

PTA Council Meeting Notes December 7, 2009

Agenda Item	Key Notes
Tour of Sherman Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal provided walkthrough of the new annex. Discussion focused on additional space needs particularly APR/Kitchen needs to support school lunches.
Alis B. McGrath Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sue Dow was recognized with the Alis B. McGrath Friend of Education Award for her efforts toward improving our public schools not only as a member of the Fairfield Board of Education, but through her many years of volunteering at all three school system levels.
Superintendent's Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Clark focused on the new High School Schedule that will be discussed at Tues night's BOE meeting. Key highlights included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 Drop 2 Schedule – Students will take 8 courses, but the daily school schedule will have 6 class time plus a lunch. Student will rotate through their courses (i.e. Classes 1-6 on Day 1, Classes 7-8 & 1-4 on Day 2, etc.). The schedule accomplishes 2 major objectives – 1) Increase instructional hours provided to students (classes go from 42 min to 50+ mins) and 2) guarantees lunch period for students. It was highlighted that Fairfield's instructional hours per student ranks significantly lower than the state and our DRG (district reference group) average. The stage average is 100 hours and Fairfield average is currently 930. The 8 Drop 2 schedule will make progress towards increasing Fairfield's instructional hours. The cost of this new schedule is approximately \$4M broken down as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$670K - \$1.1M for Staffing across both High Schools \$3.3 M (\$2.1M Ludlow & \$1.2M Warde) for Cafeteria seating capacity expansion and needed renovations(i.e. wheel chair access) to support 3 Lunch waves Dr. Clark also handed out updated version (as of 12/2/09) of the 2010-2011 Budget Year Calendar. Later in discussion, she highlighted they are projecting +129 students in school system next year which will cost approx. \$1.7M.
High Five for Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The High Fives (http://ffldptac.org/pdf/20090105_HighFiveResolution.pdf) used to guide PTA decisions & communicate PTA priorities to the BOE/town were reviewed and updated. The following additions were agreed and wording of the new version will be issued for final review after the meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> #4 on the middle school instructional model will be broadened to encompass instructional model goals aligned with best practices for all 3 levels – 1) increased instructional hours to be competitive with state benchmarks at the high school level, 2) learning community model at the middle school, and 3) workshop model at the elementary schools. #5 will include wording to guarantee students get time for lunch. Wording to emphasize that High Fives were all equally critical and the numbering did not indicate priority.
Nominating Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PTA Council positions of VP Curriculum was nominated and approved. Leonora Campbell who ran for BOE will assume this position.

PTA Council Meeting Notes December 7, 2009

Agenda Item	Key Notes
Officer's Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>BOE Delegate Update</u>: New BOE members on-board. Sue Brand is Chair and Pam Iacono is Vice Chair. McKinley racial imbalance is still an issue. Families do not want to move from their neighborhood school. • <u>VP Leadership</u>: Diane Smola has invited heads of Fundraising across the schools to session to share/brainstorm ideas. They will also be hosting a vendor night for all schools as well. • <u>Treasurer</u>: Agreed that \$4,500 set aside for Family & Parent Education will be split across the 5 schools (middle & high) for programs on drug education and bullying. \$1,000 was awarded to school for the Community Service Grant. Awaiting revenue from Coffeepond for School Pictures.
Standing Committee Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Fuel for Learning Partnership (FFLP)</u>: Working with Wellness Subcommittee for event in March which is national nutrition month. Event is scheduled for Mar 20th at Fairfield Warde and will be themed Food for Thought...Thought for Food. • <u>Health, Safety & Fitness</u>: Working on changing the Walker policy, reinforcing hand washing, and alternate actions than taking away recess to correct students. • <u>Gifted & Talented</u>: Committee has purchased Gifted & Talented Roadmap program which is offered on DVD. These will be presented to each school/PTA. Currently 11.6% of Fairfield's students are classified as Gifted & Talented. This assessment is typically done at end of 3rd grade and can be identified for either Math or Language Arts. It is a little difficult to benchmark since there are different definitions of gifted and talented across school systems. Given recent collapse of Middle School Language Arts program from 2 groups into 1, there will be a Parent Forum to review and discuss this issue.
Liaison Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Fairfield Education Association (FEA)</u>: There was sentiment expressed that some teachers do not understand why there is request for additional \$4M to support new High School schedule, when they were told 0% increase in budget during negotiations. • <u>Board of Education</u>: Tim Kery is the new liaison. • <u>Selectman</u>: The \$4-5 gap in town pension fund needs to be closed. They are looking to close approx. \$1-1.5M from the Education Budget.