

M.A.S.T. P.T.S.A., Inc.
April 19, 2010 Meeting Minutes

At 7:01 P.M. Adam Hubeny, PTSA Co-President, called the meeting to order at the High Technology HS alternative meeting site. Forty-four members were present. After the Pledge of Allegiance, Adam noted that the February 8, 2010 Meeting Minutes had been posted to the school web site approximately one week after that meeting for membership review. A motion to approve the Minutes was made and seconded with unanimous acceptance voted. Executive Committee members present in addition to Adam were Jill Henry and Stanley and Sakeena McGregory, Co-Vice Presidents, Barbara Ilaria, Treasurer, Helene Hagen, Recording Secretary and Anne Davidson, Corresponding Secretary. Diane Hubeny, Co-President, was unable to attend.

Executive Committee Reports followed.

Treasurer's Report- Barbara Ilaria reported that the filing of the 1096 tax form had been completed. She also provided details of the Financial Report. Checking account balance as of March 31, 2010 was \$10,632.03 and Money Market balance was \$69,561.44 for a total balance of \$80,193.47 in available funds. Adam had raised the point that the checking account balance was at a level where some of the funds therein might earn better interest in another account at last meeting. After receiving approval of the membership then, and subsequent research, funds were transferred from checking to the Money Market Account to benefit from the higher interest rate received. Barbara reserved a year over year larger checking account balance to offset anticipated expenses for the balance of the school year based on historical outlays in the last half of the school years 2008 and 2009. The Report was accepted and approved unanimously.

Vice President's Report- Vice Presidents Jill Henry, and Stanley and Sakeena McGregory had nothing to report at this time.

Recording Secretary- Helene Hagen had nothing to report at this time.

Corresponding Secretary- Anne Davidson had nothing to report at this time.

Faculty Report- Ms Hoffman was unable to attend. Dr. Christopher was present, and a report on District implications of a significant budget cut was delayed until later in the meeting to allow for questions and answers.

Committee Reports:

Driver's Ed- Pam Donegan was not present. Adam reported that the 30 hour program being offered through Coast Driving School was in progress and well attended.

Gift Auction-Iris Marketta reported that Gibbs Hall will not guarantee availability for scheduled reservations after August 2010 due to the Fort Monmouth Base Closing. Alternate sites may need to be considered and suggestions for locations were solicited. Iris and co-chair, Roseanne Brandl, will be investigating and report back to the membership.

Super Raffle- Phil Peluso reported that the gambling license had been approved and obtained for the raffle sale. A total of 374 raffle books had been mailed to the membership. He urged parents and students to sell a total of \$100 per family in tickets. The raffle proceeds will be split between the lucky

winners and the PTSA, with 50% of the amount returned for funding of MAST student enrichment. (The need for a successful fundraiser was again highlighted after the report on budget cuts.)

Clothing-Dot Lucyk noted that she will be unable to attend the April 29, 2010 Freshmen orientation but that Judy Horan will be manning the clothing sales at that event.

Directory/Membership - Mr. Keith Dwight reported that forms are available on the MAST web site in a .pdf fillable format for the coming school year. He requested the forms be completed online and then submitted with payment to avoid errors. Dwight Hakim was unable to attend but the merger of these two committees, which had significant overlap, is anticipated for the 2010/2011 school year. * A report on By_Laws review is still needed to see if there are any parliamentary issues that need to be taken to confirm appointment of Keith Dwight as chairperson of the new, merged, committee given current committee chair by law provisions.

Family Picnic- Patrice Jaskiewicz noted that plans are underway for the June 11, 2010 event that is both a welcome for the incoming MAST students, and a farewell to the school year for current MAST students and their families. This is her first year as chair of the event and she issued a call for volunteers as many of the prior year 'veterans' have graduated along with their student. She also asked for the understanding and continued assistance of those who have volunteered in the past. Tickets will be discounted for advance purchase but will be \$10 for adults and \$5 for students at the door on the day of the event.

Please contact Patrice if you can help.

Hospitality- No report. Plans are underway for the Teacher's luncheon hosted by the PTSA.

Scholarship- Dr. Joel Ross reported that Essay questions were posted on Monday April 5, 2010 with a deadline for submission by close of the school day on Friday, May 14, 2010. Guidelines and information for the 2010 Scholarship program were previously made available on the MAST website for review. Seniors are encouraged to submit their essays and applications. Adam Hubeny then read a letter submitted by Senior Class President, Joe Dellera, suggesting that ways to broaden the use of funds to benefit all students be considered by the PTSA. The Scholarship committee will review the suggestion and consider how it might be incorporated into the program in the future. Any proposals will be reviewed with the membership, and subject to vote for future PTSA school year budgets.

SAT/PSAT Prep- Marianne Morse was unable to attend but had reported work underway to offer courses earlier in the coming school year.

Graduation -Dr. C. reported that tentative date is Tuesday June 22, 2010 at 4:30 P.M. This is still subject to change. PTSA responsibilities will be the same as last year.

Sunshine- No report at this time.

Note: Committee chairs will need to be voted on and approved by the Executive Committee for the 2010-2011 school year. A number of vacancies will be occurring as several 'chairs' are graduating. Interested parties should contact the PTSA co-presidents.

Standing Committee Reports:

By-Laws- Nothing to report.

Rude Awakening- Ed Plaskon provided details on preparations for the drunk driving education event scheduled for April 22, 2010 here at MAST from 9 AM to 1:40 PM for an expected 860 students. **Volunteers** to assist at the breakfast and to donate food and beverage items **were still needed**. A number of volunteers had been trained by the Middletown Police Department to assist in the impaired ability simulations with the students. Refresher training for previous volunteers will be provided at MAST on the day of the event (4/22) one hour before the starting time. It was noted that volunteer levels were down a bit from last year. Details of the Volunteer Breakfast were also addressed.

Old Business

Equipment purchase- The Digital Video Camera approved for purchase at our last meeting had been delivered to the Media Center for student and faculty use.

Musical Instrument Purchase- Ed and Shawn Villalobos reported that the PTSA solicitation email had resulted in the donation of two musical instruments to this project. The criteria for a secure and usable space for storage had been met by Mr. Alfonse's kind offer to donate some of his allocated space in the Tech area. An additional need for a protective environment could be addressed by the purchase of cases and stands for the instruments. Ed had researched the cost and delivered an estimate of \$400.00. A motion to approve the purchase was made and unanimously approved. Adam advised that an ST-5 tax exempt form be used so sales tax would not be applied to purchase unnecessarily. Barbara Ilaria should be contacted for the form. Adam also thanked Dr. C. for his assistance and input on this subject.

Class Money- Adam read an email from Dr. C. outlining the criteria for each class to set up their class activity funding. It explained that there is no 'required' amount. The criteria include setting up a budget and goals as well as fundraising proposals.

Nominations-Adam reported that the PTSA will be sending a general email soliciting volunteers for Executive Committee positions for the next school year. Stanley and Sakeena McGregory (Co Vice Presidents) and Helene Hagen (Recording Secretary) will be 'graduating' along with their daughters this year. Adam requested volunteers to the Nominating Committee. They will solicit candidates for the existing offices and pending vacancies. Pam Hakim, and Mr. and Mrs. Sabatini volunteered and will be following up with us at the next meeting. We are a little behind in getting the nomination process underway, Cathy Hawn will review by-laws in this regard. We are hoping the solicitation email can get out to the membership by May 5, 2010.

New Business

Caps and Gowns-Adam mentioned that it was likely too late for this year, but he would like to entertain other ways to financially assist students, such as paying for caps and gowns for the graduating class. He would like to revisit that in the next school year budget.

Junior Class Request- Junior Class President, Amanda Pell, had submitted a proposal requesting PTSA assistance in funding a new event that her class feels may warrant consideration as a standing PTSA sponsored event in the future. The Class of 2011 would like to host an Alumni luncheon during the week of June 1, 2010 with the intent of utilizing the experiences and advice of recent graduates. The proposal was accepted and funding approved not to exceed \$560 and likely to be around \$300 by unanimous vote.

Special Report- MCVSD Budget Cut

Jill Henry had attended a meeting with Superintendent McCorkle and other MCVSD academy Parent Organizations on April 12th. The impact of budget cuts known until that date was discussed. She provided a brief overview of the report and the responses by the attendees.

Current Club Advisors' Stipends will be cut by 50%. \$500K is currently spent on club advisor positions in the form of Teacher Stipends--this is to be cut 50% across the entire MCVSD district.

It may be important to note that the MCVSD is combined of not only the 5 career academies, but Alternative Secondary, Adult Post Secondary, and Shared-time Programs. The MCVSD budget funds all 4 programs. Three entities contribute to the MCVSD budget: County tax levy (up 4% for next year), State (cut 22.7% for next year), and tuition from local school districts (which Superintendent McCorkell decided to continue unchanged for next year due to the burden local schools will be under with regard to State funding losses and the local school budget defeats in many of the sending districts).

Next year's budget is \$40.1M, which is \$1.5M less than this year and \$2.7M less if you take into account the 3% needed each year to keep teaching and programs the same. Supt. McCorkell sees only 3 ways to deal with this shortfall: save money, raise revenue, and reduce staff.

What differences we will see next year:

Student activities (clubs, competition teams)—may combine or eliminate clubs.

Academic/research clubs and competition teams—transportation costs are high, might combine teams from multiple academies to save in transportation cost.

National competitions—combination of student/parent and district monies.

Field trips—will be cut down, if needed for the curriculum they will be kept. Alternatives: virtual field trip, distance learning.

Text books—no new sets, just replace lost/worn ones or buy additional books as needed.

Supplies—no longer stockpiling, just ordering as needed.

Eliminate summer programs.

Current Club Advisors' Stipends will be cut by 50%

The responses focused on what the Parent Organizations can and cannot do to assist at their schools. Discussion included Activity Fee charges for Clubs, Parent Volunteers to replace some of the advisor positions, direct payments by Parent Organizations to fund staffing (this would not be allowed).

Jill then turned the subject over to Dr. Christopher.

Dr. C. confirmed that two members of the MAST staff had already received Reduction in Force notices: our Guidance Counselor who is not yet tenured in the district, and our Media Specialist who is budgeted as support staff. Secretaries and Administrative staff were also potentially subject to layoff. (Subsequent to the meeting a member of the secretarial staff received a notice).

Parents present were very upset with this news and asked what they could do to alter this course of events. Dr. C. urged voters to pass their local school budgets and reconfirmed that parents can't fund salaries by law. He said that retirements may be instrumental in saving positions for staff members at MAST. He noted that Mrs. Downey had announced her retirement prior to these events, and that some staff at other academies may be retiring as well.

The PTSA as a group discussed attending the District meeting to express our concerns about the Media

Specialist and Guidance positions. After much discussion, it was decided that the decision had already been made by the District to issue RIF notices. Adam suggested that he will contact other Parent Organizations in the District and see what they are doing about the budget effect on staffing and other issues, and how we can, if possible, somehow impact the decision process.

There is an effort to reopen negotiations with the bargaining units staffing the district. It has been suggested that sidebar conversations limited to certain issues (e.g., salary) could be undertaken. Positions will be moved around the District based on seniority and certifications. Parent out of pocket expenses will increase. The incoming Freshmen class of 2014 will be significantly larger (84 accepted) and room could be an issue in terms of both physical space and class size. Dr. C. believes that Teacher and Guidance Staffing levels will not be reduced, but Support Staff such as our Media Specialist position will be very difficult to maintain. He mentioned that the school had historically funded Student Achievement Awards totaling \$800-\$1000 each year. He asked for assistance with these funds. The request was approved by the membership present.

Questions about the availability of the MCVSD budget information, and whether it is on line, etc. will be answered after Dr. C. researches.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 P.M.