroom size, textbooks, staffing, transportation, and after school activities for the middle schools. There was a 15% cut in central administration and 5% school-based cuts. The Federal stimulus funds came just in time, and will help with special needs students and Title I schools. She mentioned that there are currently 1,523 homeless children in Fairfax County and that the poverty rate among children is 23.5%. The upcoming Tysons development will impact nearby schools, i.e, Spring Hill E.S. She reported that the School Board adopted a new grading scale at its May 7th meeting; the 10-point grading scale with pluses and minuses will go into effect for the school year beginning in the fall 2009. Honors courses will be addressed by the School Board over the summer. In response to a question regarding start times, she mentioned that there were complicated issues surrounding changing the start time for high schools, especially with regard to Academy classes that students attend at different high schools throughout the county. Ms. Strauss mentioned that there was not strong support for the hour start time change for high schools, but that the county would continue to look for efficiencies to shorten the bus run times.

President's Report:

Susan announced that tonight's meeting is the last official meeting for the school year 2008-09, but that there are still lots of activities to be completed before the end of the year. She also thanked the Hospitality Committee for the teacher breakfast and Wafika Albani for providing lunch for the teachers. Susan reminded the board members about the Health and Wellness program by Dr. Stixrud scheduled for next Monday, May 18th. Susan mentioned that Audra Sydnor is retiring as Assistant Superintendent and the last Cluster I Parent Advisory Council meeting is to be held on Thursday, May 28st. The Academic Awards Night is coming up on May 26th. The PTSA announces the student of the year awards for the academic departments and provides a plaque with the names for the hallway. She thanked Betty Ende for her work posting all the information on the school website. Susan also reminded committee members to submit committee reports and any reimbursements before the end of the year.

Susan thanked Dr. Jackson and all the teachers for the support this school year. She acknowledged the talented and smart students who give us hope for the future. She also thanked all the board members for all their work this past year, in particular the senior parents who were "graduating," as well as the senior parents on the Executive Committee – Reg Devlin, Kathy Rugh and Stefanie Schoepfle - for all their hard work for many years at McLean High School.

Officers' Reports:

Jacky Longwell said the Prom volunteers and chaperones are still needed for Saturday, May 30th.

Committee Reports:

Health and Wellness – MaryAnn Lastova encouraged all the parents to come out and learn about the adolescent brain from Dr. William Stixrud on May 18, 2009 at MHS in the auditorium.

Building and Grounds -- Mary Brosnan said the owner of the property at Davidson Drive agreed to donate a portion of the property to school for the new McLean High School sign. Dr. Jackson is waiting on the design of the new sign.

Unfinished Business:

Stefanie solicited fundraising for All Night Grad Party (ANGP). She brought in pillow case samples, please order a customize pillow case via online to help the ANGP event.

New Business:

A web based online payment program, Pay4schoolstuffonline, was presented by McLean High School parent and entrepreneur, Jay Bass. Jay demonstrated the web application via his laptop to the board members and shared some ideas that maybe useful to school organizations. The concept is to eliminate the need to write checks by providing an online payment system for school-related activities. The system can also generate activity reports that can be downloaded to an Excel spreadsheet. FCPS is putting together a task force to look at this type of system. At the end of the meeting there were some discussions regarding this program and several board members felt that further exploration is needed prior to the implementation. Since this was our last meeting of the year, that means we would not be ready to go with this for the school opening activities in August/September. The PTSA also did not want a small task force to decide over the summer; rather they wanted the full board to decide.

The board expressed an interest in reviewing the agreement, and maybe seeing how things are working with other groups (such as Athletic Boosters or Band Parents Association) before making the decision. It would also help if FCPS allowed the high school to participate, so it would be a more coordinated system of one-stop shopping. Dr. Jackson also wants to look into this with Tony Crosby from the county.

Stefanie recommended deferring the online payment implementation, but Rebecca said it would be beneficial to implement in the upcoming school year for Armchair and Directory sales. Stefanie made a motion to create a committee for further study. A motion was passed.

The McLean High School Theatre Boosters made a presentation to the board members seeking support for the Fringe Festival trip to Edinburgh this summer. McLean High School was one of only two high schools in Virginia who were invited to attend the festival. Altogether, 16 students and five chaperones will attend, and students will pay 60-70% of the travel costs. The cost per student to attend is \$1,500 in non-travel costs and \$3,973 in travel costs. Through various fundraisers over the past year, the Theatre Boosters have raised most of the funds needed, but is short of \$16,000. A motion was made and approved to provide a one-time student support donation of \$1,500 to help meet the goal given the unique opportunity presented to students.

Election of Officers: Susan Perla noted that, as per the bylaws, the election of officers could be by voice vote if there were only one candidate for the position. Having no new nominations, the following nominees were elected by voice vote:

President – Susan Perla
1st Vice President – Peggy Vans
2nd Vice President – Jihui Kim
3rd Vice President – Jacky Longwell
Treasurer – Rebecca Davis
Recording Secretary – Wilma Bowers
Corresponding Secretary – Catherine Slotkoff

Upcoming Dates:

May 14	SCC Meeting, 7:30 pm, McLean Community Center
May 18	Energizing the Teenage Brain, 7:30 pm, MHS Auditorium
May 25	PTSA Newsletter Deadline – June issue
May 26	Academic Awards Night
June 1	Sports Banquet
June 12	Baccalaureate
June 15	Graduation
June 15/16	All Night Grad Party
June 18	Last Day of School

No PTSA Meeting in June.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

In Attendance: Susan Perla, Debbie Jackson, Jihui Kim, Stefanie Schoepfle, Kathy Rugh, Rebecca Davis, Reg Devlin, Jacky Longwell, Kent Arnold, Phyllis Walker, Mary Brosnan, Wafika Albani, Elizabeth Ende, MaryAnn Lastova, Claire Prough, Jay Bass, Crissie Ricketts, Peggy Vans, Elinor Gruber, Katherine Key, Lisa Hymes, Vanessa Bretas, Janet Humphreys, Laura Kaiser, Harry Kaiser, Kathy Oram-Meade, Tom Van Wazer, Jane Strauss