

PLEASE NOTE:
THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THE MEETING.
OFFICIAL MINUTES WILL BE POSTED ONCE APPROVED
BY THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP AT THE NEXT MEETING.

MIAMI PALMETTO SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PTSA
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
SEPTEMBER 17, 2008

The meeting was called to order by President Andrea Shosfy at 9:16 a.m. She welcomed everyone and stated we had almost 100 members at our first meeting of the year in August. She thanked parents for attending today.

Program - School Services:

Susie Overholt, School Nurse: Ms. Overholt is employed by Jackson South Community Hospital but her services are donated by Jackson to our school. It is her 13th year at MPSH and her job is to help your children during the day with medical emergencies. Unfortunately, too many kids get hurt or ill over the weekend and come to see her Monday morning for her opinion, stating "I just wanted to see if you think I should go home." She is not allowed to administer any medications - prescription or OTC - unless they are preauthorized by a physician and the proper forms are completed and on file at the school. If your child has a chronic medical condition, the authorization form must be filled out and signed by a doctor if the child regularly takes medication. Students must have a pass to go to the clinic unless it is an emergency. She often gets requests for birth control and pregnancy testing. She will answer their questions but encourages them to speak with their parents.

Harry Nerenberg, Guidance Counselor: Mr. Nerenberg is here today on behalf of Bonnie Hannemann, Chairperson of the Student Services Department. MPSH has 6 counselors that are assigned alphabetically in grades 10 through 12. Each counselor handles about 600 students. For 9th grade students, 4 counselors are working together to do group presentations on study skills, time management, and conflict resolution. Presentations are made throughout the school year. Students should be encouraged to sit down with their counselor and work out an academic plan to steer them in the direction they want to go. They need to select classes to get the academic credentials to go to the college they want. Subject selection forms usually are sent home in the early spring, so the kids should meet with their counselors well before then. Parents need to get to know your child's counselor one-on-one as well. Ms. Maggio at ex. 2241 schedules counselor appointments.

Wendy Christopher, Career Specialist: Ms. Christopher's responsibility is to educate the students about careers and choices for their future occupation. She helps in the preparation of resumes, career portfolios, and job fairs. She works closely with Student Services and dropout prevention programs, is a community liaison, Dade Partner liaison, and manages vocational careers. She assists students in setting up educational programs online (see Facts.org), helps kids find after school jobs (16 and older), and handles special projects like the 50th Birthday Celebration, Eight Habits of the Heart, SOS Program, etc. Ms. Christopher also works closely with Sally Coords, College Assistance Program (CAP) Advisor. You need to contact Ms. Coords with questions about colleges, credits, Bright Futures, and scholarships. Her main job is to help your child do everything they can do to get in to the right place. She helps them find a good match, seek financial aid, write essays, or anything to do with the college process. Eleventh grade Parent Night is Monday, October 27th, starting at 6 p.m. in the

auditorium. That same night from 7 p.m. to 8:45 p.m., the College Fair will be held in the gym. This year, 85 colleges will be participating. You and your child should attend. All grades are invited.

Robin Tassler, TRUST Specialist: Ms. Tassler handles problems students face with their family, alcohol or drug abuse, grief counseling, relationship issues, etc. She coordinates Red Ribbon Week activities, peer mediation and training, and student based conflict resolution to help try and resolve conflicts without fighting. Lastly, she develops workshops for parents on teen issues, health classes, and helping kids feel included. It is a confidential process, including the families involved. Life-threatening situations, however, must be reported, i.e., suicidal or homicidal behavior, a crisis situation involving drugs or alcohol, abuse, etc.

Angie Felipe-Lima, Activities Director: Besides coordinating club activities, Ms. Felipe-Lima, also handles volunteers and events such as the upcoming 50th Anniversary Celebration. She introduced Student Council representative Junior Elizabeth Kobert who plans to attend our meetings and report back to the student government.

David Rosenberg, Honor Council: Senior David Rosenberg is president of the Honor Council, a group made up of MPSH students and faculty. He knows that a lot of kids are tempted to cheat because of the stiff competition for good grades. Cheating is not tolerated at our school, so he asks us to tell our kids not to cheat. Cheating or copying your friend's homework will hurt you in the long run. When they get caught, the Honor Council gives kids a second chance.

Approve Minutes: The minutes of the August 20, 2008, General Membership Meeting were presented. A motion was made by Mary Stewart to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and approved without corrections.

Recognitions: Ms. Shosfy acknowledged meeting attendees who are running for various Village of Pinecrest council positions: Cindy Lerner, Gail Serota, Jennifer Wollmann, and Nancy Harter.

Treasurer's Report: Previously, Isabel McBrayer had distributed copies of the current budget. She explained that one more adjustment was necessary to the budget that we approved last month - \$510 for ACT testing that was missed through oversight. A motion was made by Karen Kett to amend the budget to include \$510 under Special Projects – Approved 2008. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously. If you have any specific questions about the budget, contact her.

Committee Reports:

College Fair: The event is scheduled for Monday, October 27th, starting at 7 p.m. in the gym. Barbara Davis and her co-chair, Barbara Toland, need volunteers to help set up during the day and at night to guide parents and assist the college reps. They will need baked goods and other foods to feed the representatives, as well. PTSA Volunteer Chair, Mary Steele, will be sending out an email request for help.

Special Projects: Jennifer Wollmann stated that teachers have received the letters and forms to request items from funds contributed jointly by ESSAC, the PTSA, and the Principal's special account. Last year, we had \$100,000 in requests and were able to satisfy approximately \$80,000. So far this year, we have about \$15,000 in requests, but expect a lot more by the end of the month deadline.

Legislative: Parliamentarian Randi Trazenfeld said she learned three things while attending a recent workshop sponsored by MDPS downtown: (a) how the schools are funded per student from Tallahassee; (b) how the budget itself is determined; and, (c)

how we can effectively advocate and use the information we have learned to participate in the system. The workshop will be repeated again on Saturday, October 4th, at Miami Coral Park Senior High, 8865 SW 16th Street, Miami (call 305-995-1102 and/or 305-995-1233). A PTSA leadership program will be going on at the same time.

Membership/Donations: Karen Kett advised that as of today, we have 1,042 members. At the end of last year, we had 1,060 so we are well on our way to exceeding the old membership number. She reminded us that parents, students, family members, and even neighbors can join our PTSA. Concerning the Special Donation program, we have already surpassed our \$7,000 goal and have received \$15,000 to date. Last year's total was \$12,000. This is a year-long program, so you can donate at any time. The donation form is on our website.

Book Sale: Ms. Kett said that the Book Sale is going on this week through Friday. Information and teacher required reading book lists are online. The sale will be open tomorrow after early release at noon. Additional books are available for general reading so you may want to stop by and take a look. The PTSA is using Borders as its vendor for the first time and it is working out great.

50th Anniversary: Although not a MPSH graduate, Nancy Harter stated that the 50th Anniversary is for everyone. As a parent of children who attended MPSH, she has been at this school longer than at her own high school. Volunteers and parents have worked hard on behalf of Palmetto, so she suggested we buy ourselves a brick to commemorate and honor ourselves and our graduating kids. Claudia Glasson, a parent who has been here for 10 years like Ms. Harter encouraged 9th grade parents to find someone to mentor them. In addition, Ms. Glasson is in charge of the Memory Book for the celebration. Left over books will be sold for cost and she is still taking ads (\$50 for a ¼ page up to \$200 for a full page). Email her at Glasson@bellsouth.net.

EESAC: Ms. Harter said that the first ESSAC meeting of the school year was yesterday. The money coming from the state has been cut in half from \$10 per student to \$5 per student. ESSAC feels that can provide most of what they did last year, but the stipend to the teachers will be reduced. The committee needs an alternate member position filled. The group meets in Room 1005 once a month and the meetings are open to everyone. Mary Steward nominated Hal Rosenfeld to fill the alternate position. The motion was seconded by Denise Kranichfeld and all voted in favor.

Principal's Report: After a parent expressed concerns about persons just walking into the school, Mr. Weiner explained that the building was designed and built in 1958. Because of the design, there are probably 30 different ways to enter the campus. We only have 8 security monitors now. We are authorized to have 10, but we have 2 positions open. He has asked for an increase in security personnel. This is a wide open campus and we have been lucky there have been no incidents over the past 10 years. When he came here, he made the id badge program mandatory. He relies upon parents to educate their kids and make sure they have their ids and wear them.

Mr. Weiner reminded parents that the Open House is scheduled for Tuesday, September 23rd. A Resource Fair will be in the Media Center, opening at 6 pm, and at 7 pm, you should be in your child's first period class so Open House can begin. Please be on time and your child should have given you a copy of their schedule with a map of the school. He thanked the PTSA for the \$1,500 donation for teacher lunches during the 5 early release days. In fact, tomorrow is an early release day and the students will be dismissed at noon. He also thanked the parent volunteers who do photocopying for the teachers every day from 9 am to 11 am.

The electronic device policy is in its third year. They can bring them to school, but must keep them off and in a secure place. Ninety-nine percent of the time when a

cell phone gets confiscated, it is because a parent is trying to get in touch with the child. Please do not call or text message them between 7 am and 2:30 pm. If you must get a message to your student, call or email the school. Phones going off in the middle of class are disruptive and not fair to the teacher or other students.

Mr. Weiner encouraged members to purchase a brick and attend the 50th Anniversary festivities as a community event. He also wanted parents to know that, if you have Bellsouth as your internet provider, the school is having problems receiving your emails. So, call us, because the staff is not ignoring your emails. Lastly, this auditorium feels like a "meat locker" because the temperature is set for a full house. We are not allowed to adjust the thermostat but he meet with the maintenance department today to figure it how to correct this problem.

A parent asked a question concerning homecoming, hotel parties, and school-sponsored after parties (if any). Mr. Weiner advised that there are no school-sponsored after parties. If you are a parent assisting in reserving a limo service by organizing it and putting it on your credit card, you should speak directly with the company and driver to set a fixed driving itinerary. It is all about communication and let the kids know what your expectations are. An informal meeting of parents is planned for Friday, September 26th, in Room 307, at 9 am, to further discuss this issue. Sima Miska told parents that we need to empower ourselves and get together with other parents and have a uniform answer about curfews, after parties, etc. Don't be shy to call the other parents. Ms. Miska thanked parents for the food and other supplies they brought today to donate to Haitian relief efforts. She said that some clubs are also making collections at the school.

Old Business:

Reflections: Ms. Shosfy explained that Reflections is a PTSA sponsored program for the arts. The last day for entries is October 17th.

Miscellaneous:

Yearbook: Student Stephanie Lipton explained that this year's book has an anniversary theme. Ads are being sold for the book for senior students and businesses. They are also seeking underwriters. The presale cost of the books is \$50 cash valid this week and next week. After that, the price will be going up. Student council is also selling pouch-type id holders for \$3.

Volunteer ID Badges: AP O'Connor is available after today's meeting to make id badges in Room 508. All regular volunteers should have one.

Media Center Volunteers: Due to staffing cuts, the Media Center needs volunteers on a regular weekly basis to help out. An email will be sent out requesting volunteers.

Band Booster Club Fundraiser: Club member Kathy McGilvray stated that the booster club is selling discount cards for \$10. The cards allow discounts at local restaurants and businesses and are good until August 31, 2009. On Saturday, September 27th, the club will hold a garage sale at the school. If you have items we can sell, call her at 665 3470 and she will make arrangements to have them picked up.

Next Meeting: The next PTSA meeting will be held at Pinecrest Community Center, 5855 SW 111th Street, on October 15th at 9 am. Toby Rose will be our guest speaker to offer advice and what to expect with the college process.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Roxy Lancelli, Recording Secretary