

JAMES W. ALEXANDER PTA, INC.
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
November 13, 2007

CALL TO ORDER:

President Betsy Reetz called the meeting to order at 7:12pm and led the flag salute. She welcomed visitors to the meeting and teacher/staff representatives Mrs. Minogue and Mrs. Chirichella.

ESTABLISHING QUORUM: (Executive Committee)

Excused from tonight's meeting and those present; see attached list.

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

Secretary's Report: The minutes were acknowledged and approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: Betsy Reetz submitted the Statement of Account for October 3, 2007 through November 13, 2007. A beginning balance of \$2,528.26, receipts of \$25,703.38, disbursements of \$14,853.84, and an ending balance of \$13,377.80. The report was filed for audit. (See copy of attached report.)

Correspondence: Tammy Rodriguez read various thank you notes from teachers thanking the PTA for books donated to their classrooms from the Book Fair. She also read a thank you note from the first grade teachers for the breakfast.

Thank you notes were read from Miss Inverso and Mrs. Wagner for their retirement gifts. They both remarked how wonderful their time was at Alexander school. They commented on how they are enjoying their retirement. Also, a note from the third grade teachers to "the best PTA in NJ" thanking us for the breakfast, the \$100 reimbursement and last but not least the amazing "Start the Arts week."

Mrs. Stevenson then took the floor to present a few awards. She wanted to acknowledge parents on their volunteering to make this a wonderful PTA. Betsy Reetz was given a plaque to recognize the Alexander PTA as Champions for Children. Awards were also given to Mrs. Kern, Mrs. Sette, Mrs. Register, Mrs. Maruca, Mrs. Hamm, and Mrs. Iorio. The awards were given for Focus on Nutrition Awareness, Historical Yearbook and Teacher Membership.

Mrs. Stevenson wanted to welcome and thank Mr. DeLea for joining us to video our celebration of PTA work for the HTV channel.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Communications – Sue Bishop reported the first newsletter was distributed in September; she thanked Julie for all her hard work. She also thanked Debbie J. and Sondi H. for copying the newsletter. Sue announced the deadline for the December

newsletter is November 26. Sue asked that everyone send their articles via e-mail in word if possible. A tribute article is planned to acknowledge our recent awards.

Sue related that Debbie J. has been diligently sending announcements to HTV, but we are unsure as to why our announcements are not being televised. Sue also thanked Sondi H. for the "Fall Harvest" bulletin board.

Room representatives – Sue reported that the Halloween parties went very smooth. There was no sight of candy of any kind but most importantly the children seemed to really enjoy the healthy treats and not miss any of the sugar. Mrs. Minogue gave all a thumbs up as she saw no head or tummy aches that day as was usual in years before. And hats off to those ever dedicated and creative room moms who made spooky fingers out of cheese sticks and green peppers! Impressive!

Sue asked if everyone could please remember to send (electronically) her a copy of the party forms that you have devised for each grade level. Also the teachers expressed appreciation for having the party planner list of items/games/crafts at least one week ahead of time-it helped them keep track of what was already brought and alert the room parent to what still needed to be sent. In at least one case parents forgot to send items and the teacher communicated it to the room mom in time for her to stop by the grocery store on her way! Don't forget those reminder calls to parents that you initially contact for items. We are all busy and human and thus forget!

Sue stressed to please have ready your emergency contact forms (in as many places as you need them!) She urged everyone to have a plan. Remember every parent needs to be personally contacted (message/voice mail not acceptable) because having 0 children left at school in an emergency is our goal!

Educational Programs – Rachel Sorrento reported that at 1:30 on Friday there will be a program Discovering Ancient Egypt. It will have animals and is a Mutual of Omaha program.

Family Activities – Cindy Mimmo reported that the Holiday Shop will take place on Friday December 7th. Children will purchase small gifts; there will be a raffle and pictures with Santa. The set up will take place that Friday from 1:30 – 3:30. A sign up sheet for volunteers was circulated.

Cindy also reported that a flyer for the poinsettia order will be sent home in a day or two. The cost is \$6 for red white or pink six and half inch pots. She stated this is a pre-sale only.

Cindy reported that the ice skating party is not scheduled as of yet. The only time that was available was the open skate for a Friday 8:30-10:30. A discussion followed and the group decided this time may be too late for the younger students. Cindy will explore the possibility of using Iceland. She also stated that we are having difficulty finding a date

for the Trenton Thunder. There are not many days that are available for the fifty-fifty, we do still have a possibility of getting the winner's prize from last year if it is not claimed by this year's date.

Debbie Hamm asked Cindy if there were going to be vendors at the Holiday Shop. Cindy said that Kathy Register and Cindy Devine will be coordinating this.

Founders Day – Jodi reported that Pauly's is closing. The committee met at Pauly's the night before and would like to request that if anyone had suggestions on who should be honored please e-mail her.

Budget and Finance – Marianne Joralemon gave a special thanks to all who helped out with the fall fundraiser distribution, and a special note of thanks to all who helped out with the School Fair and the Box Top program.

She was happy to report that we will be receiving the biggest Box Top check she has ever seen in the past 7 years as a member of the Alexander E Board. (\$402 of which is attributable to the Spring Box Top Contest banked at the end of last year and \$385 is attributable to the School Fair.) Our next Box Top awareness is an event many people have been asking her about, Box Top Bingo which is scheduled for the first Friday night in February.

Marianne said based on her records; we earned profits of \$6,115 from our fall fundraiser. We earned profits of \$1,500 from the School Fair, approximately \$2,200 from the book fair, over \$1,000 from Box Tops, over \$500 from the A&M fundraiser, approximately \$500 from Marrazzo Receipts as well as income from various other sources giving us anticipated income of \$13,750. We are about 2/3 of our way to our fundraising goal for this school year.

We have a Barnes and Noble Fundraiser scheduled for November 30th and a Red Robin Fundraiser scheduled for Wednesday, December 5th.

We hope to do a super 50/50 in connection with the Founders Day PTA meeting.

She said Karin Casole is organizing an art-work fund-raiser for us and Cindy Devine is organizing a read-a-thon fundraiser for us.

She I also wanted to mention a new no-cost fundraiser. She has emailed everyone information on using GoodSearch.com as a search engine. Our PTA will receive 1 cent for each search. That doesn't sound like much money, but it does add up. According to the GoodSearch Website, if you have 100 supporters that search two items each day our PTA will receive a refund of \$730 annually. If we had 150 supporters our annual refund would exceed \$1,000. We've been enrolled for a few days and so far we are entitled to a refund of \$0.56 and that's just from a few of us using the site. As more of us use the site the refund will grow exponentially.

Jodi Morgan added that Cheeburger Cheeburger will donate 25% of sales if we conduct a fundraiser there. Thanks to Mrs. LaDolcetta for informing us of this.

Recognitions – It was reported that the crossing guards and the lunch ladies were acknowledged with gift certificates.

Book Fair – Cindy Devine reported that we sold \$7,653.51 worth of books giving us a profit of \$2,296.06.

School Fair – It was reported that fair went well. The weather was great. Rachel said it was the best she had seen. Jodi was pleased to say that the mayor was there. A game that was especially liked was the cake walk. A big thank you went out to everyone who helped.

Special Treats – Melissa reported that the first special treats day went O.K. Teachers delivered the treats to the kids when they had time. Since Pauly's is going out of business we need a new place to supply flying saucers. The next special treat day will be in February.

Arts in Education – Bev reported that a reminder went out for Reflections entries which are due next Monday. Grades 4 and 5 were required to enter the competition. Bev will be getting judges together including Mr. C.

She also reported that Start the Arts was a big success. The mural, poetry readings etc. were enjoyed by many. The art show brought in about 50 families. Rachel felt it was a good stimulator for students interested in entering this year. The teacher commented that the children really enjoyed the program.

Historical Yearbook – Debbie Hamm asked that if anyone has any pictures or flyers please forward them to the committee after the holidays.

OLD BUSINESS:

Standing Rules Revision – Discussion was held on the remainder of the standing rules not discussed at last month's meeting. Following the discussion, a motion to approve them was made by Kathy Register and seconded by Debbie Hamm. The motion was unanimously passed.

Life Member Nominating Committee – development of criteria for this award remains pending, discussion tabled until next meeting

General Membership Approval of Fundraisers – Betsy brought to our attention & therefore made it a matter of record that she received one additional ballot since our last board meeting. Since it was received after the stated deadline, it was automatically invalid.

NEW BUSINESS:

New Bylaws – Betsy stated our bylaws were returned as approved by the NJPTA Bylaws Chair and copies were distributed at last month's meeting. If you were not here last month and need a copy, they are available near the sign in sheet. If anyone did not already pick up a copy, please make sure that you do so on your way out.

Convention Delegates – Voting delegates to the NJPTA convention must be elected by the local unit and are charged with the responsibility of voting on behalf of their local unit. Betsy said that she will be attending the convention on both Friday and Saturday. Audrey Maruca will be attending the convention on Saturday. She asked for a motion from the floor to elect Audrey and her as voting delegates from Alexander PTA. A motion was made by Jodi Morgan and seconded by Kathy Register. Following a vote, Betsy Reetz and Audrey Maruca were unanimously elected as voting delegates for Alexander PTA and, therefore, authorized to vote on behalf of this PTA at the NJPTA convention.

Betsy went over what they will be voting on. The NJPTA has proposed various amendments to their bylaws, a review of which has revealed that none have a direct effect on us or the way we conduct business. In the interest of not wasting paper, she did not make copies of the 6 page document for everyone. She offered to review each amendment, but the assembly declines. A motion was made by Rachel Sorrento to approve the NJPTA bylaw amendments as proposed and seconded by Jodi Morgan. The motion was unanimously approved.

Betsy announced that convention delegates will also be electing a President-elect – the nominating committee has selected Judy Hyde – and a Vice President of Educational Services – the nominating committee has selected Syvonne Forkin. A motion to vote to approve both selections of the nominating committee was made by Audrey Maruca and seconded by Deb Conti. The motion was unanimously approved.

Betsy indicated that the list of Legislative Actions and/or Priorities and several resolutions which will be addressed at convention were available as a hand out at the sign in table. As no one requested additional information on any of the convention resolutions, a motion to vote yes on behalf of Alexander PTA was made by Jodi Morgan and seconded by Cindy Mimmo. The motion was unanimously approved.

Betsy thanked everyone for their patience.

Holiday Meeting - Betsy announced, for the benefit of new members present, that we typically have a short business meeting in December followed by a holiday gathering. Marianne Joralemon had suggested to her some time back the possibility of planning our holiday gathering for our January meeting. After a brief discussion, the members present unanimously approved of delaying our holiday gathering until January. Cindy Devine will look into the availability of the Hamilton PBA Hall.

Legislative Advocacy Training - Audrey attended this training as a representative of Alexander and reported on her experience. She mentioned that the assemblymen in attendance do not feel the “no child left behind” act is working. They feel it might work to have the funds follow the child not the school district. She stated that there was a discussion about not just special needs children getting support but the gifted student also.

Audrey stressed that parent involvement and solutions are needed. They feel that more money does not necessarily mean more solutions. She said that each representative was very receptive to ideas. She urged people to write to their assemblyman.

PRESIDENTS REPORT:

Awards Dinner – Betsy stated that Sue Bishop recently became aware that she will be unable to attend the dinner; so she is looking for someone to take her place. Please let either Sue or Betsy know ASAP if you would like to go. She also became aware prior to the meeting that Michelle Lescynski’s ticket is also available. If you are going to the Awards Dinner and still need transportation – i.e., a carpool to join - please let her know ASAP.

Check Reminder – Betsy reminded everyone that #3 under “Submitting a Deposit” on treasurer’s instructions state: “Ensure that all checks are payable to **James W. Alexander PTA, Inc.** Checks **MUST** include the student’s name and phone number. She asked that everyone please include this reminder on all letters/notices that go home with the children. This is very important in the event that a check is returned for insufficient funds. We have such a check that was returned last week and thus far, we have been unable to match it up with an Alexander student in order to collect the funds.

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT:

Mrs. Stevenson reminded everyone of the referendum meeting at Crockett on November 26 at 7pm. The board is trying to push this through but she feels that it is not the right climate.

She went on to discuss the upcoming activities for American Education Week; they were as follows:

Monday-Parent Visitation

Tuesday- Turn Around Day (students really enjoyed playing roles as teachers and administrators)

The first grade will be going to the Crayola Factory and the Wednesday before Thanksgiving is a half day.

Mrs. Minogue asked for donations to fill in some missing items for the Thanksgiving baskets. She also stated that turkey donations would be accepted on Monday. She also asked for clothing donations for students who need to change at school.

Mrs. Stevenson concluded by saying she is very proud of everything the Alexander PTA does. She said keep up the good work.

GOOD OF THE ORDER OF ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ADJOURNMENT:

Betsy distributed recognition certificates as follows:

Bev Braddock & Rachel Sorrento - Outstanding Start the Arts Week

Cindy Mimmo and Marianne Joralemon – Outstanding School Fair

Karin Casole – Expert job in organizing and running the “Snack Shack” for the School Fair

Cindy Devine & Kelly Sterns – Terrific job on our Book Fair

There being no further business Betsy adjourned the meeting at 8:40pm.

Debra Conti

Recording Secretary