

Wednesday, January 11, 2006

Meeting began at 7:10 p.m. This meeting was translated in Spanish.

Translation was performed by Maria-Elena Aviles.

President's Welcome: Reid Lyons welcomed all to the meeting.

Secretary's report : Read and accepted motion by Colette Casey Brenner, seconded by Brenda Neshe

Treasurer's report : Read and accepted motion by Kathy Hersey, seconded By Orit Biran and Brenda Neshe

Total membership of PTO is 147 124 parents, 24 teachers. 1 parent is both . Attendance @ the meeting was approximately 70.

Old Business:

Holiday Shopping : Eileen Stanowicz thanked her volunteers and reported that she has already started shopping for next year.

Haircut Fund Raisers: Giovanna Abeiga thanked everyone for participating and reported a profit just around \$200 for a first year fundraiser. Suggested we try it again in August 2006 just before school starts.

Bake Sale: Jen Caruso thanked everyone for helping and reported that we have made 703.00 3.00 more than last year.

Recap of Snowflakes: All children received the items they requested and more; families were each able to receive gift certificates. Thanks to everyone who participated.

Reid thanked all committee members and was amazed at all the work involved; special thanks to Giovanna for bringing forth a new idea and going with it. He also encouraged more people to step up and reminded parents that some of these Committee chairs won't be here forever.

New business:

Vote for Laura Larson to appropriate \$1500.00 for the media center.

Vote passed with no opposition.

Sandy Kiesling raised a question of whether our donation would affect the Laura Bush grant Mrs. Larson is applying for. Dr. Cabrera gave a definitive answer of "No, that does not affect the grant"

Super Sundae: Chaired by Kathy Hersey and Brenda Neshe will be held February 5th, Superbowl Sundae 12:30 – 3:00 p.m. ; Lizzy's will be providing ice cream for sundaes

and there will be games and raffle prizes, Committee's first meeting was held tonight and promises to be a fun day. Look for notices to be sent home soon.

Principal's Report: Dr. Pilar Shepard-Cabrera

A building meeting was held Monday January 9th, teachers reviewed the school improvement plan which is part of their roadmap of areas covered and not covered to stay compliance. "we are continuing to meets the needs of our children, working hard to ensure students are working at their highest level is our responsibility, thank you for being here" End of report

Open Discussion:

Reid Lyons made reference to requests by email from some parents who were looking for copies of the PTO bylaws; these are now available on website thanks to Jen Murphy. There is also a binder of Colette's minutes and agendas for the last two years. They are available to anyone who wishes to see them.

Email questions regarding the elections of the current board and the nominating process were asked: Answer was Notification went out to parents and teachers seeking nominations for the board positions. People were nominated in April, the new board was elected in May 2005. Their first meeting as a new board was June 15, 2005.

Judy Santiago asked what the nominating committee does. Eileen Stanowicz explained that anybody can be nominated by parent or teacher or principal of the Stanley School. A committee reviews the nominations and then calls nominated individuals to see if they are really interested in serving on the board.

Amy Alvarez: Rumor going around that before school year started in September there was a position open on the PTO board but no memo was sent to parents. Reid's answer was that a full board - all 5 positions were elected in May however a parent who was filling the recording secretary position rescinded the job and another parent was nominated. This parent, Cindi Bourque was nominated and elected as recording secretary on June 15, 2005 PTO meeting. Amy states that is misleading to parents because Agenda states Cindi was already nominated so there was no chance for anyone else. Agenda was pulled from prior secretary's book and read so that everyone could understand what had happened. Eileen explained that no new parents are involved until the September in which their child actually starts in the Stanley school. Colette explained that the first notices were sent home twice in February and twice again in March. The process starts at least 3 months in advance. Amy insinuated that parents at the Stanley school do not like to be questioned. Colette insisted that this was not true and that all parents were included in the process and no one came forth to help so this board was actually recruited to give their time and volunteer for this job. They had consented to do it and she thought they were doing fantastic job.

Dr. Cabrera began an impassioned speech saying “all parents should work together and it does not matter who is on the board. We have the responsibility to make sure our children succeed and we must work together as one”

Shane Wise stated a petition was going around; its purpose being to make an amendment to bylaws for the next PTO meeting to create a position on the pto board for a multi - cultural liaison open to all races because the current PTO is not diverse and maybe a little bit intimidating. He tried to get it on this meeting’s agenda but was too late. He wants the amendment on next agenda on February for a vote. Reid explains that any “Any member in good standing may in writing submit to the PTO President an item to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.” As stated in the by-laws per Article X, section 2. This amendment must be submitted in writing to PTO membership 2 weeks prior to the meeting. A 2/3 majority is necessary for the amendment to be adopted. Article X section 3. Eileen explained that an amendment needs to specifically written whatever is written is what will be voted on and put in the by laws. Sandy stated no petition was needed one person could propose an amendment. Only paid PTO members could vote on amendments. Dr. Cabrera then showed application for PTO membership to encourage signup.

Jeanne McLaughlin asked Shane what you want liaison to do. He replied this person could bridge gap in communication.

Maria Lara Jimenez replied PTO has expressed desire for more involvement by others so this liaison may encourage more participation because they can open up communications.

Dr. Parrella is now introduced to discuss the independent consultant Dr. Saunders. She explained that due to concerns following December 13th’s meeting, people felt their concerns were not heard. She has been trying to devise a way for everyone to convey their concerns. Dr. Saunders is an organizational development consultant for a wide range of organizations which focus primarily on achieving healthy communities within organizations.

Dr. Saunders indicated we are living in a society increasingly diverse; desegregated but integrated, a concerted intentional effort needed to archive outcome. With large forums like these it is not easy for everyone to feel comfortable speaking their minds. We want to provide a safe place to express your feelings. He welcomed any questions about the process.

CCB: Are phone conversation okay? Dr. Saunders: yes

Dr. P. Limited phone calls, will schedule a day for calls.

Maria: What about weekends/weekdays for a time?

Another question: Will there be a translator? Yes

Will written input be considered? Dr. Saunders: Yes, Why Not?

Dr. Parrella emphatically states: No outsiders calling; must be able to identify yourself and your child at Stanley.

Small groups are encouraged to sign up. 600 parents will not be allowed to speak to the consultant; form small groups and sign up in that manner. Reid Lyons is to sign up the PTO board.

Reactions and questions varied; a parent expressed concern on who was paying for the consultant. Dr. Parrella indicated that it was her budget. Same parent asked why am I to believe this is going to work? Response by Dr. Parrella indicated we are doing this in good faith so therefore you must want to believe in this.

Dr. Saunders: He has already sat with a number of teachers and we thought it would be beneficial to get input from parents. He is not a consultant to PTO.

A parent asked: can I help right now? How can I help? PTO presidents as well as others immediately proposed he could help on any committee right away signup sheet were available. He proposed a diversity committee and looked for volunteers' right then.

Dr. Parrella asked for suggestions on when to meet with Dr. Saunders; suggestions were given and Dr. Parrella will follow up with notification sent home on colored paper with the children. Someone asked will this data be given to school committee. Dr. Parrella indicated that "no" this document will be used as a working guide for Dr. Cabrera.

A request was made for the PTO By-laws to be translated into Spanish. Pilar Pueyo has offered to do this. Everyone clapped.

Priscilla Picardi , SAC at the school has now asked about recent article written by Dr. Alice Pierce-Bonifaz of Lesley College that projected the school in a very unfavorable fashion. Dr. Parrella indicated she has contacted the Dean of Lesley and Dr. Bonifaz herself but received no response as Lesley College is now on break. She indicated she also asked Dr. Rosenburg, Dr. Wyeth, Asst. Principal Tom LeFort and former principal Sue McIvor about said incident. Each stated that no report was every given to them regarding the incident stated in the article. Dr. Parrella will continue to pursue this and has indicated a possible slander suit if this article proves unfounded.

A letter was presented by Maria Lara Jimenez to the PTO Board members emphatically stating the misconception that a version of a "Spanish PTO" was not the case and the meetings that were taking place every third Monday of the month were Leadership classes. PTO has a copy of this letter if anyone would like see it.

At this point, Dr. Parrella indicates that every word being said is being recorded by a Globe West reporter who she made stand and introduce herself. The reporter is Stephanie C. and she writes for the Globe West covering Waltham. She indicated she was continuing her report on the SAGA since December going on at the Stanley School. Lisa Wise asked why are you here and stated that she has been misquoted several times. Lisa also wanted to know where the clarification was and why this reporter has not responded to her emails regarding misquotes in past articles. A discussion then ensued

about having a closed PTO member meeting. Bottom line indicates that any meeting held in a public city property is open to all.

Sue McIvor introduced herself as the former principal and new school committee member. She had been taking notes and wanted to speak about the school. She indicated how well she knew all the staff and parents and that she wanted to remind all that we needed to keep the school moving forward. She indicated that the Stanley school had been highly successful since its inception 3 years prior. She always as the principal had an open door policy. If anyone chose not to express concerns or problems, she was sorry. She believes that the majority of parents want to achieve the feelings we had previously. Feelings that included sharing common goals and values. We must work together to form a strong community and a vibrant school. Everyone clapped.

Last question was asked by Ron Bourque to the consultant How would the consultant help achieve what Sue McIvor had said about forming a strong and vibrant community? Consultant's response was that through open, honest and respectful communication could this be achieved.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m. Motion was made by Eileen S. and seconded by Kathy H.