

**Central Parents Council**

**Minutes from September 4, 2014**

**In Attendance:** Lolita Reichbach, Beth Packert, Wendi DeSchutter, Kaitlin Eisenegger, Ingrid Wright, Augusta Reese, Helen Daly, Pamela Sherlock, Amy Brogan, Maura McGloin, Stephanie DiNozzi, Angela Engel, Anne Gumersell, Jill DeMarco, Karen Spehler, Andrea Buonfiglio, Rosemarie Kirchner, Karen Walters, Fran Conte, Christina Bruderman, Nicole Pultz, Fran Conte, Christina Goetjen, Helena Grossman, Carol Terracino, Terry Coyle, M. Marasciullo, Janice Elkin, Lesa Starkins, Anthony Paolano, Anabela Rivadeneiro. Tricia Hammond

**Absent:** Colleen Haskell, Dana Lostritto, Heather Savarese, Ginette Reynolds, Kristin Robillard, Lauryn Koke, Anne Scott, Robert Taglich, Tim Ruocco

**CPC Business**

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 by Beth Packert, Chairperson. Beth led the group in the the Pledge of Allegiance. For the first meeting, we went around the room and introduced ourselves.

Beth asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 1, 2014 meeting. Lolita Reichbach moved, Augusta Reese seconded. The minutes were approved.

Beth requested that reports from all member groups be sent prior to the meeting so they could be distributed.

Beth stated that we would love to have the Goosehill parents and parents of younger children attending meetings. People don't have an inkling of what CPC does. Members of the audience suggested including reminders of meetings in weekly notes from the schools and that parent group meetings should encourage attendance. It was also suggested that class moms should be encouraged to attend.

Beth stated that contract negotiations with the teachers' union are ongoing. Parents received the letter from the teachers last year. We need to wait and see. Test scores came out recently, they seemed fine. Mrs. Bellino will be discussing the new social studies curriculum in fourth grade and fifth grade.

Maura McGloin questioned where the test scores were. They were supposed to be posted on the website three weeks ago. There tends to be a lag time.

Beth asked what people think of having a later start time. Helen Daly stated that it was a great idea but that it's a busing issue. Karen Walter said that there is also a question of competitive sports-timing.

Beth requested a volunteer to chair the staff appreciation lunch. Christina Goetjen volunteered. The lunch is on March 19th.

**Report from the Treasurer**

**Lolita Reichbach, Treasurer**, stated that the calendars are in. They will be distributed to the parents at schools via the presidents of the PTOs. The price will uniformly be \$5 this year to cover the cost of the printing and to raise funds for PTO insurance. We have a budget that will need to be presented and voted on next month.

Beth questioned whether we want to go color for the pocket calendars. Karen Spehler said that the pocket calendars are covered in color, but the inside is black and white and that full color would probably be too expensive.

### **Status and Resolution Report**

**Wendi DeSchutter, Vice Chair**, stated that the S&R Report is a summary of things going on in the district including goals from the Board of Ed and parent concerns. Issues for this report included teacher contracts and security of the schools. For every meeting Wendi will point out important parts and questions can be asked.

Lloyd Harbor renovations to security: been pushed off until next summer because permits were not obtained from state in time.

### **School Reports**

**GPFA:** Kaitlin Eisenegger gave the report. GH got a new playground over the summer, it looks great. GPFA bought t-shirts for the staff as welcome back to school. The Welcome Back Picnic is tomorrow and will include bouncy castles, dj, games and pizza. The Welcome Back Tea is on the 17th at 9:30. Back to school night is on the 18th for Kindergarten and 1st Graders.

**LH:** Gussie Donohue gave the report. We had 10 new families over the summer. The Ambassador Program has each board member helping one or two families. Involvement included playdates, answering questions. There was a great response. New family orientation is on the 28th. There is a new shadow program where parents came in to help incoming 2nd graders with the transition. The LH group had breakfast delivered yesterday for the staff which was very appreciated. The Welcome Back Tea is on September 11th. Photo day is Sept. 30 as is Back to School night.

**WS:** Ingrid Wright gave the report. We have 7 new families. We now have 243 students, with 174 families. The new family orientation was a success: students gave tours; Ingrid and Mr. Simon described how they run things at the school. PTG made new purchases including new street signs, at both entrances to school which highlight the blue ribbon distinction they received and that it was established in 1790. The PTG purchased a new rock wall for the gym and are waiting for padding. They added green screen tech for the media room; new replacement benches for gym; new art for art room. The West Side garden was flourishing over the summer. They will have tomato sauce day in September. The Welcome Breakfast is on the 16th. The big fundraiser, Westside Win on Nov. 17th. Hope to sell 200 tickets at \$100.

**CFA:** Wendi DeSchutter gave the report in Nancy Israeli's absence. The first meeting is Tuesday at noon at Pac. Mr. Maddock and mr. Montesaro will be there. The Faculty Breakfast is on September 16th. Class Pictures are on September 19th and 22nd.

**Arts Booster:** Pamela Sherlock gave the report. They are run by a five parent team including Stacy Seeka Colleen Campbell. The Arts Booster Club supports a lot of students, with a very broad reach including in school and after school programs too. There is a new Gallery at the HS that CFA and Arts Booster donated featuring student artwork. They are in a financially sound position. They will be going to look at the needs of the district and high school, inside and outside school. October 17th is the next meeting. October 23rd: is a Fall Night Out.

**Cultural Arts Committee:** Tricia , gave the report. We are working on a concert for 7-12, spread out through grades. Have each group do their own situation instead of one big event where a lot of students might not be available. The first meeting is on Monday at 9am in HS.

**FOCUS:** Helen Daly gave the report. The team includes Lolita Reichbach (WS), Angela Engel (LH), and they need a GH representative. Goal for FOCUS is to continue a dialog about drugs and alcohol. They are looking at programs and having meetings with principals for direction. They are looking into a MADD presentation and Sufflok DA choices and consequences, a film about drinking and driving.

**SEPTA:** Helen Daly gave the report. Homework club at LH notice went out.

**Seahawks Booster:** See form for membership application. Includes all we've done including: path to Seahawk field; community message board; trainers; golf carts; Senior Field Day; 7th grade orientation; traveling teams get a stipend; assist families in need. Summer camps we had most sports, with all coaches involved. The coaches liked meeting the younger kids and students got to volunteer. Brick sales are ongoing (purchased last spring). Goals are to redo wall of fame and make it more organized along with the retired jersey banners. Seahawks Booster holds the Varsity Awards Dinner at Crest Hollow. A Fall fundraiser is planned. First Meeting is next Wednesday at the library. New people are interested in joining. The Wellness and Fitness center proposal has been approved. A rendering will be available to review. The Center is geared to the student body as a whole including yoga and fitness classes. Clothing sales: the Boathouse will be open two or three times a year and items will be shipped to your house.

Pamela Sherlock asked whether they could coordinate the clothing rather than having everyone decide on different clothing. Karen Spehler stated it was frustrating to have to purchase different clothing every year. They are also looking at customizing with numbers.

**New Business:**

Helen Daly: Attendance is an issue. In the Minutes from May 1st, half attended and half didn't attend. She suggested asking presidents to send email to reps that they do need to attend meetings. they're only able to miss one or two. Otherwise they need to be replaced. To have a strong parent group, you need to have attendance. People need to be aware of CPC rules.

Nicole Pultz stated that it is also great to be cutting down on the time that will encourage people to attend. Pamela Sherlock stated that we should publicize if we're having a speaker. Parents would love to know what they're coming for. Helen Daly stated that anyone can come to CPC meetings. Beth Packert stated that we want to make this a more unique meeting so we're not rehashing everything from other meetings. Ingrid Wright suggested that we send info about the meeting so the presidents can forward to their people and that we need to explain what CPC is.

Kaitlin Eisenegger stated that she needs blurbs from all groups about what they do to educated GH parents. Any groups are welcome to come on September 17th at 9:30 for the Welcome Tea.

Karen Spehler: suggested that we post board of ed highlights at the back of the room.

Beth Packert stated that we'll be reviewing bylaws, if you want to review that, ask for a copy.

Helen Daly asked whether there was any progress with teacher contracts? Beth stated that it has gone to fact finding.

### Guest Speakers

**Anthony Paolano** is the new board president. He stated that teacher contracts is an ongoing matter. Fact-finding is in preliminary stages (we did that 6 years ago and had a settlement about a month later). The report takes time to come out. The Board is still open to communication with teachers. Everyone wants it settled sooner than later. State of negotiations on LI: 53 out of 125 school districts are out of contract which stems from the tax cap issue.

Buildings: The new playground looks great at GH. The Board wants to keep up facilities to the utmost. They are in the final phase of lighting improvement and new ceilings to help with energy efficiency. Over 2-3 months board will do a tour with principals to see what needs to be done. Paolano will try to come to meetings as much as he can.

#### **Dr. Wilansky and Mrs. Bellino:**

Dr. Wilansky stated that we had a great opening yesterday. She started at Westside with the bell ringing. This year is the 225th anniversary of west side. They're planning a celebration in spring. HS and LH were very positive. We're ready and excited.

Work over summer: curriculum, buildings cleaned up and insuring that teachers receive professional development.

We are committed to standards. Test prep is not our middle name. We want to find a balance. There were two workshops this summer; Jr high Teachers College Literacy Institute. Math specialist had a workshop with a large number of teachers.

Common Core: we are integrating common core standards. Common core is the new reality, but it's about how you introduce the standards. By the time students are taking regents, they will have had years of common core training. We were pleased with results on common core algebra test, but it wasn't as good as our 89 average on traditional regents test (so regents test posted is the traditional one). State released more questions on elementary and regents assessments, teachers will be able to use those this year.

Mrs. Bellino stated that we are comparing unit tests and common core tests and seeing where are we mismatched are we spending too much time on one thing and not enough of the other? They are looking closely at how many kids got the question almost right. Need to find out where the misunderstanding is that the majority of kids have. We need to be looking at the curriculum document as a whole. We have the test prep material ready for this year. Teachers college work is great professional environment. That is a strong university partnership.

Dr. Wilansky stated that assessment scores are not part of the students' folders. It is just informational which was an interesting concession for the transition.

Mrs. Bellino discussed the change in the social studies curriculum that would impact WSS because of the immigration unit changing from 5th to 4th grade. They will be doing the unit in both grades this year so no one misses it. She was happy that the parents are concerned about those experiences. This is part of the balance. These experiences are as important as test prep. Mrs. Bellino stated that the new pieces in the curriculum are economics and citizenship. The new curriculum is emphasizing habits of mind and ways of thinking. Think like a historian -inquiry arc. Start out with central question (aligned to the standards) and then use information and text to form arguments, opinions and evidence, draw conclusion. Gives kids the experience of working through it and thinking like a historian. Mrs. Bellino stated that they are not going to be able to

complete the whole unit on social studies. It should be more integrated into reading and writing. All of the teachers should be teaching reading for ELA. We didn't have time to work on the curriculum for social studies this summer.

Mrs. Bellino stated that they would be releasing letters with scores today and will be on the portal.

*Health:* Dr. Wilansky discussed the new health curriculum at schools.

- The Board created elementary health and Mrs. Parent will work at WS and LH, she is certified in health - it's her dream job. Helen Crosson at the library has put together a list of parenting books on how to raise healthy and sound children so there can be book studies. This is a great way to change the community.
- Drop in rooms are starting at HS so that there is a place for students in distress. There is a new 1/2 time social worker during Jr. High lunch periods. They are really reexamining services to make sure we're helping these kids.
- Wendi DeSchutter asked what are the topics for health. Dr. Wilansky responded that they are using Great Body Shop.
- Mrs. Bellino stated that they do have a K-3 committee to explore what are the implications for younger kids with the health curriculum. Mr. Bongino is Health, PE and athletics director and is chairing a committee with Mrs. Parent to look at health curriculum. Mr. Homer is also involved.

*Science:* There was a question about the science curriculum changes. Mrs. Bellino stated that the HS Science Dept. made the decision; wanted earth science back as a more foundational piece. A lot of this is driven by splitting physics into two courses. Good topic for the CFA to discuss with the science teachers. They are now having 8th graders taking Living Environment Regents so that they can open up another year of science for them.

**Educational Foundation:** Stephanie DiNozzi reported: They have some new board members. Lisa Starkins, Nancy Israeli, Charles Prizzi. Additional community members too. They are a fast growing organization. Lolita Reichbach is helping with revamping the website. They donated \$84,000 to the school district in July that went toward the increase in tech accessibility in elementary schools. A Community Info event is in October. Lego Robotics is to be run by Ms. Seal. She is the tech person for the elementary schools. They paid fee for entry to Lego and for equipment. PTGs are administering. School is providing teacher and location. We do need more funding for HS robotics too, including corporate sponsorship. Send inquiries to [cshedfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:cshedfoundation@gmail.com).

**Reminders:** Principals will be here in October. Beth Packert said that the next meeting would be October 2nd and the next Board of Ed meeting would be September 9th.

**Motion to Adjourn at 10:50: Helen Daly, 2nd Karen Walker.**