

Parent Connection Minutes

January 20, 2009

Co-President Carol Hennessy welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

Treasurer's Report: September 2008

Beginning Balance: \$4,167.78

January 2009

Beginning Balance: \$3,947.75

Deposits are earned from sponsor fees and monthly e-script. Also donations for staff appreciation luncheons.

Withdrawals of these deposits are spent for Spanish translation fee, staff appreciation luncheon reimbursements, and new staff name plates.

District Liaison Report: Shanna Molitor will be attending the district wide leadership meeting on Wednesday, January 21, 2009. Budget information will be discussed and input will be welcomed. Please share this information with any district PTA/PTO officer you may know.

Staff Appreciation Coordinator: The Junior Class Parents and the Parent Connection sponsored the latest Staff Appreciation Luncheon. We chose soup and bread as the theme, because it was a huge hit last year. Again, it was very popular. We had a huge turn out, with some moments being standing room only. Brownies, sweet treats, and coffee topped off the meal and added to the gaiety of the event. Thank you to everyone who was able to come forward with donations.

With the upcoming budget cuts, it will become increasingly important to continue to remind our fabulous staff just how much we appreciate them, and all they do for our children.

Our next luncheon is scheduled for Thursday, February 26. It will be sponsored by the sophomore parents and the theme will be Italian.

Principal's Report:

- Dawn Granger shared with us that recent re-evaluations concerning the budget from the governor's office have not been positive. Although the district needs to cut \$920,000 from the budget for the remaining school year, Dawn wanted to reassure us that CHS does have a reserve fund of \$24,000 which is approximately 10% of the school's discretionary budget. Dawn does not anticipate changes in class size or staffing changes for this year.

- There will be four public meetings concerning the budget at the district office in February. The district is looking for input from parents. Please refer to the district website for meeting times and dates, or call the district office.
- At the February Parent Connection meeting Eric Wright and Alicia Ward will present budget information for next year. They will be asking for input concerning cuts. Dawn will prepare a list of discretionary items from which potential cuts could be made. The budget for personnel is not controlled at the school, rather the district controls it.
- The district is also looking for input considering the school calendar. If you have any input concerning the calendar, please email it to Dawn or call with your suggestions.
- The Department Chairs and Dawn have been discussing conferences; what works and what doesn't. If you have any input, please send it to Dawn.
- Alicia Ward, (assist. principal) who oversees attendance, has been working with the Pinnacle system in an attempt to make it more user friendly. Currently if you log onto your student's account, there is a window with email options. There, you may request email updates of unexcused absences and tardies. These notifications may be sent within 20 minutes of the class that is missed, daily, weekly or monthly. This is a great tool for parents.
- Lastly Dawn wanted to let us all know how wonderful the Spartan student body was at the recent CV vs. CHS boy's basketball game. Upon arriving, it was obvious that inadequate seating was an issue for both CHS students and parents. Without making a controversy out of it, the CHS population squeezed into limited spaces. Throughout the game the students conducted themselves with stellar sportsmanship. At the end of the game, the kids "embodied every bit of class and control" and kept a situation that could have easily spun out of control in control.

Dan Finnen and Cathy Wright were our guest speakers. Dan spoke for the Counseling Department and Cathy talked about the Advisor program.

Dan started with a snap shot of a counselor's year:

- August: Register new students, work on schedules for all students and generally help get the school up and running. This is a very hectic time in the counseling office with lots of lines to accommodate student schedule changes. This year was particularly busy due to the glitches in the new scheduling software program.
- September: The focus is on seniors, letters of recommendation, college applications and credit checks.
- October/November: Checks on seniors continue, National Merit paperwork due, students with a D or an F in a class are checked on, support at conferences.
- December/January: Send notes to all freshman, sophomores and juniors inviting them to make an appointment to meet with their counselor to discuss academic plans.
- February/ March: Continue inviting all students to meet with their counselor, begin scheduling for the following year, visit 8th graders and help them begin scheduling and their transition to high school.

- April/May: Meet with seniors who are in academic trouble, meet with juniors to discuss plans for college applications and what is necessary for that process.

In addition to the above, the counselors work with Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), 504 plans, students in crisis, weekly department meetings. On an average day, a counselor will meet with approximately 18 students. During the day there is also time built in to accommodate over flow. Although the counselors try to be proactive, most of their work is reactive. In addition to our counseling staff, two days a week, mental health outreach counselors come to the school to work with students who need it.

This year the counselors have been seeing more students for anxiety behaviors. Cathy Wright said that the counselors are doing a lot of behavioral counseling. She attributed this to referrals from a caring faculty. There are many people watching out for our students.

Advisor Program:

Cathy Wright comes from an administrative background. Her organizational skills led her to coordinating the Advisor program.

- Advisor offers an opportunity for a staff member to meet with a consistent group of students for mentoring and guidance.
- Some of the topics covered in Advisor include: Career Related requirements, Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, diversity survey, Link Crew. Although there are set lesson plans for Advisor, the time must remain fluid to be able to accommodate needs as they come up, such as handing out test scores, assemblies, etc.
- Advisor happens once a week for 20 minutes alternating between Wednesday and Thursday (odd/even days). The students have the same advisor and advisor class for all 4 years. Every class (Sr., Jr., etc.) has different topics to cover.
- It has been suggested that each advisor class has a representative who will then meet with class presidents/student council to help foster communication within the student body.
- This is the first year that Advisor has been regular. As a result people are beginning to accept and value the time set aside for Advisor.
- For the Advisor program to become more successful the staff and student body will need to buy into it. Right now, Cathy is concentrating on the organization of the program, supporting the teachers with planned lessons and materials. She is working to make it worth the students' and staff time.

- The focus for freshman year advisor is: Link Crew, Career Education information, understanding the Rights and Responsibilities handbook, teaching CHS traditions and how to adjust to CHS.

The next PC meeting will be February 17 at 7:00 PM. Eric Wright and Alicia Ward will be presenting budget information and looking for parent input.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carrie Thompson

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