

PTA Meeting notes – February 3, 2009 at 7 pm

The meeting was called to order by President Lisa Sanfuentes. The December 9, 2008 meeting minutes were approved.

President's Report (Lisa S.) – we are forming a nominating committee to form next year's PTA Executive Board. If you're interested, please contact Olivia Lai or me. We need to fill 5 open positions. We also need to amend our PTA bylaws by March 7, 2009. The Bylaws committee met over the weekend. And we have to change certain items in accordance with the MCCPTA. The major changes are: the PTA Executive Board will now be called the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is made up of our PTA Board, the school principal or assistant principal, ex-officio members and at large members; and the PTA Executive Committee is only for people who are elected. Doreen Rosenthal is our cluster rep and she has sent out a letter on BTNET to the governor on funding the school budget. It's a form letter and you can either send that off or send your own letter. Science Fair (Katerina P.) – set up is tomorrow from 5pm to 6:45 pm; on Thursday we will have class visits from 11 am to 3 pm and families can visit from 6 to 8 pm. The evening starts ½ hour earlier. If you need to leave early, please leave your project and we'll get it to you. Parents must come by and pick them up the day after. Whatever is not brought to classrooms we'll leave on the stage (ie., messy projects). We have 270 kids participating. We usually have around 200, but this time we are requiring 5th graders to do it. Scientists from the Navy are coming and other scientists will also be visiting. Mrs. Erdrich - we looked long and hard at our calendar on when to move the Science Fair to and the next open date would have been March. That was too late as some projects would have "died" or mold could have grown. Lisa S. - Skate Night will be held on 2/20. The Nicole Rann Memorial Fund is set up at the Rainbow Children's Hospital in Cleveland. Monies will go to the main doctor who worked with Nicky and he'll make sure it goes where it's supposed to (Study for Immunological Diseases). PTA will give \$100 to the Fund. Landscaping grounds committee has a quote for mulching, planting plants and we'll still have the clean-up days. But we need extra help. Montgomery County gave us a free landscape design, with plants we cannot plant. Best quote is from \$1,933.40 for materials, soaker hoses, timer switches, and actual plants and labor. This is all being donated by Denchfield Landscaping. They will charge labor for soaker hoses and timer switches. Can we take some of the monies from items that are not being spent in the Wish List and spend it on Landscaping? Motion passes. MCCPTA resolution – for gifted and talented kids at BTES: Cindy and I were at a cluster meeting with Dr. Stetson (Community Superintendent) yesterday and this is a benign resolution. It encourages gifted and talented education regardless of whether we have a program labeled gifted and talented. We are a pilot school for not labeling. A meeting will be held on the 4th Thursday in February at 7:30 pm at the Carver Building where the program will be presented but not voted on. It will be voted on subsequently. **Treasurer's Report (Lisa N.)** – we're doing fine for money. Fill Our Pond is at \$24,500! After school program dollars are inflated because teachers haven't been paid yet. Sally Foster is a bit under budget. For the Spring Fair, we're putting down deposits and buying bags for Bag-o-Mania. Curriculum money will be spent. Media Center will use their budget too. Student activities – we've spent very little money from this line item because part of the money is

to purchase games for Indoor Recess. Die cutters have been ordered; gym improvements have an extra \$429.71 and we need to figure out whether we'll need the money. If not, I can move the monies. Frog logo tiles monies should not be on the Wish List. **VP of Fundraising (Ellie A.)** – we have a Dine Out on 2/18 at BD's Mongolian Barbeque. Fill Our Pond FUNdraising party is on 3/14 at Julie and Jon Garcia's home. We will have a silent auction for teacher and staff donations. We are charging a nominal fee to cover part of the food. We will need some volunteers. Sally Foster is ongoing until June 1st. Valentine's Day is coming up so think of Sally Foster for chocolates. A lot of the Sally Foster products are environmentally friendly. **V.P. of Community Service (Vicki H.)** – next week is the food drive for the Capital Area Food Bank to send food on the weekends for kids. We're asking for boxes of Macaroni & Cheese to feed 1,100 kids. We'll have a competition for which class brings in the most. **V.P. of Membership (Katerina P.)** – we have 317 members versus 321 last year. **MCCPTA Representative (Darrin H.)** – there was a school pilot program where a company provided radios with ads and sanitized versions of Rap songs. This was voted down. **V.P. of Volunteers (Lisa S. for Elissa G.)** - both Theresa and Cathy are out on vacation, so we are secretary-less and need volunteers to help man the office. **Principal's Report (Mrs. Nancy E.)** – we have a new part-time Learning Center teacher (we had asked for a full-time teacher but didn't get that because of budget cuts). We lobbied for this starting in November and it's been a long time in coming. We got the allocation right before Christmas vacation. Our new teacher, Justina Miller, will work with the kids in the 2nd/3rd grade LC who are most impacted. We also have a 1 ½ day speech and language pathologist Dr. Oyler. He will take the same caseload as Ms. Barkin had and is very experienced. **MSA** is coming for grades 3, 4, 5. We're looking at making our kids as prepared as they can be. Do some kids need a boost in skills? We're putting in an Intervention time during the day (2 times a week) for these kids. Mrs. Dieckman, Mrs. Richter, Ms. Jones and Ms. Finberg will be on hand for the Intervention. We are showing the kids what test looks like and how to answer questions. We are also doing groups for Math and Reading. Attendance is crucial. The school must maintain 94% attendance because otherwise we won't make our annual yearly progress number. The attendance includes leaving early, being tardy, absent, etc. We need 100% participation for MSA and we have a couple of make-up days. When your child is out sick or can't come in, we need a written note (email is OK too) to either Cathy Shaub or Theresa Halabi. You must do this within 3 days of when your child is absent. A phone call will not suffice. The budget is impacting everything in Montgomery County. One goal is to keep class sizes as they are. Projections came out in November for our student numbers for 2009-2010 and the numbers didn't look right to me. I've been in touch with the person in charge of the learning Portables and I've asked for one more. We're not as impacted by the budget cuts as other schools but we have been affected in that we cannot get substitute teachers when our teachers are out for Staff Development. The PTA has generously funded teachers to attend conferences, but I'm not sure how to fund the substitutes so teachers can go to the conference. Thank you to all the parents and other caregivers for volunteering at the school. I would like to remind everyone that things that happen at school are confidential. Additionally, only teachers and para-educators can reprimand the kids, it's important that the volunteers circulate amongst all the kids and there is no talking on the cell phone when volunteering. We are going **paperless** – thank you PTA; I've been sending out By Leaps and Bounds on the internet. I will try to cut

and paste article onto Leaps and Bounds versus clicking on the link to get the article. 4 families have opted in to continue getting paper versions. Gifted/Talented – we don't label our kids in this way. We still test, gather the same data as other schools, we provide the same programs if not more, but we just don't label the students. Our testing let's us identify the potential in kids. Once we know what level a child needs to be working at, we'll have the staff help the child to get there. In other schools there might be a focus on the remedial children so the parents believe the gifted/talented label will give their child the resources they need. **Mrs. Richter** - for 2nd graders, we send the scores home last day of school so kids don't come to school to talk about their gifted/talented label. **Mr. Tark** – the Health Committee is looking at our policies around competitive foods, which is anything that is served at our schools (PTA events, birthday parties, a la carte items in the lunch room, etc.) We are also looking at what teachers are doing and we'll get their feedback. We'll get everyone's feedback for next year as regards the new policy. **Mrs. Granof** - 4th and 5th grade families are invited a week from tonight at the Air & Space Museum. We leave at 6 pm. We charge for the cost of the buses. We have 100 seats and we're pretty much full. For the Science Fair, the Robotics Club has brought in scientists and they're wonderful. We simulate robots cleaning up Chesapeake Bay so in one of the rooms Thursday night we'll have the kids demonstrate their robots. Robotics is completely free. Thank you in advance for the Teacher/Staff Appreciation lunch tomorrow.

Respectfully submitted
Surya M. Shah, Recording Secretary