

PTO Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 11, 2008
7:00-9:00
Bromfield Library

23 people attended

PTO President Cathryn Noyes made introductions and welcomed all in attendance.

Superintendent Tom Jefferson, Bromfield Principal Jim O'Shea and HES Principal Mary Beth Banios all shared their own introductions and kind words of appreciation to the PTO and volunteers for all of our contributions. Tom invited all to review the Educational Strategic Plan that has been worked on by many community members and serves as a backbone for future improvements to our system.

Mary Beth Banios shared with us some of the ways in which PTO donated apple seed money is helpful to teachers in helping to defer some of their classroom setup expenses. Some of these included window fans, classroom books, professional books, inflatable globes, prizes for treasure chest, materials for cranberry thanksgiving, craft project materials, velcro, packing tape, printer, scanner, copier for use with Smart Board. Mary Beth also submitted a funding priority list for HES which included Smart Board Setups for classrooms which run approx. \$5,800/ classroom and a \$1,200.00 request for buses for 5th grade Nashua Watershed Trip. Neither request was voted on at this time.

Jim O'Shea spoke about how helpful it is to have a principal's discretionary \$account (part of which comes from PTO apple seed money) because it allows for various reasonable requests to be met in a timely fashion. Some of these include hospitality, equipment, buses for field trips, awards nights, incidentals, competitions, scholarships. **Jim submitted a request of \$800.00 to pay for web based scheduling software for the Bromfield Parent Open House on 9/24. The motion passed unanimously.** (sidenote: this software was very well received in the previous year as it allayed sign up headaches for many parents)

There was discussion to encourage folks to explore the Renzulli Learning philosophy and web site as administration seems interested in experimenting with this software in an effort to bring expanded learning to all students. The website to review is www.renzullilearning.com. User name: rectorp Password: parent A twelve month license runs \$5k. PTO suggested we all review it such that all together we can explore the possibility of supporting this initiative in the near future.

Lynn Seymour, PTO Treasurer, presented the group with a comprehensive overview of where Harvard PTO monies are distributed. Total 2007-2008 distribution was \$65,378! We discussed where the money has been used and what the funding plan for the new year should be. We had discussion about enrichment software, professional development, technology that would be a win/win for all such as student registration/directory software or lunch payment cards.

We discussed whether or not to continue funding connect-ed. Dr. Jefferson said it's a \$3,500 annual expense. PTO has historically supported a portion of this. **A motion was made and seconded to support \$2,000 of Connect Ed.** The motion passed 22-1. PTO expressed again that we remain a politically neutral organization and that all Connect Ed messages should reflect this.

Deborah Sauve, membership chair, reported that all is going well with the membership drive and many are still coming in. We again touched on the ongoing discussion of PTO membership and the possibilities of if or how we should restructure membership options such that people could give more or less and be members at different levels. It was also suggested that people without school age children might like the opportunity to give to PTO. PTO will not discriminate any donations! Membership drive will continue throughout upcoming open houses. Members of PTO board will be available with forms and for conversation.

Cathryn Noyes went through the interesting feedback from the PTO survey that was published this summer. It included lots of good data that generally suggested that we are on the right track.

Ann Marie Rowse and Andrea Hill took a few moments to update us on the 2nd annual Bromfield Open House social that PTO will sponsor for parents and teachers. **A request for \$800 was made to cover costs of event, with any unused money to be returned. A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously.**

Carolyn Grant told us all is well on the Fall Fete front. It should be a great cruise to nowhere and everyone should come aboard! Donations for silent auctions or volunteer time are still being accepted!

Terry Symula shared her excitement over the first Fall into Fashion show that is being put on to benefit the Harvard Council on Aging and Elderly and Disabled Tax Relief fund. This is a unique event as it is represented by many community organizations. **The PTO will be donating goods to the silent auction** (recycling bags, 2 fete tickets, PTO membership, PTO calendar, and some goodies) and will have PTO member Marcie Donahue representing as a model. All are encouraged to attend and enjoy the evening!

When the agenda opened for new business, Stu Sklar suggested that he would like the School Committee to have time on the PTO agenda so our constituency could feel free to

ask questions of the committee in a more personal setting than town hall. This is in efforts to reach out and be more accessible to our school community. All seemed supportive of this idea.

Cathryn Noyes closed the meeting with thank you's and an invitation to come on back and bring a friend! Volunteering can be fun!

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Bardenheuer, Secretary