

**McLean High School PTSA  
General Membership Meeting  
February 11, 2008**

The February meeting of the McLean High School PTSA was called to order by Kathy Rugh, PTSA President.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the January 14, 2008 meeting were reviewed and approved. The minutes will be posted on the PTSA website.

**Treasurer's Report:** Rebecca Davis, Treasurer, was unable to be present. Kathy Rugh submitted the budget report covering the month ending January 31, 2008.

**Student Reports:** Joe Russo, SGA president, reported on behalf of the SGA and the class officers. He reported that the SGA "Have a Heart" Dance is scheduled for February 23, from 8 – 11 pm. Tickets are \$5.00 and proceeds will benefit a charity to be selected by the students. The senior class is planning for the Senior Talent Show and graduation activities. The Junior Class is planning for Prom. The Mr. McLean Pageant was cancelled due to lack of interest. The sophomore class is selling carnations and the freshman Class is selling candy grams as fundraisers for Valentines Day.

**Principal and Staff Reports:**

Tonight's Spotlight on Learning was the Math Department. Department Chair Chrissie Ricketts described a pilot program at McLean High School called E-Cart, which is an electronic assessment tool. The program is currently available for Algebra I and Biology, and in the future they will add Geometry, Algebra II and other courses. By using the Blackboard website, teachers can give assessments and see immediate test results. This allows teachers to hone into exactly where students need help before the SOL tests are given in the spring. In the fall, all FCPS high schools will be using this tool. As a pilot school, McLean can have input on the pacing guides and help set standards for the program. In the future, there will also be a Parent View of the program via Blackboard.

Dr. Jackson reported that Ghislaine Tulou had been voted Teacher of the Year by her peers. A reception was held at McLean High School and she will also be honored by the McLean Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Jackson also reported that the 9<sup>th</sup> grade orientation program was well attended and that Joe Russo had also spoken to the parents that night, representing the students very well. The second quarter grades showed an increase in A, B, and C's, but also an increase in F's. Usually, the second quarter grading period is the hardest of the year due to the number of breaks. Dr. Jackson also reported that there has been good school spirit at McLean, with winter sports doing well, Special Olympics, Governor School Nominations, etc. The McLeadership (mentoring) program is underway this year, with a planned activity for Valentines Day. Mini-Conferences are scheduled for Friday, February 22; school will begin at 10:20 am that day. Dr. Jackson also reported the FCPS budget outlook for next year is not looking good, with proposed reductions in staff (which might affect electives offerings) and other reductions in programs and increases in fees. Summer school will take place, but the county is not sure how extensive the final summer school program will be. She advised parents to check the FCPS website for updates.

In response to a question on school boundaries, Dr. Jackson reported that McLean High School should not be affected, since the school already has a diverse population.

**President's Report:** Kathy Rugh reported that she also had an opportunity to greet the parents at the rising 9<sup>th</sup> grade orientation session. Kathy noted that parent proctors are needed for the AP exams in May; check with Megan Georges to sign up to help. Kathy also attended the Cluster I meeting where proposed budget cuts were discussed. The funding for the schools comes from the county real estate taxes, and she urged parents to contact their Board of Supervisors members to ask them to fully fund the FCPS budget.

Kathy and Reg Devlin attended a recent program at Langley High School for 9<sup>th</sup> grade parents and students which focused on prevention of alcohol, tobacco and drug use. In the past, the PTSA has sponsored the "Vision Warrior" program for the Junior and Senior classes, but have been unable to schedule this program for this year, so we were looking for other programs to fill this gap. The Langley program is provided by the "Community of Concern" organization and is a roundtable discussion format with trained speakers and facilitators. In addition to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade program, there is also a program for 10<sup>th</sup> graders on driving, and they are developing a program for 11<sup>th</sup> graders on stress. Reg Devlin noted that this provided a forum for the whole community to come together to work on a common problem. There was discussion on how much work this would involve, since there is not an active PTSA Parent Networking Committee. Kathy said the main thing would be to get a date that would work this year; to do a mailing and coordinate RSVPs. The program would be held in the Cafeteria, with dinner from 6:15 – 6:45 pm and the program taking place from 7:00 – 8:30 pm. Jacky Longwell suggested that perhaps the Character Education Committee could help organize this, since there was a need to start these discussions earlier in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, not just in senior year as is done with Senior Ethics Day.

**ACTION:** A motion was made and carried to pursue the Community of Caring program.

Kathy also reported that the PTSA needs volunteers for a Nominating Committee. Please see Kathy to volunteer. Kathy also noted that the PTSA sent sympathy flowers to Janie Strauss at the end of January, following the death of her husband, Bill Strauss, in December. She also reported that the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce and the Fairfax County Council of PTA's was sponsoring a "Bright Futures" educational and environmental initiative to encourage people to switch out their light bulbs. The PTSA will provide information on this via the website. Kathy also reported that McLean will hold a Summer Prep Institute, August 18 – 21, as was done last year to help prepare rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders for high school. She asked members to tell their friends and neighbors who have current 8<sup>th</sup> graders about this program. Kathy and Rebecca Davis are preparing the 990 tax forms to file. Volunteers are needed to help with an audit of the PTSA books sometime in the next month. Lisa Burns, Wafika Albani and John Becci volunteered to help.

Finally, Kathy noted that parent presentation on the FCPS grading policies mentioned at the last meeting was not ready to be presented at this time. McLean High School will host a forum (outside of the normal PTSA meeting) and invite parents from other schools to attend.

## **Committee Reports**

Special Education: Phyllis Yoshida reported that the Virginia Board of Education is doing a major re-write of the special education regulations. She will have this posted on the PTSA website. Also, there will be a spring conference in April, with a great program

of speakers of interest to all parents, not just parents of special education students. She will also post this on the website.

Membership: Phyllis Walker reported that the mid-year Membership mailing will be going out and requested more envelopes for the mailing.

Human Relations: Wafika Albani reported that the ICU had requested that the potluck dinner date be changed because of a conflict with a Band program. The students will be voting this week to either move the dinner to March 28 or keep the March 7 date but at a later time of day.

MHS Orchestra Liaison: Ann Oudemans reported that the orchestra chamber group had a very successful exchange program in Germany. They received great support from the administration and teachers in order to make this happen. Normally, it takes two weeks to get the international trips approved; this only took two days.

### **New Business**

At the last meeting it was reported that the Spirit decals would be sold in the Activities Office. The MHS Boosters Club has offered to take over the sales of the spirit decals from the PTSA. In the past, the Boosters sold decals, but it had not been done for a while, so that is why the PTSA decided to take this project on. Decal sales were not meant to be a fundraiser, but rather to raise school spirit. The Boosters offered to pay for the upfront costs of the decals, but Reg Devlin noted that it would create goodwill not to charge them for the decals.

Two questions were raised: 1) should the PTSA transfer the spirit decals over to the MHS Boosters and 2) should the PTSA transfer these at no cost?

**ACTION:** A motion was made and carried to transfer the Spirit decals over to the MHS Boosters, with the stipulation that they would also continue to sell the Band, Theater, Chorus, and other activities stickers.

**ACTION:** A motion was made and carried to transfer the Spirit decals at no cost.

### **Announcements**

Irene Bortolussi noted that parent volunteers are needed to help with planning for Prom. She mentioned that the students are planning a socially conscience prom, with girls donating dresses for prom. Check the Pipenotes for announcements on upcoming prom meetings.

**Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 pm.

In Attendance: Debbie Jackson, Jean Wacaster, Chrissie Ricketts, Kathy Rugh, Stefanie Schoepfle, Andrea Stillman, Reg Devlin, Jean Godla, Susan Perla, Jane Beddoe, Jihui Kim, Jacky Longwell, Wafika Albani, Phyllis Walker, John Becci, Jaewoo Lee, Kathy Oram Meade, Phyllis Yoshida, Anne Oudemans, Amy Vaughan, Lisa Burns, Joe Russo.