

**McLean High School PTSA
General Membership Meeting
January 12, 2009**

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

Minutes: There was no meeting in December 2008. The minutes of the November 10, 2008 meeting were reviewed and approved. The minutes are posted on the PTSA website.

Treasurer's Report:

Kathy Rugh presented the monthly budget report covering 11/1/08 thru 12/31/08 since there was no meeting in December. She said additional \$500 came in for Armchair fund in November and December of 2008. The balance on hand as of December 31, 2008 was \$29, 527.84. Please refer to the monthly report for the detail information.

Student Reports:

A meeting notification has been sent to the SGA representatives but there was no student reported for the January meeting.

Principal and Staff Reports:

Dr. Jackson shared her enthusiasm about MHS ranking #55 in the nation at the recent Rotary Club recognition luncheon. She felt this recognition was important because of the diversified student population at MHS and the achievement that was accomplished by the collaboration of students, administrators and staff at MHS. Dr. Jackson has observed much confidence in our students this year and that we continue to support the momentum at school.

Dr. Jackson discussed the Longfellow Panel that was hosted at MHS on Wednesday, December 3, 2008. She said the event was successful and we are expecting to host the rising 9th grade parents for an orientation session in February, 2009.

Dr. Jackson also mentioned the District Band competition which was held at MHS on January 10, 2009. Many MHS band students were selected to play at the District Band. She was very pleased with the students' performance from the competition. It is great to see many events occur at MHS and let's continue to provide much energy and spirit to upcoming student activities here at MHS.

Dr. Jackson reminded us about that the senior countdown has begun. Coming up will be orders for class rings, cap and gown, graduation invitations, etc. She also touched on the grants program. MHS will continue to have the grant for the freshmen transition program next year.

Dr. Jackson expressed her concern on recent student expulsions due to drug activities, with an increase in marijuana and heroine use. Some kids are still making a poor choice and we must get past the "my kid is not doing drugs" attitude and come together as a community to help our children to make a better choice. She talked about a past event called "Saturday Night in Suburbs" which focused on alcohol, drugs and other risky activities. We need to have more discussions on how to support drug issues and educate the kids and help them find alternatives to have fun without alcohol and drugs.

President's Report:

Susan announced that we need form a nominating committee for the following school year, 2009-2010. We need three volunteers for this committee; she will send out an email to the PTSA board seeking volunteers. Susan recognized Lisa Hymes and Joan Shetterly for doing a great job with the Longfellow Panel on December 3, 2008.

She also mentioned about the upcoming event "Colleges that Change Lives" program geared for parents of Juniors. Please share this information with Junior parents. (This is now open to Sophomore and Junior parents.)

Susan announced about the Virginia PTA Citizenship Essay Project, Our Earth, and Our Future essay competition. Students in grades 9-12 are eligible to participate in this essay competition. Please spread the words to our students.

Officer Reports:

Conversations That Count – Jihui Kim attended this seminar Safe Community Coalition sponsored "Conversations that count" at Langley HS on Thursday, December 11, 2008. The theme of the evening was "The High School Social Scene" - knowing the benefits of avoiding underage drinking and creating the networks to support good decisions. The program was introduced by Langley's PTSA president, Michelle Shaw.

The session began with two students from Langley sharing their views on the social scene. There was a mixture of students and parents at the round table discussing the topic presented by the facilitator. The scenarios that were discussed as follows:

1. What do you want a parent to do when you are invited to a party? Also, as a parent, what do you want your daughter/son to do? Each table had discussions on this topic and at the end the facilitator selected a table to share the outcome of the discussion. The general consensus of the discussion was to have the parent call the host and confirm that the party is legitimate and there will be parental supervision.

2. Alcohol and drugs available at the party - signing the list to not do drugs and consume alcohol isn't enough, you and your child need to engage in conversation about the party. Student should have a talk with the parent prior to the party and make arrangements to be picked up early if the student notices of alcohol and drug use.

Langley HS is actively looking to sponsor games, dances and club activities for the students; they need an outlet, a place to have fun without alcohol and drugs.

School Board Work Session – Jacky Longwell attended the school board work session on January 12, regarding the change to the grading policy. Jacky distributed handouts pertaining to the work session. She summarized what was transpired during the work session – and the list of reasons given by school board members to "changes vs. keep" the current grading policy. Please refer to the handout, "Jack Dale/School Board's thinking sheet regarding grading scales" for the detailed information. Jacky felt the report lacked the crucial points of grading scale based on comments made by board members at the work session.

Jacky also shared the study result of the same topic grade regulation that was done on another county, Albemarle County. The school board in this county had an open forum discussion to complete the study to implement the new grading scale system. We need to continue to encourage our school board to move forward on this.

Betty Ende also attended the work session, and after Jacky's report, Betty discussed the school board discussion of the SLEEP study. Apparently the task force study was conducted without any consultation on the part of the teachers and, at this point, the school board has not firmed up the plan.

Committee Reports:

Audit Committee Report – Betty Ende presented the result of the audit report from last year. The result of the review was positive, all sources of cash disbursements have been administered properly and the report has been approved.

Orchestra Update – February 12 & 13, 2008, Electrify Your Strings. A grant was awarded and teachers have discussed and decided on the “Mark Wood Production” workshop to promote and inspire students to a new level of orchestra. Bach to Rock donated a sound system for this work shop. Jacky and Wafika both suggested advertising the event thru Highlander and Pipenotes.

FAFSA Night – Wafika attended this event with several other parents from MHS in December 2008. We need to collaborate with Langley on events like this to share and disseminate pertinent information to the parents for both schools.

Unfinished Business:

There was no Unfinished Business Reported in the January meeting.

New Business:

There was no New Business reported in the January meeting.

Upcoming Dates:

January 19	Martin Luther King's Birthday – student holiday
January 20	Inauguration Day – student holiday
January 25	PTSA Newsletter Deadline for February Issue
January 26 & 27	Student Holidays – teacher workdays
February 3	Rising 9 th Grade Information Night
February 9	Colleges that Change Lives Program
February 10	PTSA meeting 7:30 pm – Note: this is Tuesday night

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

In Attendance: Susan Perla, Debbie Jackson, Jihui Kim, Stefanie Schoepfle, Kathy Rugh, Rebecca Davis, Reg Devlin, Jacky Longwell, Lisa Hymes, Wafika Albani, Betty Ende, Eileen Nelson, Kent Arnold, Phyllis Yoshida