

HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTC

Meeting Minutes of September 28, 2006

The meeting came to order at 9:04am and adjourned at 10:40am

Attendance was 34 members

PTC Co-Presidents Karen Resnic and Marian Slavin welcomed everyone to the first meeting of this academic year.

Special Guests – Members of the SSD

Fifth grade students who are SSD (Student Sidewalk Department) volunteers and Michael Kascak spoke about the new safety program. To facilitate the flow and safety of the morning drop off, they walk Kindergarteners and other students from their cars to their classrooms. Five students work each shift, and there are currently 15 members of SSD who wear badges with a gold star. So far the SSD program has gone well and they are working out the few glitches. Parent volunteers are also being recruited to assist the SSD students from 8:20 – 8:35am. Perhaps the SSD can also assist at afternoon dismissal, bringing Kindergarten students to their parents' cars.

PTC Report - Karen Resnic and Marian Slavin

It has been a busy September for students, teachers, and parents. So far, there has been the book fair, curriculum nights, 4th graders went on the Boston Duck Tour, the Innisbrook gift wrap sale is underway, and committees and individuals are working on the Family Fun Night in October, the Shopping Night in November, the directory, and other events and activities.

The surplus funds the PTC had were spent down last year and the PTC is back to a balanced budget. Parents are encouraged to pay their dues and challenge grants.

The Needham League of Women Voters and the PTCs are hosting a forum entitled "Follow the Money – How Needham Budgets and Spends" on Tuesday, October 26th at 7:30pm at Broadmeadow School.

The next Superintendent's Coffee will be held on Friday, October 6th at 9:30-10:30am at the home of Karen Resnic. Space is limited, so call or email Karen to RSVP (781-237-5797 or karen_resnic@hotmail.com). This is an opportunity for parents to meet the new Superintendent, Daniel E. Gutekanst.

The Needham Coalition for Suicide Prevention will be holding two parent focus groups, lead by the director of the high school's guidance department, on October 4th, at 4pm and 6pm. Attendance at each session is limited to 10 parents with children of all ages.

A technology upgrade is a priority for the PTC this year. The goal is to shift to a paperless newsletter including the flyers and announcements, and to improve the website.

Due to conflicts, the November and January PTC meetings will be changed from what was previously scheduled, with dates to be determined

Principal's Report – Michael Kascak

Michael thanked the PTC Co-Presidents for all the support they have given him, beginning in July.

He hopes to resolve the parking issues soon. A map will be developed indicating where parents and visitors can park on area streets without blocking access. For safety reasons, the straight strip and curve are available only for live parking. No parking is allowed in the lot, for several staff are split between schools and need to come and go during the day. The only exceptions are during elections when the lot is opened to the public and morning PTC meetings when parents can park on the curve only from 9am – 10:30am.

There is construction currently happening in the area but often there is no police detail. The school has not been informed when there will be blasting or blocked streets, so parents need to stay on top of this issue for the safety of their children.

There are four candidates for the two positions on the School Council. Their nomination papers will be posted on the PTC bulletin board and the ballots for the election will be due back on Friday, October 6th.

There are numerous activities needing parents volunteers:

- Painting the bulletin boards above the lockers and near the cafeteria.
- Helping the 5th graders to write thank you notes.
- Attending the Responsive Classroom training for cafeteria volunteers, taught by Chris Trethewey.

Committee Reports

Campus for Hillside – Sue Compton

A permanent standing committee is needed to upkeep the gardens. Clean-up days will be scheduled in the fall and the spring. The upcoming fall event (date to be determined) will have pruning instruction and leaf sucking.

The committee is looking for at least four new members to join. Issues the Campus for Hillside will be working on include irrigation, access, and fundraising.

Book Fair- Rachel Foley and Kathy DeMayo

The proceeds from the recent Book Fair earned \$2950+ (\$2000 more than last year). The Curriculum Nights on Monday and Tuesday greatly contributed to sales and gave enough time for re-orders during the week.

The committee will be investigating other vendor options for next year. Scholastic gives 30% of the profits back to the school, but there are a lot of 'junkie' books and gee-gaws that parents prefer not to purchase. There were also requests to add a section of books for adults to buy too.

Hillside Directory- Jennifer Quinn

Parents need to send in their contact information as soon as possible, for the directory will be coming out soon.

Media

More volunteers are needed to donate an hour of their time every two weeks. The newsletter will list hours still available.

Innisbrook Gift Wrap Sales

The order sheets are due back on October 6th. This is a great fundraiser for the PTC, for 50% of the sales comes back to the school.

Room Parents - Rachel Foley

A meeting for all of the Room Parents is scheduled for October 12th.

Box Tops

Parents should save the Box Tops for Education coupons found on many food packages, for last year the PTC made \$650. It is requested that they be clipped close around the edges, since we pay to ship them. There is an easy volunteer opportunity to help clip and bag the Box Tops into packages of 50.

Program on Disabilities – Anne Weinstein

January is Disability Awareness Month and the Program on Disabilities will be presented to each of the grades. The committee is trying to get Travis Ward, the BU hockey player who was disabled in his first game, to be the guest speaker. They have some funds but will be seeking additional grant monies.

Publicity Committee – Anne Weinstein

This committee publicizes events our students are involved with at the school, such as the Jump Rope for Heart. Contact Anne if you are planning an activity that should be publicized.

Year Book

Last year's Year Book, featuring all the students (not just the 5th graders), sold out. The committee is looking for more members for this ongoing project. People who take pictures at school events are encouraged to submit their pictures to the Year Book committee.

Playground Committee

The students will be getting new balls in a week.

Authors Study – Monica Markstein

From October 16 through the 20th, authors of published children's books will be doing writer's workshops in each of the classrooms in grades 1 – 5. This program has been funded by the NEF (Needham Educational Foundation) and a \$3000 enrichment grant from the Hillside PTC and PTCs at other Needham schools. As a fundraiser for the school, books can be purchased that have been signed by the authors.

The Authors Study Week concludes with a community event at the Needham Public Library on Saturday October 21st that will include readings, craft projects, and writing stories. Volunteers are needed to greet and show the authors around.

Treasurer's Report

Handouts included last year's budget and the proposed 06/07 budget. A lot of last year's surplus funds were spent down at the end of the year on enrichment grants. New categories in this year's budget include a Principal's Grant (since the school budget was significantly cut) and Technology Upgrades.

The 2006/07 budget was voted on and accepted unanimously.

There is currently \$18,688 in the bank, although some funds have been committed already. They will also be used to fund upcoming events and enrichment grants.

The goal is to have events such as the Fall Family Fun Night and Bingo Night break even this year, so there will be a \$1 per person admission fee. This will help cover the costs for the custodian, EMT, and prizes.

Only 65% of the families have paid their PTC dues so far this year – 107 families have not yet paid. Therefore, the PTC has received only \$3960 in dues, although the amount should be closer to \$6000. A dues reminder will go into the newsletter.

A new fundraiser is being added this year. Marlin Art will hold an art auction in early February and the PTC will get 30% of the profits. There will be all kinds of art at a variety of prices. This fundraiser was last held four years ago and was very fun and successful.

The school library needs to be built up, and \$1500 of PTC funds have been allocated to purchase new books. The librarian will also compile a list of books she would like for the library if anyone wants to make specific donations.

School Committee Report

The School Committee liaison to Hillside, Jeff Simmons, is unable to attend morning meetings, so a brief report was given by Karen Resnic and Kim Marie Nicols.

The School Committee has a proposal to renovate the High Rock School and use it as an interim middle school satellite starting in 2009 for either just 6th graders (the current 3rd grade class) or for all three grades. The School Committee is holding a public hearing regarding this proposal during their meeting on Tuesday October 3rd at 7pm (or perhaps later due to other business on their agenda) at Broadmeadow. Comments can also be sent to the School Committee before that date via their website (<http://district.needham.k12.ma.us>). Since this is an issue that will affect students in the years to come, parents of children in all the younger grades need to express their concerns and ideas.

The School Committee is asking for \$15 million dollars for the renovation of High Rock, including the purchase of four portable classrooms, at the Town Meeting on November 1st, with the expectation there will be an over-ride vote at the next election. It is unknown where the extra hundreds of students will go if the over-ride fails.

The Finance Committee has proposed building a second middle school building in 2014.

Open PTC Positions, Committee Members, & Volunteers Needed:

School Committee Reporter

METCO

Art Auction Fundraiser

Cafeteria Duty

Social Action

Acquiring Permits for Events

Co-Secretary

Fundraising from U Promise and School Pops

Campus for Hillside

Student Sidewalk Department

Painting Bulletin Boards

Writing Thank You Notes with 5th Graders

Responsive Classroom in the Cafeteria

Media

Box Tops

Year Book

Author Study Event at the Needham Library

Minutes from the May 24, 2006 Meeting

The minutes were unanimously approved without discussion or corrections.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Kim Marie Nicols, Hillside PTC Secretary

HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTC

Meeting Minutes of October 18, 2006

The meeting came to order at 7:05pm and adjourned at 8:29pm

Attendance was 22 Members

SmartBoard Demonstration – Ms. McKenna

Ms. McKenna welcomed the PTC Members to her classroom and with excitement, demonstrated the SmartBoard and encouraged the parents to try activities on it. She uses it to create folders for all subjects, filled with games and connections to the internet, and the children can move and manipulate icons and numbers, and hard copies can be printed. Her third grade students love it and are more attentive during instruction. Parents are welcome to contact Mr. Kascak to arrange a visit to her classroom to see it in action.

Hillside has more SmartBoards than the other elementary schools in town, and each of the new classrooms in the High School have one. There are six Hillside classrooms, one at each grade level, that have the SmartBoard, plus one in the Media Center. They will be switched to a different classroom approximately every six weeks, starting November 1st. Marge Modena has searched out great websites and an interactive portfolio is being created for each grade level. Mr. Kascak calls SmartBoards “the biggest shift in educational technology in a long time.”

The goal is to acquire more SmartBoards, which cost \$3000 each, and mount them on the walls so they will not get bumped and cause screen errors, and so classrooms will not have to be significantly rearranged.

School Committee Report – Jeff Simmons

Peter O’Neil, a parent of a third grader, will be Hillside’s PTC School Committee liaison.

Jeff Simmons can be contacted at Jeff_Simmons@needham.k12.ma.us for school system-wide concerns.

There are numerous issues that the School Committee is working on right now. They hope to do a technology upgrade soon at Pollard Middle School. Future plans include upgrading Hillside.

The biggest issue is dealing with the increasing number of students who will be attending Pollard in the upcoming years. The bulge of students in 2008/09 (current 4th graders) will need two new portable/modular classrooms at Pollard. There is a proposal to place some middle school students at a renovated High Rock School for every year thereafter until a second middle school can be built in 2014 or so, when state reimbursement funds of 40% will be available again. The community response, Superintendent Gutekanst, and most members of the School Committee are leaning towards placing the entire 6th grade at High Rock. This would create equity of education experience despite the additional physical transition.

The School Committee will be asking the Town Meeting Members in November for design money for High Rock, and a \$15 million over-ride vote in April will be needed to renovate, add space, and upgrade the building. After a second middle school is built, High Rock will be converted back into an elementary school. This is the most “fiscally responsible and educationally sound” decision. If an over-ride fails, the School Committee has until September 2009 to address alternatives.

Once 6th graders are housed at High Rock, there will be problematic busing issues to work out. More buses will be needed, at a cost of \$200,000 - \$300,000, and they may need to stagger start times between Pollard and High Rock. With the Pollard population reduced to 800 – 900 students, perhaps school administrators will use the modular classrooms for office space, since the Emery Grover Building is in deplorable shape.

PTC Report - Karen Resnic and Marian Slavin

Hillside Directory: The Hillside Directory just came out on Monday and Jennifer Quinn did a “fabulous job”. The Vora family once again donated the printing and has committed to continue printing the directory in future years, even though they no longer have children at Hillside.

Staff Spending Money: The PTC gave every classroom teacher \$200 and specialists received \$100 to spend on supplies. Media got \$1500 and the Principal got \$2500. They all appreciate the PTC support.

Author Study: The Author Inspiration Week is underway and the students and teachers love it. The week closes with an event at the Library on Saturday. Committed PTC funds (\$525) have not been paid yet.

PTC Positions: Parents have volunteered to help teachers and parents write grants, work in the cafeteria, and co-chair the METCO committee. Open positions include co-secretary and recruiting new people to work on various fundraising activities next year, such as the Innisbrook Gift Wrap sales.

League of Women Voters: The Needham League of Women Voters and the PTCs are hosting a forum entitled “Follow the Money – How Needham Budgets and Spends” on Thursday, October 26th at 7:30pm at Broadmeadow School.

Fall Family Fun Night: Fall Family Fun Night will be Friday, October 27th beginning at 6:00pm. Activities will include dancing, games, and making ice cream sundaes, and admission is \$5.00 per family.

Teachers' Report – Laura Miller and Martha Healy

Staff Spending Money: They thanked the PTC for the generous \$200 to purchase supplies this year.

Author Study: All of the authors have been terrific, and the teachers and students appreciate the opportunity to meet and learn from the published authors.

Principal's Report – Michael Kascak

Author Study: The children have been inspired to write their own books and revise their stories because of the Author Study. He read an illustrated story by a kindergarten student named Zach.

Thank You Notes: The 5th grade Thank You Note Committee has just started. Susan Wexler is assisting and they have received a donation of card stock and envelopes.

Crisis Planning: Next week there will be a focus on safety, with bus evacuation and lockdown head count drills. Mr. Kascak will explain the drills and safety plans in the upcoming Hillside News. If there is a crisis, a disaster radio will contact the authorities and parents will be notified via an emergency phone chain.

Parking: Parking rules and a map have been developed. Notices and stickers have been printed and will be placed on violators' cars.

Student Sidewalk Department: The SSD needs umbrellas for inclement weather and will be given bright orange mittens for the winter.

Lesley Program: Hillside has been approved as an off-campus site for Lesley University next year. A grant is being written to the NEF.

Pollard Concert: Tiger Okoshi, a jazz musician, is performing a concert on October 23rd and tickets are still available.

Treasurer's Report – Judy Jacobs

Dues: Only 70% of the families have paid their PTC dues this year. Those who have not yet sent in their dues will be sent reminder envelopes. Challenge Grant funds are also down.

Innisbrook Gift Wrap: The gift wrap sales have earned \$2000 less than last year. This will affect the funds available for enrichment grants. Gift wrap can be ordered online all year, and Hillside will earn 50% on the sales.

School Pops: Many retail stores that take online orders, like LL Bean and Lands' End, participate in School Pops. A small percentage of the sales gets returned to the school. Register at www.schoolpops.com and go to the website before placing an order. Reminders to use School Pops for holiday orders will be put in the Hillside News.

Box Tops: Parents are reminded to clip the Box Tops for Education and bring them to the school.

Book Fair: The Book Fair held during Curriculum Nights was profitable for the PTC. However, some parents are concerned with the various fundraisers and activity costs in the beginning of the school year, and wonder if the Book Fair could be moved to the springtime to coincide with the Invitational Coffee dates.

Enrichment Grants

Enrichment Grant applications are being submitted, but were not voted on by the PTC at this time. They include \$900 for the Spring Talent Show, \$1200 for 5th grade amplifying equipment, and \$1200 for 5th grade math supplies. There was also an application for purchasing media and technology supplies, but Media will first spend the \$1500 they received from the PTC.

Citizens for Needham Schools – Kim Marie Nicols

The CNS provides online nonpartisan information about school issues and needs, such as proposal to make High Rock a middle school site. Their website is www.needhamyes.com.

Art Auction

The Marlin Art Auction fundraiser will be held in early February and the co-chairs are kindergartener parents Kerry Hurwitch and Becky Krechting.

Minutes from the September 28, 2006 Meeting

The minutes were unanimously approved without discussion or corrections.

Upcoming PTC Meeting

The next meeting will be Tuesday, November 14, 2006, at 9:00am in the Cafeteria.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Kim Marie Nicols, Hillside PTC Secretary

HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTC

Meeting Minutes of November 14, 2006

The meeting came to order at 9:05am and adjourned at 10:26am

Attendance was 20 Members

Co-Presidents' Report - Karen Resnic and Marian Slavin

Karen and Marian welcomed everyone to the PTC Meeting, and report that things are going smoothly.

The PTC Bylaws are now posted on the website (<http://hillside.needham.k12.ma.us/ptc/ptc.html>).

The Hillside Newsletter is now mostly paperless and more parents are encouraged to switch over to receiving the newsletter by email. This has resulted in saving the office time, paper, and busyness at the copier, and Jeanne Goodwin is thrilled. Any flyers that are to be inserted into the Newsletter should be both emailed to Jeanne and 145 hard copies given to her.

PTC dues reminder envelopes were recently sent out, yielding ten more families sending in their dues. Hillside has the lowest dues per family of all the Needham elementary schools. (Eliot Elementary School's dues are \$50 per child, which has resulted in more funds but participation has dropped.) Dues at Hillside may be slightly raised next year, but they will still be low and be per family. This will be discussed further in the spring, along with ideas like encouraging extended family and friends to contribute towards the PTC challenge grant.

They are open to new fundraising ideas, but need people to run them. One possibility is having a group go to Let's Dish and pre-making meals to freeze, with a percentage of the cost going to the Hillside PTC.

Karen and Marian attend the PTC Council that meets monthly with Superintendent Gutekanst, and last month's meeting reviewed what budget cuts mean to the curriculum and the implications on the students' learning. They particularly discussed cuts to the departments of Fine & Performing Arts, Physical Education, and Media & Technology. The integration between classroom teachers and teachers in these departments have been greatly reduced. In addition, students are receiving less instruction time in these subjects every week, and this time significantly adds up over their academic careers.

School Committee Report - Peter O'Neil, Hillside PTC School Committee Liaison

The School Committee is working with the town's Finance Committee (FinCom) to develop next year's budget. They encourage parents to contact them regarding their concerns:

FinanceCommittee@town.needham.ma.us, Superintendent - [Dan Gutekanst@needham.k12.ma.us](mailto:Dan_Gutekanst@needham.k12.ma.us),

School Committee Members - [Marianne Cooley@needham.K12.ma.us](mailto:Marianne_Cooley@needham.K12.ma.us),

[Donald Gratz@needham.k12.ma.us](mailto:Donald_Gratz@needham.k12.ma.us), [Joe Barnes@needham.k12.ma.us](mailto:Joe_Barnes@needham.k12.ma.us),

[Gary Crossen@needham.k12.ma.us](mailto:Gary_Crossen@needham.k12.ma.us), [Michael Greis@needham.k12.ma.us](mailto:Michael_Greis@needham.k12.ma.us),

[Jeff Simmons@needham.k12.ma.us](mailto:Jeff_Simmons@needham.k12.ma.us), [Laura Flueckiger@needham.k12.ma.us](mailto:Laura_Flueckiger@needham.k12.ma.us)

The April 2007 election will include a debt exclusion over ride vote for the High Rock School renovation and possibly a school operating budget over ride.

The vacant School Committee position was filled by Joe Barnes, the recently retired Pollard Middle School principal.

The November Town Meeting approved design monies for three school related issues: the High Rock School renovation (\$525,000), upgrading Pollard Middle School's electrical and technology infrastructure (\$41,000), and additional portable classrooms at Pollard (\$30,000).

Converting High Rock into a Sixth Grade Center in 2009 does not solve the school over-crowding problem for the long term, but it will accommodate 420 students.

The teachers' contract is up this year, and bargaining will include pay raises and school start and finish times.

Media Center – Elizabeth Vaccaro

Elizabeth thanked the talented media center volunteers who are teaching the children skills, like how to use an encyclopedia. This year, there is more of a focus on doing research, instead of watching videos.

She has been checking the condition of the media center's books and will accept donations of current books in excellent condition.

The media center is instituting a Gift Book Program to add new hard cover fiction and picture books to its collection. For \$15 (checks made out to the Hillside PTC), a child can select a pre-purchased book in honor of their birthday or another person or event, and it will be labeled with their name and message. There will be three enrollment periods this academic year, with the first one in November. Enrollment forms are available on the Hillside website (<http://hillside.needham.k12.ma.us>) at the media center link and will be in the Hillside Newsletter. A similar program at Broadmeadow Elementary School yielded \$1800 worth of new books.

Principal's Report – Michael Kascak

Michael discussed the latest MCAS results for Hillside, beginning with a commentary by the Mitchell Elementary School principal, Mike Schwinden, which can be read on their website (http://mitchell.needham.k12.ma.us/bulletin/oct_27.htm). MCAS affects how people perceive what individual schools do and what children are taught. Hillside's population is diverse, so its MCAS scores may not be as high as other Needham elementary schools, but they are above the state average. The teachers' professional day on November 27th will review the MCAS results and investigate specific questions that students did not do so well on. Another test Hillside students take is the DRA, and those scores are comparable to the MCAS.

Treasurer's Report – Judy Jacobs

Judy is pleased that more dues money has been added to the budget.

The Fall Family Fun Night will yield a slight profit, and although there were more expenses than budgeted, it earned more than expected.

The PTC made a commitment of giving \$3000 towards the Author Study, but has been asked to only contribute \$1060.79.

The Innisbrook Gift Wrap fundraiser may be close to breaking even, but not all the numbers have come in yet.

Enrichment Grants

There have been three applications so far for an enrichment grant, although one will be deferred to the springtime.

The guidance counselors would like to purchase Second Step Program Kits for Kindergarten for two more kindergarten classrooms. They currently have one kit that is shared between the classrooms, and the kits can last for years. The request for \$628.46 passed unanimously.

Laura Miller, a fifth grade teacher, would like a Front Row to Go audio sound system for her modular classroom. The teachers who already have the system say it is indispensable, and research shows that it helps students to learn and pay attention. Michael Kascak has committed to pay for half of the system, which costs \$864. The request for \$432 passed unanimously.

The annual Hillside Talent Show requires a lot of volunteer organization and effort from three teachers. The PTC has previously given them a \$900 stipend. The teachers will submit an Enrichment Grant request in the spring.

Committee Reports

Box Tops for Education

Clipping box tops will be yielding the PTC a projected \$655 so far this year.

The Program on Disabilities – Anne Weinstein

The POD will be doing the classroom presentations in January 2007. The program will culminate with a presentation by Travis Roy, the former BU hockey player who was paralyzed, on February 5, 2007. The Needham Commission on Disabilities is giving the POD a matching grant.

Art Auction

The Marlin Art Auction fundraiser is scheduled for Saturday evening, February 3, 2007, although the location is still to be determined. The auction house will frame art contributed by students and provide other fine art and auctioneers. They may also auction off tickets to winter sport and theatre events. The PTC will get a profit from the tickets sold and a percentage from the sales. This event was held five years ago, and parents reported that it was great, and the PTC earned \$17,000.

Spring Fling

The Spring Fling is scheduled for May 20, 2007.

Hillside Shopping Bazaar

The Shopping Bazaar will be November 16th. Parents can also pick up their orders of Innisbrook gift wrap at the Bazaar.

Bylaws Amendment

The PTC Bylaws currently state in Article V Section 2 “The Secretary shall arrange for the minutes of each meeting to be published in the Hillside weekly newsletter”. The current secretary has proposed the wording “published in the Hillside weekly newsletter” be amended to “available on the Hillside PTC website”.

In accordance with the Bylaws, this amendment will be voted on at the next PTC meeting, scheduled for Wednesday, December 13, 2006, at 7pm.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Kim Marie Nicols, Hillside PTC Secretary

HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTC

Meeting Minutes of December 13, 2006

The meeting came to order at 7:10pm and adjourned at 8:08pm
Attendance was 11 Members

Co-Presidents' Report - Karen Resnic and Marian Slavin

Karen and Marian welcomed everyone to the PTC Meeting.

The Hillside Shopping Bazaar in mid-November did not do as well as expected. Vendors had to pay \$50 per table, and some did not even make that much in sales. Perhaps in the future, it should be scheduled for the week *after* Thanksgiving, when people may make more purchases.

Principal's Report – Michael Kascak

In academic year 2007/2008 there will probably be four sections of 1st grade with 22 students per class. There will also be four sections of Kindergarten. The class size configurations of the other grade levels still need to be determined based on enrollment.

Hillside faculty have been busy doing things out outside of school.

- **Shelly Santaniello**, K teacher, wrote an article in the multi-cultural magazine Skipping Stones entitled *Candles in Common*, about the meaning of candles used in Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa celebrations. She will also be presenting this in a school-wide assembly.
- **George Goneconto**, 2nd grade teacher, played percussion on a newly released CD entitled *One-Line Rap for Girls and Chaps: Rhythmic Self-Talk to Help Kids Control Anger, Talk Respectfully, Build Self-Esteem, Enhance Peer Relations, and Succeed in School – Volume I* by Charlie Appelstein and the No Bad Kid Band.
- **Michael Kascak**, who also teaches at Lesley University, has developed *Diamond Algebra* that combines traditional triangular flash cards with geographical terms to do number calculations, which he demonstrated to the PTC members. This is being used in all grade levels at Hillside.

Teachers in the 4th and 5th grades are using the Reading Laboratories SRA Cards, familiar to many parents when they were in school, to reinforce skills that are on the MCAS, such as following directions, building reading comprehension and word skills, and answering multiple choice questions. Michaels is inventorying what Hillside currently has and will be using funds the PTC gave him in September to purchase more sets (which cost \$700 from the manufacturer but are \$435 on Amazon).

SmartBoards continue to thrill students and teachers, who like the interactions, developing materials that can be saved and sent to other teachers, and internet access. On the teachers' professional day in November, they used SmartBoards to pull up the Department of Education website to review the MCAS questions that Hillside students found difficult. Some computer companies have SmartBoards and may not be using them, so if any parents have any connections, perhaps they could be donated to Hillside.

The Cafeteria will be going on-line in January, and parents can set up accounts for each of their children by pre-paying by debit or checks. Using a key pad unit, younger students will be able to purchase lunches by clicking on their picture or name, while the older students will put in their own

four digit personal code number. Lunch tickets that have already been purchase will continue to be accepted. This system is in place in several other schools, and it yields good data for the cafeteria workers who can monitor what foods the kids are buying.

Teacher's Report - Laura Miller

Laura is very thankful for the PTC Enrichment Grant for the purchase of the Front Row to Go wireless audio sound system for her modular classroom.

Citizen's for Needham Schools Report – Kim Marie Nicols

Kim Marie attended the December CNS meeting, which discussed numerous issues affecting Needham schools. There will be an over ride vote in April 2007 to renovate High Rock School into a sixth grade center. If the over ride does not pass, new plans will need to be developed to accommodate a huge influx of students into middle school in three years.

Superintendent Gutekanst presented his budget to the School Committee, which includes funds for a simplified Science Center and restoring some positions, but does not include an elementary Spanish program. Parent coffees with the Superintendent are being set up. The Finance Committee (<http://www.town.needham.ma.us/FinCom/Index.htm>) will discuss the school budget on January 8th and the School Committee (http://district.needham.k12.ma.us/ssc_school_com.htm) is having a public hearing on the budget on January 16th, and parents are encouraged to attend both meetings.

The League of Women Voters (<http://www.lwv-needham.org/>) is repeating their *Follow the Money* program in March and is planning on a *Know Your School* series for preschool parents.

The next CNS (www.NeedhamYes.com) meeting is January 21st and is open to the community.

Treasurer's Report

PTC dues have been paid by 79% of Hillside parents, and the budget is on a 'good keel'. The Enrichment Grants have been budgeted for \$4000, and approximately \$1000 has already been spent.

Committee Reports

Needham Cares Project (<http://needhamcares.olin.edu/>)

Deb Jacobs coordinated the Needham Cares Project of buying Holiday gifts for communities in Mississippi affected by Hurricane Katrina. Hillside families and staff made a great response of taking 130 gift tags in just a few days. Hillside alumni helped pack the truck full of gift bags and photos were exhibited on a poster.

Art Auction

Kerry Hurwitch and Becky Krechting are coordinating the Marlin Art Auction fundraiser on February 3, 2007. They are still finalizing a location, and will have to rent tables and a sound system and hire a bartender and caterer. The PTC will sell tickets to the event, but the price still needs to be determined. The art house does not charge anything and will provide everything else, including framing the art of Hillside students (which needs to be created in early January). If at least 150 people show up to the event, Marlin guarantees the PTC will receive \$2000, but it will probably earn much more through a percentage of the sales. Volunteers are being sought to serve on auction committees.

Enrichment Grants

The guidance counselors and Kindergarten teachers sent a thank you note for the Enrichment Grant that purchased two Second Step Program Kits.

The three 1st grade teachers have submitted an Enrichment Grant application to update their classroom guided reading curriculum books. They are requesting \$600 (\$200 per classroom) to purchase books at the New England Mobile Book Fair. The request for \$600 passed unanimously.

Minutes from the November 14, 2006 Meeting

The minutes were unanimously approved. Minutes for the October 18th meeting were approved on November 14th.

Bylaws Amendment

The proposed bylaws amendment passed unanimously. The PTC Bylaws in Article V Section 2 now read “The Secretary shall arrange for the minutes of each meeting to be available on the Hillside PTC website”, which is at <http://hillside.needham.k12.ma.us/ptc/ptc.html>.

Child Assault Prevention (CAP) Program

The CAP program will be presented to children in the 1st, 3rd, and 5th grades in January.

Program on Disabilities (POD)

The POD classroom presentations will be in January, and Travis Roy (disabled former BU hockey player) will be the guest speaker at a school-wide assembly on February 5, 2007.

METCO Program

Bridget Bradley is now the co-chair for Needham METCO, and will be the parent representative to the upcoming METCO conference.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Kim Marie Nicols, Hillside PTC Secretary

HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTC

Meeting Minutes of January 24, 2007

The meeting came to order at 9:08am and adjourned at 10:39am

Guest Speakers – Barbara Buckley, Hillside Cafeteria Manager and Ruth Griffin, Needham Schools Food Service Director

The new cafeteria computerized payment service is now in place and things are going very well. In March, students in all grades will be using PIN numbers to purchase food, although their accounts can still be accessed by name and their pictures will pop up on the screen. By April, parents will be able to access the cafeteria account on line and see what their children have purchased and the remaining balance.

To encourage healthy eating, Hillside has instituted new cafeteria protocols that parents need to reinforce at home. Students who choose to have a pretzel or bagel for lunch must also select cheese or yogurt and a fruit or vegetable. Unless restricted due to parental requests, students can purchase one lunch (\$1.75), one snack (ranging from 25c to 75c), and an extra beverage (50c or 75c). When pizza or hot dogs are served, they can get an additional one for \$1. On Fridays, students can purchase both a snack and ice cream (50c). If parents want to further limit what can be bought or approve purchasing additional food, or to note food allergies, they should contact Fiorella Meoli in Food Services (781-455-0400 x219) to put that into the computer system. When the students type in their PIN number, all this information will be on the screen.

If the balance in the account is less than \$1, reminders will be sent home on Wednesdays. When the balance is getting low, reminders will be sent on Fridays. If the account goes in the negative by \$20, a notice will be sent by mail. The system is not able to send out email notices. Even if there is no money in their accounts, students will still be fed, albeit a cheese sandwich, milk, and a fruit.

Barbara is available to answer any questions or concerns daily from 8-10am.

Principal's Report – Michael Kascak

Tom Franks is still recovering at home with a foot problem, and is expected back next week. The students have sent him get-well cards that were greatly appreciated. The other two custodians have been doing a great job picking up the slack.

Michael was very pleased to report that the Needham Education Foundation just approved his large grant proposal for a Lesley University graduate internship program. Hillside will be the first suburban public school to institute such a program, which has been successful elsewhere. Interns will earn graduate credits towards a fourteen-month program leading to a master's degree and teaching certificate. Teachers Raylene Roberts and Elaine McKenna will assist Michael in selecting five interns who will be at Hillside during the 07/08 academic year. In addition to classroom responsibilities, the interns will do recess and parking duties.

Committee Reports

Campus for Hillside – **Susan Opton**

Volunteers are encouraged to join the monthly Campus for Hillside committee meetings to implement their ambitious ideas to beautify the school grounds.

The manhole cover in Mrs. Wong's garden is damaged, and although the town may be able to replace it, the committee would like to have a decorative cover that could cost between \$600-\$800. This could be an idea for a 5th grade class present.

They also are trying to arrange a visit with the Plant Mobile from the Mass. Horticultural Society – a station wagon planted all over with grass and plants.

Their newest plan is to create a portion of the Emerald Necklace around the school called the 'Hillside Plaza'. This area would be outside the cafeteria, from around the dumpster to the basketball hoop. It would create a usable space for sitting and quiet games (like chess) and would be where slush is served and the children dance during the Hillside picnics. The project will begin with screening the dumpster in an artful way. Although the design has yet to be determined, a Hillside parent who is a carpenter has offered his services. There is also an idea to incorporate mosaics and sculptures of recycled materials created by the children, so they would have 'ownership' of the beautiful new area.

Hillside Goes Green – **Tracilee Messina**

The ideas are still incubating, but Tracilee would like to develop some programs on recycling and reducing pollution. These could include field trips to pick up trash at the town forest, developing a partnership with Volante Farm, and encouraging the use of tote bags instead of plastic bags.

METCO – **Cathy Guild, Co-Chair**

An activity is being planned to get Needham and Boston children and parents together called "METCO friends and neighbors movie madness". The location and date and time still need to be determined.

Co-Presidents' Report - Karen Resnic and Marian Slavin

Their focus has been on the upcoming Marlin Art Auction fundraiser on February 3, 2007. The goal is to sell 200 tickets (\$20 individual, \$35 couple), although only 65 have been sold so far. Tickets will also be available at the door. One hundred percent of the ticket sales go to the PTC. The teachers and staff were invited gratis, and so far the principal and eight staff and their spouses have confirmed. If 150 people walk through the door, Marlin Art will give the PTC a guaranteed \$2000, plus a percentage of the sales. Marlin Art offers a variety of art and artists, which can be viewed online at www.marlinart.com, and has framed 21 student pictures that will also be auctioned. Social time will be from 7-8pm, and the auction begins at 8pm.

Several coffees with Superintendent Gutekanst to talk about the 07/08 school budget and spending cuts are being scheduled. Linda Mesnik is sponsoring one at her home on February 7th at 9am and space is still available but RSVPs are required.

The School Committee just voted on a budget that is less than the Superintendent's proposal. Next academic year there will be no elementary Spanish and the high school athletic fees will not be

reduced. However, a \$1.1 million operational override will need to be passed in April if teacher positions are to be kept, including one for the incoming 5th grade at Hillside (a reduction would mean three classrooms instead of four for the current 73 students). There will be a public hearing on the budget on February 27th at 7pm at Broadmeadow School. There will also be a debt override on the ballot for creating a 6th grade Center at the High Rock School.

Another fundraiser opportunity is from Chef Dane's in Needham, where customers prepare gourmet meals. They will donate 10% of the proceeds to anyone who mentions the Hillside code. Hillside parents have also organized two private parties for next week. Chef Dane's has a special this month where you buy three meals and get one free.

The PTC is recruiting committee chair positions. A Gift Wrap chair is especially needed because the process needs to start soon. Other gift wrap vendors need to be investigated to see the variety of products and the potential of raising more money than what has been earned over the past several years. There is also an idea to have a Caring Committee that could coordinate outreach and provide meals to staff and families in need and liaison with Needham Cares activities.

Treasurer's Report

Income has included the Innisbrook Gift Wrap sales, which have totaled \$6970.16, plus the potential of future internet sales. There is also additional bank interest income. No new information is available from the School Pops and Box Tops for Education fundraising.

Spending has included the "Amazing Grace" creative arts program, Program on Disabilities materials, the 4th grade fieldtrip to Harvard's Peabody Museum, Travis Roy coming to speak on February 5th, and paying the PTC insurance policy.

The Hillside Media Gift Book program will be re-opening in February. The November enrollment brought in \$390 towards the \$460 that was spent on new books.

Enrichment Grants

Lynne Doran has submitted a grant application of \$420 for the 5th grade to attend the Boston Lyric Opera's "Barber of Seville" on May 2nd. The fee includes a pre-show presentation at Hillside, materials, and admission to the performance. The students will pay for bus transportations of about \$7 apiece. The request for \$420 passed unanimously.

Citizen's for Needham Schools Report – Kim Marie Nicols

The next meeting will be Sunday, January 28th, 7:30pm at the Needham Historical Society. The agenda will include discussion of upcoming override votes for the school budget and the High Rock School renovation. More information is available at www.NeedhamYes.com.

Minutes from the December 13, 2006 Meeting

The minutes were unanimously approved.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Kim Marie Nicols, Hillside PTC Secretary

HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTC

Meeting Minutes of February 28, 2007

The meeting came to order at 7:16pm and adjourned at 9:10pm
Attendance was 18 Members

School Committee Report – Joe Barnes, School Committee Member

The School Committee is meeting tomorrow to vote on the budget and High Rock School project.

Superintendent Gutekanst recommended an operational budget increase of 7.4%, and the School Committee will, in all probability, support it. This is 'bare bones' budget, because of the losses from previous years, and to keep pace with rising enrollment, predicted to be 60 additional students next year. The Finance Committee believes that the school system can get by with only a \$600,000 increase, but they left items out of their budget (no contingency for special education, not adding the Science Center and other items taken out of last year's budget, not accounting for rising enrollment, and nothing for legal fees). The Selectmen will have to approve an override request of \$1.1 million, which could increase taxes by \$75 per average home. If the override does not pass on the April 10th ballot, then there will be layers of cuts, including cutting a total of 14 classroom teachers, and class sizes will rise. For Hillside, this could mean cutting one teacher from next year's 5th grade which would create three very large classes, the elimination of 4th grade band, and further cutbacks in PE and the arts.

There is also a proposal to renovate High Rock School into a sixth grade center that would open in September 2009. The School Committee is in support of a renovation with permanent construction (not modulars) that would require a debt exclusion override of \$20 to \$21 million. It would be for 460 6th graders, and in the future could be converted for use by 320 elementary students. The layout of the school is good, with special education classes close to each cluster. The Pollard Middle School technology upgrade is also included in this override, but not two additional Pollard modulars in 2008.

There will not be an override proposal for operating costs for a High Rock 6th grade center on the April 10th ballot, since it is two years into the future.

Co-Presidents' Report - Karen Resnic and Marian Slavin

The Art Auction was very successful and they thanked all who assisted and attended.

They want to start a Caring Committee, which needs a co-chair and volunteers. The committee would arrange meals for families in need, coordinate Hillside's donations to the Needham Community Council's food pantry, and liaison with Needham Cares.

The Gift Wrap Committee has a chairwoman, but a co-chair is still needed for next year. The committee is already working on plans for the fall, including investigating other companies (although it appears that their products are similar to Innisbrook's). This fundraiser brings in money for the PTC early in the academic year, and earnings have ranged from \$7 - \$10 thousand. This year brought in less money than was budgeted, but funds are still coming in from internet sales.

The Book Fair Committee has been going with Scholastic for a while, but they may be looking at other companies as well. The Book Fair will be scheduled for later in the fall, closer to the holidays, and will not be back-to-back with the gift wrap fundraiser. The PTC members clearly stated that they did not want a second Book Fair in the spring.

Principal's Report – Michael Kascak

It is projected that there will be less Kindergarteners at Hillside next year. Many families are opting for a full day private Kindergarten program, even though Hillside will be a KASE location.

Michael and three teachers (Mr. Goneconto, Ms. Cicala, and Ms. McKenna) attended a SmartBoard seminar yesterday. He continues to believe that it is changing teaching practices in wonderful ways. Teachers are developing lesson plans that are easier to organize between videos, overheads, and the internet, and the plans can be simply passed on to other teachers. Although there is no hard data on the effectiveness of SmartBoards, the children are enthusiastic and their attentiveness is increased. There are currently six SmartBoards at Hillside and the goal is to have six more by next year, with the higher grades getting them first. Michael is also negotiating with the SmartBoard company to have Hillside become a site school.

Interviews for the Lesley University / Hillside internship program will begin next week, and they hope to accept four to six candidates in elementary or special education. The interns must already have a BA degree, and they will earn graduate credits leading to a master's degree and teaching certificate in a fourteen-month program, for a lower tuition than the regular Lesley program. They will work a full academic year at Hillside, getting experience with two different homeroom teachers, and will attend seminars taught by Hillside faculty.

Teacher's Report – Laura Miller

The PTC provided funds for two wonderful programs this week. The Boston Ballet performance awed both students and staff. The 5th graders had a presentation of “ The Barber of Seville” by the Boston Lyric Opera in preparation for the May performance.

Treasurer's Report – Judy Jacobs

The Skating Party, which was scheduled for January this year, was very successful and earned \$400.

The Bingo Night is scheduled for March 16th, and admission will be charged so the event can break even.

The Enrichment Grant Budget has spent about \$2000 so far this year, plus it may allocate \$900 towards the Talent Show in the spring.

The Marlin Art Auction grossed \$7300, with \$1300 going towards expenses and making a profit of \$6000, which exceeded what was budgeted. The children's art alone earned about \$2000, the ticket sales accounted for \$2400, and drinks brought in \$700. Marlin Art reported that they made money too.

Chef Dane's is donating 10% of their sales to anyone who mentions the Hillside code. Already, \$162 has come to the PTC.

Future Grant Proposal

George Goneconto presented a proposal for the fall of 2007 called "Drum Up Character". He is seeking funds totaling \$5750 from a variety of sources, although the requests for \$1050 from a PTC Enrichment Grant and additional funds from the Hillside Creative Arts Committee are contingent upon receiving \$3500 from the NEF first.

The money would purchase 25 beautiful African drums for students and 4 lead drums for teachers, two carts to carry them around to classrooms, and training from drumming instructor Tom Foote. Mr. Kascak wants to display the drums on shelves in the lobby, which will be paid for out of his budget.

The first year would have a theme of 'inclusion' with drumming circles in morning meetings and an assembly for the whole school. Using a drumbeat, the teachers and children will develop language on what inclusion means. Themes in subsequent years could be 'integrity', 'respect', etc. Drums would become part of the Hillside culture, heard in classrooms, on the playground, and in the cafeteria. The drums would also be used in Ms. Doran's music curriculum.

Enrichment Grants

ProScope Microscope

Ms. Cicala, representing all of the fourth grade teachers, submitted a proposal to purchase a ProScope Microscope. It can be connected to the SmartBoards, and will enhance their instruction on insects, minerals, etc. The microscope costs \$414, but Ms. Cicala will be contributing the \$200 the PTC gave her in September, so the Enrichment Grant request was for \$214, which passed unanimously.

SmartBoard

Mr. Kascak submitted a grant request to purchase one SmartBoard for a fifth grade classroom for \$3000. (The newest upgrade, SmartBoard 600i, mounts on the wall, casts less shadow, and has a closer connection to the computer, but it sells for \$4200.) The PTC unanimously approved an Enrichment Grant for \$3000 for one regular SmartBoard.

Talent Show Discussion

The three teachers who organize the students' Talent Show annually submit an Enrichment Grant for a \$900 stipend, and they plan to do so again in the spring. They devote a lot of their personal after-school time to tryouts and rehearsals. The Talent Show is part of the Hillside culture, looked forward to by all the students and it involves 80 performers. The discussion looked at other options to fund the teachers' stipend, including putting it under the EASE program, having the PTC charge an activity fee of \$10 per participant, or adding it in as a line item to the PTC budget. The decision was made to keep funding the teachers' stipend as an Enrichment Grant at this time.

Committee Reports

Media Center

The Media Center is replenishing its stacks and tossing out older and very worn books. It has already instituted a Gift Book Program, and plans to host a Hillside Used Book Sale. Book donations will be accepted, and the good ones and series will be kept by the Media Center. The rest of the donated books will be offered for sale and the money will go back to the Media Center to purchase more new books. This program has been very successful at the Mitchell Elementary School.

Yearbook

The order form for the 2007 Hillside Yearbook has just been distributed. Yearbooks will cost \$14.

Invitational Coffees

The Invitational Coffees, where parents can visit their children's classrooms, are beginning tomorrow. Only beverages will be served; there will be no food this year.

Box Tops for Education

Everyone is encouraged to continue to bring their Box Tops to school – look for the new box in the lobby.

Minutes from the January 24, 2007 Meeting

The minutes were unanimously approved.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Kim Marie Nicols, Hillside PTC Secretary

HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTC

Meeting Minutes of March 22, 2007

The meeting came to order at 9:12am and adjourned at 10:39am
Attendance was 12 Members

Co-Presidents' Report - Karen Resnic and Marian Slavin

They welcomed everyone to the PTC meeting, and reported on upcoming events.

Book Drive and Sale

To increase the resources in the Media Center, parents will be asked to donate used books and videos/DVDs. The Media Center will select what they want for their shelves, and the remainder will be sold on election day in the school lobby, with the proceeds going to purchase additional books. Rochelle Goldin is coordinating the sale and will need lots of volunteers to work two-hour shifts.

Hillside Goes Green

Tracilee Messina is coordinating a collection of used cell phones. They will be sent to a charitable organization that will contribute a small amount of money back to the Hillside PTC.

Volunteer Fair for PTC Positions

To recruit chairs and volunteers for various PTC positions, there will be a Volunteer Fair at the May meeting. Open positions include a co-president and a co-secretary. Two parents have already volunteered to be co-chairs for the gift-wrap paper fundraiser.

Guest Speaker for April PTC Meeting

Glenn Brand, the principal of the Pollard Middle School, will be speaking at the meeting on April 25th.

Principal's Report – Michael Kascak

SmartBoards

Michael thanked the PTC once again for the \$3000 Enrichment Grant to purchase another SmartBoard. He will add his principal's funds to upgrade to a Super SmartBoard 600i.

Hillside has been accepted as a showcase school site for the SmartBoard company and will receive a loan of SmartBoard equipment for five years worth \$30,000. This will include three regular SmartBoards and one Super SmartBoard 600i, and possibly any future upgrades. Hillside may need to host seminars on SmartBoards for other schools.

Lesley Internship Program

Two promising candidates for the Lesley University / Hillside internship program were recently interviewed, and Michael hopes to have a total of four to six interns next year. They must already have a BA degree, and will earn graduate credits leading to a master's degree and a teaching certificate in the fourteen-month program, which includes working a full academic year at Hillside.

Fifth Grade Volunteers

Yesterday, incoming kindergarteners and their parents were guided around Hillside by current fifth graders, who had such positive experiences that they want to conduct more tours for other groups.

MCAS

The 3rd graders are done with MCAS, and since there were no absences, no make-ups are needed. The 4th and 5th graders will continue to take their MCAS tests next week. The students should not fret over the MCAS because they have practiced test-taking techniques and are well prepared.

There are parent concerns that homework and long term assignments have been due the day of scheduled MSAS testing. Part of the problem is that students delay working on assignments until the last moment, leading to the 'hurried child'. Perhaps there should be an evening meeting of parents and teachers to discuss preparation for assignments and homework. In the meantime, parents need to tell teachers whenever the homework load is too heavy or taking too much time to complete.

T-Shirts

Michael gave Rachel Foley information about a vendor who can print school logos on t-shirts for \$1.99 each.

School Committee Report – Kim Marie Nicols

Guests at the March 20th School Committee Meeting were the Needham Selectmen and State Legislators, Representative Lida Harkins and Senator Scott Brown, who spoke about various funding sources for schools, Department of Education regulations, and future planning and programs. There was a presentation by The Education Cooperative (TEC), which establishes collaborative programs and services, including special education, among area towns. There was also a report about the components (including Morning Meetings in the classrooms) and benefits of the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) program.

The School Committee had further discussion of the school budget for 07/08, the Finance Committee (FinCom) approach in establishing budgets for town departments, and the override proposals on the April 10th election ballot. If the operational override does not pass, then bus transportation will increase to \$375 per rider. There is also a proposal to add a late fee of \$50 for students who register for bus transportation after the June 1st deadline.

Motion on the Overrides

Fredie Kay made two motions for the Hillside PTC to endorse both the operational and debt-exclusion overrides. The PTC Co-Presidents will be able to use their names and titles in support of the overrides and use the PTC email list to encourage parents to go to www.YesforNeedham.com for information about the overrides campaign.

The motion that *the Hillside PTC support the April 10, 2007 ballot question for an Operational Override that will provide \$1.1 million to fund operating costs of the schools* passed unanimously.

The motion that *the Hillside PTC support the April 10, 2007 ballot question for a \$21 million Debt-Exclusion Override for the renovation and construction of an addition at the High Rock School to*

become a Sixth Grade Center and eventually an Elementary School, and the Technology Infrastructure Upgrade of Pollard passed by majority.

Treasurer's Report – Judy Jacobs

There is money in the PTC budget to fund Enrichment Grants, including \$600 in that line item and \$1500 from other line items that had profits beyond what was budgeted or funds not spent.

Enrichment Grants

Plantmobile

Parents June Ferestien and Susan Opton submitted a grant request of \$325 for the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's Plantmobile to present their half-day "Schoolyard Ecology" workshop to all the second grade classes. The students will observe the schoolyard as an ecosystem and discover plant and animal interactions. A comparable program is probably not available from the Science Center. A fuller description of the workshop and a picture of the Plantmobile are at www.masshort.org.

Since the second grade still has \$150 in their field trip account, the PTC unanimously approved an Enrichment Grant of \$175.

Talent Show

The three teachers (Ellen Rodman, Maria DeCicco, and Raylene Roberts) who organize the students' Talent Show submitted an Enrichment Grant for \$900, for a stipend of \$300 each. They devote a lot of their personal after-school time to tryouts and rehearsals. The Talent Show is part of the Hillside culture, showcases the abilities of 80 student performers, and is looked forward to by the entire student body.

There was extended discussion about looking at other options to fund the teachers' stipend, including putting it under the EASE program, having the PTC charge a voluntary activity fee of \$10 per participant, asking for contributions to fund the Talent Show, adding it in as a Creative Arts line item in the PTC budget, or getting matching funds from the Principal. A decision will be made in the next academic year on how a stipend could be funded.

The motion to give the Hillside PTC authority to fund \$900 in full from the Enrichment Grant line item, or other appropriate PTC funds such as Creative Arts, or cost share with the Principal's funds passed unanimously.

Minutes from the February 28, 2007 Meeting

The minutes were unanimously approved.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Kim Marie Nicols, Hillside PTC Secretary

HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTC

Meeting Minutes of April 25, 2007

The meeting came to order at 7:13pm and adjourned at 8:56pm
Attendance was 23 Members

Guest Speaker – Glenn Brand, Principal of Pollard Middle School

Glenn Brand led a discussion about the transition to the Middle School. All incoming students will visit in June and there will be a Parent's Night that will provide further information.

It is understandable that parents are apprehensive about their children going to a school with 1070 students. But the cluster system organization is like three middle schools in one building and it is an effective system to handle the population. Each grade level has its own office with an administrator, secretary, and guidance staff, and each cluster has four academic teachers who get to know their 80-85 students really well. The staff are dedicated professionals who have specialized skills and interests in working with young adolescents.

The Pollard staff has been working with 5th grade teachers to get information about the incoming students and make cluster placement decisions that are equitable and balanced. The cluster teachers are also balanced by experience and gender. There are five retiring Pollard teachers this year, so some clusters may be reshuffled. Course selections were just done and the trimester schedules are being put together now. Electives are offered in the afternoons and those classes mix students together from other clusters in the same grade.

The Pollard After-School activities are varied and a lot of students participate. They will start at the end of September, and begin at 2:40 and go for about an hour. Since school ends at 2:10, students have a half hour to see their teachers for homework help. There is no late bus.

Parental involvement is strong at Pollard and they have a good partnership with the school staff. There is currently a homework task force that is surveying the homework load, attempting to balance and coordinate the amount, examine its purpose, and create greater equity between clusters.

Pollard is an old building with narrow hallways and limited public space. But the cafeteria is within fire code safety limits now and in two years when the population will be at its highest. There are a lot of exit doors in case of an emergency.

Since the population will rise by an additional 40 student in two years, they will probably need to develop a ½ cluster to accommodate them. The administration is in the planning stage for how Pollard will operate in three years when the 6th grade will be split off to the High Rock School site.

Vision / Values Survey

Superintendent Gutekanst is doing a survey of all groups involved with schools, and the Hillside PTC was asked to participate.

1. *What one or two words describe the Hillside School experience?*

engaging, positive, solid, stimulating, inclusive, enriching, exciting, embracing, nurturing, balanced values academics.

2. *What word (s) should be at the heart of our school system?*

education, learning, opportunity, excellence

3. *What is the difference between good and great school systems?*

innovation, teachers, community, funding, leadership, attitudes, expectations, striving

Co-Presidents' Report - Karen Resnic and Marian Slavin

They thanked the Hillside community who worked on the overrides. The administration is “overflowing with joy and thanks”.

At the May meeting, there will be a recruitment of committee chairs and volunteers. Jennifer Quinn will be the Co-President with Marian.

They briefly spoke about numerous events:

The *Book Fair* will be held the first week of November.

The *Staff Appreciation Luncheon* is tomorrow.

The *Spring Fling* will be on May 20th and the fundraising goal is \$16,000.

The *Talent Show Stipend* will be funded out of the Creative Arts line item.

The *Plant Sale* will not be scheduled this year.

The *Tupperware* fundraiser will be happening soon.

Campus for Hillside is cleaning up the grounds, having a seminar on pruning, and planting this Saturday.

Used Book Drive and Sale

Held on Election Day in the lobby, the Used Book Sale was a lucrative and wonderful event. Donated books were added to the Media Center and lots of funds were raised to purchase more. It will happen again next election day, so families are asked to save their books for donation.

Hillside Goes Green

Tracilee Messina worked with Volante Farm (who fronted the costs) to make up green canvas bags that will be sold at the Spring Fling. They will be filled with donated goodies. The price per bag has yet to be determined. There may also be a school-wide assembly to encourage greener practices.

Teacher's Report – Laura Miller

The students from Ms. Audibert's class created a thank you poster for the new books purchased with PTC funds. It will be displayed on the PTC bulletin board.

Principal's Report – Michael Kascak

When he is out of the building, Raylene Roberts, who has her principal's certification, will be covering. Michael will be attending the Teachers and Scholars Seminar about outdoor architecture for learning and art tomorrow, and is disappointed to miss the Staff Appreciation Luncheon.

Parking

Parking continues to be an issue around Hillside, and the police were here twice because of complaints by neighbors. The police may assign a detail and will ticket and tow if roads are blocked (especially Hasenfus Circle). More signs are also needed in the area. Michael will send a reminder to parents again on where they can park. Part of the problem is that there are 49 staff and only 44 parking spaces.

Movie Warning

The new movie in theatres, *Meet the Robinsons*, has negative messages about adoption. If children see the movie, they should be prepared ahead of time. More information is available at www.mspcc.org/site/PageServer?pagename=progs_adopt_AdoptiveFamiliesTogether.

Lesley Internship Program

The Lesley University / Hillside internship program has accepted two candidates. They will have a Career Fair at Lesley on Saturday. Nancy Albuquerque, who retired from Hillside last year, has been hired as a consultant.

SmartBoards

Three SmartBoards have been delivered and are waiting to be installed.

Teacher Retention

All of the current Hillside teachers will be returning next year and none are retiring. New reading teachers need to be hired.

Hillside Facility Upgrade

The school is at its electronics capacity, and needs to be upgraded with more sockets. The capital budget will fund improvements.

Environmental and Wellness Activities

Numerous activities are planned, beginning with an Earth Day assembly kick-off. Students will write on paper leaves how they can help the earth, which will be put up on the lobby bulletin board. The DPW sewerage truck is coming to do their Down the Drain program. A Walk Across America project is being coordinated by Rob Tatro. The field will be marked at off at ¼ mile, and students will earn a popsicle stick when they walk one mile. They will also be encouraged to walk to school more often (which may alleviate some of the parking problems). The cumulative miles will be tallied by the popsicle sticks and marked on a map. Prizes will be awarded to those who have the best estimate on how far the whole student body can walk in five weeks.

Drum Up Character

The NEF just announced that the grant, written by Jane Goldstein and George Goneconto, will be funded. Using an additional \$1000 from the Hillside PTC, African drums will be purchased and an extensive drumming programming developed.

Enrichment Grants

Wellness Activities: Walk Across American and Ultimate Frisbee Challenge

A grant proposal in the amount of \$450 was requested to purchase prizes, field paint, and Frisbees. Matching funds, from a donated gift certificate, will also be contributed by Michael Kascak. The grant was unanimously approved.

School Committee Report – Kim Marie Nicols

Hillside will be assigned a new representative from the School Committee since Jeff Simmons is no longer a member.

The last day of school will be Wednesday, June 20, 2007, with elementary school dismissal at 12:05pm.

Minutes from the March 22, 2007 Meeting

The minutes were unanimously approved.

Upcoming PTC Meetings

The next meeting will be on Thursday, May 24, 2007. There is no meeting scheduled for June.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Kim Marie Nicols, Hillside PTC Secretary

HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTC

Meeting Minutes of May 24, 2007

The meeting came to order at 9:11am and adjourned at 10:25am

Attendance was 13 Members

Co-Presidents' Report – Karen Resnic and Marian Slavin

After welcoming everyone to the last meeting of this academic year, they made a few announcements and turned their focus on positions and activities for the next school year.

Needham Educational Foundation (NEF)

At the PTC Council Meeting yesterday, it was announced that the NEF will be increasing their small grant amounts from \$3000 to \$5000. Anyone can submit a grant or co-write one with a teacher. The Hillside PTC has a Grant Writer position and two Hillside parents are on the NEF Board.

METCO Program

A Family Friends Program is being developed to increase the contacts between Needham and Boston. The METCO students who live in Boston will be matched up with Needham students, and activities could include scheduling playdates on early release days. There will be 20 METCO students at Hillside next year, and Newman Elementary will have 6 students for the first time.

PTC Positions

* see addendum entitled Draft 2007-2008 Hillside PTC Officers and Committee Heads *

Volunteers are still needed for the following open positions:

- Co-Secretary
- Kindergarten Orientation Co-Chair
- School Committee Liaison
- Spring Fling Auction Chair

For future recruitment, it may be helpful to have a paragraph describing each PTC position.

PTC Activities

Book Fair – It will be scheduled later in the fall, in the last week of October.

The Hillside Directory – It will continue to be printed gratis by the Vora family.

Playground Equipment – The goal is to purchase new balls before school starts in September.

Invitational Coffees – The details still need to be worked out, but instead of morning coffees, open houses will be scheduled by grade.

Creative Arts – With a budget of \$10, 000, this committee will help with all-school assemblies and arrange guest speakers.

Art Auction – It will not be repeated in the coming year, but students' art will be put into the Spring Fling auction.

Winter Parent / Teacher Mixer – The mixer will be an opportunity for parents and teachers to socialize at a non-fundraising event and without children.

Hillside / Eliot Basketball Game – A team will be formed of parents and teachers to go against an Eliot Elementary School team.

Plant Sale – It has not been done for two years and will no longer be a scheduled fundraiser.

Shopping Night – It will not be scheduled in the upcoming year.

Election Day Used Book Fair – Because it was such a success in providing books and funds for the Media Center, it will be held again next spring.

Principal's Report – Michael Kascak

Michael expressed his thanks to the parents for their contributions in making it a wonderful first year as the Hillside principal.

Parent Appreciation Breakfast Hosted by the Teachers

The breakfast is scheduled for Thursday, June 7th. Only pre-Kindergarten children will accompany their parents to the breakfast; students will hang out in the classrooms of teacher volunteers.

Space Restraints

Every available space will be occupied next year. KASE classrooms will accommodate Hillside students. The kitchen will be getting a walk-in freezer. A request was made to clean out the hallway and room that has stored Spring Fling items (sand table, craft stuff, and auction boards) by the end of the year.

Lesley Internship Program

So far there are 3 candidates for the Lesley University / Hillside internship program next year, although the program could accept a total of 6 interns.

Lost and Found

There are a lot of items in the Lost and Found. Some items are labeled, and perhaps a parent volunteer and some of the 5th graders could sort them out and return them to students.

Class Lists for 2007/2008

The lists will be posted and mailed out before June 26th.

Spring Fling Report

The Spring Fling is the biggest fundraiser for the PTC and it was more profitable than last year's, grossing over \$20,000 with about \$5000 in expenses.

The auction had its best year ever and brought in \$11,958 (before expenses). The auction committee began soliciting donations in March and personally asked local merchants for donations in April. The computer check out system makes the process much easier, and is not hard for new volunteers to learn.

The raffle earned \$1681 (before expenses). The other activities (food and games) brought in \$6500, which was a little lower than previous years.

The 5th grade Thank You Card Committee will send out notes to all the volunteers who worked on the Spring Fling.

Treasurer's Report – Judy Jacobs

Some committees did not spend all of their budgeted money this year. About \$49,000 was budgeted for expenses, but only \$45,000 was spent.

The budgeted gross income was around \$47,000, and the actual amount was nearly \$52,000.

The Hillside PTC will have approximately \$25,000 in the bank in September.

There was discussion about committees seeking financial reimbursement from the PTC when they buy refreshments for their volunteers. Usually, whoever hosts an activity will donate snacks or ask for contributions. A formal policy may need to be developed to clarify when or if the PTC will cover refreshment expenses.

School Supplies

An idea was submitted to contract with an office supply store to pre-purchase school supplies for the start of the school year.

Enrichment Grants

The proposal for an Enrichment Grant to start a Hillside School Store was withdrawn.

A grant proposal will be submitted early next year to purchase more SmartBoards. Hillside currently has 10, and many are mounted.

Voting on PTC Officers for 2007/2008

By unanimous vote, the officers for the next school year will be:

Co-Presidents – Marian Slavin and Jennifer Quinn

Treasurer – Kathy DeMayo

Secretary – Kim Marie Nicols

Dues for 2007/2008

The dues among the PTCs vary greatly. Currently they are:

Hillside - \$20 per family

Mitchell - \$60 per child

Eliot - \$50 per child

By unanimous vote, the Hillside PTC dues will be increased in 2007/2008. The new amount will be \$35 per family.

Minutes from the April 25, 2007 Meeting

The minutes were unanimously approved.

Gifts for the PTC Presidents

Karen and Marian were presented with beautiful flowering plants in appreciation of their hard work this year on behalf of Hillside and the PTC.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Kim Marie Nicols, Hillside PTC Secretary

Addendum

Draft 2007-2008 Hillside PTC Officers and Committee Heads

Position/Committee	PTC Volunteer	Phone	E-Mail
Co-Presidents	Marian Slavin Jennifer Quinn	781-444-9076 781-449-9930	mjsslavin@aol.com jenniferquinn@rcn.com
Co-Secretaries	Kim Marie Nicols Open	781-455-8178	kim_marie_nicols@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Kathleen DeMayo	781-449-6198	kdemayo@rcn.com
Audit Committee	Mike Evans	781-444-5344	mevans@forstmannleff.com
Bingo Night	Judy Jacobs	781-455-6757	jjacobs02492@yahoo.com
Book Fair	Karen Resnic	781-237-5797	karen_resnic@hotmail.com
Box Tops	Elissa Grebber	781-449-1631	grebbers@comcast.net
Cafeteria Volunteers	Michele Kalamvokis	781-455-9801	kalamvokis@rcn.com
Campus for Hillside	Tracy Belval Susan Opton	781-455-6587 781-449-5256	tbelval@rcn.com sopton@hotmail.com
Creative Arts	Beth Warner	781-449-5495	bbwarner@rcn.com
Directory	Heather Goss	781-444-0150	heather_goss@comcast.net
E-Mail Coordinator	Sharon Breitbart	781-455-7979	home@sitesbysharon.com
Fall Family Fun Night	Judy Jacobs Betsy Delaney	781-455-6757 781-400-5480	jjacobs02492@yahoo.com betsydelaney01@comcast.net
Gift Wrap Fundraiser	Becky Krechting Sarah Hood	781-449-2920 781-400-5029	krechting@comcast.net dshood@hotmail.com
Grants	June Ferestien	781-449-6895	june.ferestien@comcast.net
Head Room Parent K-2	Rachel Foley	781-559-8148	rlfoles@aol.com
Head Room Parent 3-5	Elissa Grebber	781-449-1631	grebbers@comcast.net
Hillside Cares	Deb Jacob	781-235-1357	dhjacob@comcast.net
Hospitality	Suzanne Connelly Christine Ruddy	781-237-0636 781-431-4686	williconne@aol.com christinerud@yahoo.com
Kindergarten Orientation	Beth Cohen Open	781-444-2520	bzuckcohen@aol.com
Media	Rochelle Goldin	781-449-2388	rochellegoldin@rcn.com
METCO	Cathy Guild Bridget Bradley	617-822-1199 781-400-1349	cdguild@hotmail.com babesq35@msn.com
Permits	Sarah McCormick	781-449-1434	mcbassett@rcn.com
Picnics	Lisa Channen Mary Ann Savrin	781-455-6990 781-455-8351	earlcamp@rcn.com dmlmsavrin@rcn.com
Playground	Jane Goldstein	781-453-4957	jegoldtein@comcast.net
Program on Disabilities	Anne Weinstein Beth Pinals	781-455-0620 781-444-0251	anneweinstein@yahoo.com bpinals@comcast.net
Publicity	Anne Weinstein	781-455-0620	anneweinstein@yahoo.com
School Committee Liaison	Open		
Skating Party	Sandy Higgins Claire Murphy	781-449-8119 781-400-1199	pebblesvet@comcast.net john.murphy28@comcast.net
Spring Fling	Kathleen DeMayo	781-449-6198	kdemayo@rcn.com
Art	Jennifer Ramras	781-455-1177	jennifer_ramras@needham.k12.ma.us
Food	Christie Curran	781-449-5966	mcjm4c@comcast.net
Games	Margaret Gray	781-559-3224	margeegray@yahoo.com
Auction	Open		
Staffing	Amy Sweeney	781-449-8243	aksweeney@comcast.net
Publicity	Sarah McCormick	781-449-1434	mcbassett@rcn.com
Staff Luncheon	Jennifer Ziskin Jennifer Ramras	781-444-7674 781-455-1177	jen@lamorra.com jennifer_ramras@needham.k12.ma.us
Yearbook	Heather Goss	781-444-0150	heather_goss@comcast.net