

Hillside PTC Meeting Minutes Sept. 22, 2010

The meeting commenced at 9:02am.

Co-Presidents Report

- Various committee chair positions are filling up.
- An Auction will be added to Spring Fling this year.
- Current committee chair positions needed include Auction and the Talent Show.
- The Talent Show will be a fundraiser this year.
- We need to boost fundraising to meet our cash needs.

Committee Reports

- The Innisbrook fundraiser is under way. Some parents mentioned not receiving the order forms for the Spunkmeyer portion of the fundraiser.
- Noreen Finnegan is running the Used Costume Sale on October 1, 2010. There will be morning and afternoon times for that event.
- The Playground Committee has raised one quarter of the funds needed thus far. They are in Stage 2 of fundraising which is the Parent and Family Stage. Letters went home to all families.

Motions to Approve New PTC Members

- Stephanie Zdanavage was approved as the PTC Co-Secretary.
- Mary Buffinger was approved as Treasurer.

Grants

A grant was introduced and approved to re-paint the lines on the playground.

Treasurer's Report: Kathy DeMayo

The Treasurer presented the PTC Budget for 2010/2011 in a new spreadsheet format on paper for all attendees. In addition, the Treasurer highlighted the following items:

- The Playground Committee has raised \$4500.00 to date.
- The beginning of the year is when the PTC spends a substantial amount of money, specifically on Teacher Grants and Class Trips.
- Revenue brought in from PTC Dues is \$7945.00 to date.
- Dues were raised from \$35 last year to \$45 this year which is low compared to other Needham District schools. There are approximately 235 families at Hillside Elementary.
- The Treasurer highlighted the "Contribution from Reserves" category on the budget spreadsheet explaining how this helps balance the PTC budget, especially at the beginning of the school year when the PTC has greater expenses up front.

Principal's Report: Mr. K

- The 5th Grade Student Sidewalk Detail is doing great. Their enthusiasm and lack of need to give out tickets thus far was highlighted.
- Carpooling and walking to school was recommended to alleviate the traffic issues around Hillside and a reminder was made about the Oct. 6th Walk to School Day.

- Mr. K offered his thanks for the funds raised for the Lesley Program last year and commented that Hillside is in better shape than we thought for this year. Hillside has 9 Lesley Interns this year which is the most we have ever had. Hillside is getting great press for the Lesley Program including being featured in a video about this program. In addition, the state has added another required course for the program (Behavior) which we can accommodate at Hillside.
- Anticipated new topics for future PTC meetings include the Think Math Curriculum, the Anti-Bullying Initiative, and the Resiliency Initiative at Hillside.
- Dr. Joe Barnes, a Needham School Committee Representative, was introduced. Dr. Barnes was recognized for being instrumental with the Lesley Intern Program. He discussed the following: The Anti-Bullying Policy is seeking parent feedback/input before the active policy is introduced in December; and in regards to the Capital Improvement Plans, both Hillside and Mitchell Elementary Schools are coming to the forefront now that Newman Elementary is well into its own renovations.

Other News

- New parents/families in attendance were asked to introduce themselves at the Co-Presidents' request. 2 new families were introduced.
- Allison Borelli from the Needham Historical Society presented information about the upcoming Needham's Walk Through History event on Saturday Oct. 2, 2010. This fundraising event will offer participants an opportunity to tour Needham's historic sites on a route throughout Needham. Ways to participate include a \$25 family donation or by walkers raising donations through sponsorship.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Daniel Gutekanst, Needham Public Schools Superintendent

Dr. Gutekanst expressed his interest in leading a discussion/conversation with parents in attendance today but first made a point to talk about a specific initiative to get students involved in the topics/subjects of Engineering, Science, Technology, and Math. The district has reached out to the local Engineering community seeking their involvement in this initiative, both at the individual level and at the corporate level. To date, over 85 engineers responded to this request to attend a future breakfast meeting at Pollard Middle School. The district also intends to email the local community at large seeking other individuals who are interested in being involved with this initiative. The goal is to provide opportunities for students to get more involved in those particular subject matters.

Dr. Gutekanst then opened the floor to anyone with questions, comments, concerns and addressed each issue as they were presented. Dr. Barnes, Principal K, and other parents offered their responses to each issue presented as needed. Some of the issues brought up were as follows:

- ***First Lego League:*** Moving the First Lego League into the school buildings instead of parent volunteer homes due to some parents' time constraints. Finding resources for making this happen can be explored.

• ***Fostering creativity in school:*** The School Committee has been vigilant about preserving the arts in grades K-12 and while they have resisted cutting the Arts budget, perhaps more can be done. Giving students more responsibility and leadership opportunities provides them a chance to take risks, explore and grow on their own. Based on the results of last year's Parent Survey, the School Committee would like to offer focus groups with parents to talk about parents' interest in the district offering more opportunities to enrich the students who are ready for more challenges. Teachers have limited time to add new programs and do the work to make such programs happen such as doing the grant writing. Perhaps it is time to call on parents who are able to assist with any new programs that might be added. The School Committee is looking for human and financial capital to help our schools which is why they are reaching out to the surrounding Engineering community to target certain areas specifically that can benefit students.

• ***Collaboration within and among schools:*** the Elementary schools have more collaboration opportunities due to the number of schools. At the Middle and High school levels, there is less opportunity due to the fact that there are so few schools.

• ***Prioritizing Mitchell vs. Hillside Schools' renovations:*** This matter depends not only on how to deal with the children during renovations and organizing that process, but also depends on the land issues of each site. Such matters have to be addressed and resolved before one building can be renovated before another.

• ***Language education at the Elementary level:*** At this time, language education is not on the table at the elementary level. Due to the net loss of 3 teachers this year as a result of budget cutbacks, there simply isn't the resources. It is anticipated that next year, the budget will be just as tight. At the Middle School level, additional foreign language classes could be added only if we push something out or lengthen the school day.

• ***Class sizes and the effect of less resources:*** Additional resources are needed to hire more teachers which would ultimately alleviate class sizes, but there are not a lot of new resources coming in at this time. Stimulus monies received from Congress may help with this issue. There is a range we have to stay in regarding class sizes.

• ***The lack of morning music lessons for 5th grade:*** Morning lessons are made available at the 4th grade level to gain the interest of students. If they are still interested in 5th grade, they are encouraged to seek lessons outside of the school. Once they get to the Middle School level, students will have more music opportunities.

• ***Other ways to raise money for the school/district:*** The School Committee can accept gifts for a program they deem worthwhile. When doing so, they look at equity issues, the sustainability of the program, and other important factors.

Dr. Gutekanst also addressed three other issues:

1. The Hillside building... He commented that the bathroom issue has been addressed as needed. In reference to renovations, the Hillside building will probably have to be torn down and rebuilt. In the meantime, the town of Needham will do an assessment to determine what the building needs to get by over the next few years.

2. Ways the district saves money... Examples include the purchase of two buses and some vans that have ultimately saved the equivalent of 3 teachers.

3. The Back to School Staff Meetings have traditionally been negatively anticipated by the staff. Now, some high school and middle school students come to the meetings to welcome

the staff back personally. The district has gotten great feedback from this which has changed the past negative outlook on these meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15am.

Hillside PTC January 2011 Board Meeting

Karen called the meeting to order at 9:10AM and reviewed the agenda.

President's Report

Karen noted that work was underway for the spring enrichment fundraiser, a month long prize drawing, was needed to keep the PTC services at our current level. They are seeking sports tickets to add to the drawing. The April 13th meeting will be at Eliot. The Hillside, Mitchell and Eliot are co-sponsoring a talk by Robert Evans. There are two open PTC positions; Community Liaison, who would build relationships with local businesses, and Spring Fling chair.

Principal's Report

Mr. Kascak discussed the Needham Times article about the student sidewalk detail. He mentioned the need to follow the parking guidelines particularly now due to snow.

Committee Reports

Talent Show – Beth Tallarico provided an update on the Talent Show. Ms. Rodman has gone to each class explaining the new format to the students. Students are encouraged to collaborate because there will be fewer acts in the show this year. Auditions will be held on March 2nd and 3rd with three judges from outside the Hillside community. After the tryouts, there will be other opportunities to be involved in the show (e.g., ushers, stage help).

Hillside/Eliot Basketball Game – Rachel Foley noted that the game will be held on April 8th at the High School. They have had a preliminary meeting and are looking for additional volunteers.

Skating Party – Will be held on January 30th from 5-7:30PM at Babson.

Bingo Night – Sondae Varga noted it will be held on February 11th from 6:30 – 8PM in the gym. The cost is \$5 per person or \$10 per family

Enrichment Grants

Karen presented three enrichment grants. The first was from Mrs. Strakosch for \$68 for tapes, which will help her, teach about nutrition to the kindergarteners. Kathy DeMayo made a motion to accept which was seconded by Jenn Sexton and approved by all.

The second was from Mr. Goneconto and Mrs. Cicala for the water project for \$260. Part of the project is a service learning piece to teach the community about the need for clean water in developing countries. **This year the students involved in the project are performing at half time at a girls' varsity basketball game and boys' varsity basketball game. The funds requested are to help supplement the cost of t-shirts for the students to wear when performing.** A motion to approve the grant was made by Katie Rutter, seconded by Kathy DeMayo and approved by all. The third grant was from Mrs. DeMaria for \$300 to bring a music program to kindergartners. After some discussion it was decided that it would be revisited next month.

School Committee Report

Joe Barnes reported on the public hearing regarding the budget. He noted that the greatest concern seemed to be class size. The proposed budget increase is 5.1% but that includes federal money so the increase is actually closer to 3% almost all of which is related to special education. HE also noted that the Newman and Pollard projects are moving ahead smoothly.

Think Math

Mr. Goneconto spoke about his experiences with the new math curriculum. He has found the teacher guide easy to work with and indicated that the teachers like the workbooks. He noted that the teachers also appreciated the consistency district wide with the curriculum and would benefit from a professional development opportunity (one which had been scheduled was cancelled due to snow) to discuss their concerns. He felt the curriculum had a strong home-school connection. He noted that the material is challenging but thought that part of that could be due to the curriculum's assumption of previous learning that would not exist the first year of the program. It was also noted that the homework instruction included on the sheets could be better.

Terry Duggan, Director of Program Development and Implementation, noted that next year the new curriculum will roll out to grades 3-5. There will be one day of professional development in the summer for teachers and they are hoping to use the March early release day to expose the teachers to the program.

Lauri Levin, Math Curriculum Instructional Leader for K-5, indicated that to date, the response has been positive. She reviewed the core components of the program and the assessment pieces.

Minutes submitted by Kathy DeMayo

HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTC
Meeting Minutes of March 23, 2011

The meeting came to order at 9:06am.
Attendance was 9 members.

Co-President's Report – Karen Dasey

Karen Dasey opened the meeting.

Spring Enrichment Fundraiser

Karen Dasey presented a proof of a flyer for the event outlining details and prizes. The fundraiser will begin the first week of April. Raffle tickets will be going home with each family. Every school day from the first day of the fundraiser until May 2nd there will be a drawing. The last prize will be a cash drawing. We need the support of the community to buy tickets in order to raise \$5,000.00 to balance the PTC budget for this school-year.

Robert Evans Event

This is a speaker event which was scheduled for April 13th. The event has been postponed due to a conflict with the 5th Grade Band event.

Spirit Wear Sales

The current figures are as follows: \$367.41 profit on the sale of 56 items.

Open PTC Positions

The following PTC positions are available for the 2011/2012 school-year: Co-President and Secretary. If anyone has questions or ideas regarding nominations, please talk to the PTC. In brief, the President's role is described as managerial, a liaison to the Principal, and includes monthly meetings with other PTC Presidents as well as the Superintendent, providing somewhat of an "insider's view". The Secretary position involves taking/recording the monthly PTC meeting minutes and submitting them.

Principal's Report – Mr. Kascak

Mr. K reports that things are very busy at Hillside with events such as the Talent Show, the Spelling Bee, the Hillside v. Eliot Basketball Game, and the Race to Nowhere. The Robert Evans event can be expected sometime in late September or early October.

The Japan Collection

Mrs. Margolis is leading this fundraiser. There is a clear cube located in Mr. K's office to collect donations. The 1st Grade is adding up the donations and will present the final amount to a specific charity.

MCAS Testing

Given Hillside's space limitations and the number of students, we are using every space for these tests except for the cafeteria.

Committee Reports

Talent Show

The Talent Show is April 1st at the Pollard Middle School auditorium. There will be 50 students performing in 30 acts. Auditions were held and some of the acts were combined as a result of the auditions. 5th Grade students will be the show Announcers while students from both 4th and 5th Grade will be Stage Hands. Rehearsal was last week. Tickets will be on sale this week; they are \$3 each and will go home in a newsletter. The Talent Show will last 1.5 hours beginning at 7pm; doors open at 6:30pm. There is a big finale performance planned with the entire group.

Hillside vs. Eliot Basketball Game

As of today, 50 families have purchased tickets. The game is Friday April 8th; the doors open at 6:30pm and the game starts between 7:00 and 7:15pm. Wild Willy's is selling concessions and will be donating a portion of the proceeds to each PTC. In addition to the game, there will be a Free-Throw contest, a raffle, foam-fingers, and a Cheer-Off contest. Tickets are \$4 in advance and \$5 at the door.

Green Team

The Green Team is sponsoring the half-time show at the Hillside vs. Eliot Basketball game on April 8th. They will also be selling water bottles at the game.

Book Sale

Today is the 2nd day of the Used Book Sale. 400 titles went right into the Hillside Library circulation and 100-150 titles went to teacher classrooms libraries. On Day 1, there was \$200 in sales. All unsold books will be going to a Needham Eagle Scout program. Teachers have been bringing their classes to the book sale so that students can make purchases.

Treasurer's Report

A Treasurer was not in attendance, but an income and expense sheet was provided. It was also reported that \$1000.00 was brought in from the most recent Otis Spunkmeyer cookie sale.

School Committee Report – Dr. Barnes

The topic of most interest among elementary school parents is the Sexual Education program. The School Committee gets emails daily regarding this matter. A revision will be happening in the 9th Grade but there are concerns about what is presented in Grades 5 and 6. Parents will be able to see the lesson plan ahead of time and will have the ability to “opt out” of certain pieces of the curriculum on behalf of their children. The School Committee does not personally approve the curriculum (it is not up to them). More information will be available in the spring describing what the 5th and 6th Grade curriculum will look like. Email comments can be left at bewell@needham.k12.ma.us.

The PTC minutes from the February 16, 2011 were unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30am.

**Guest Speaker Presentation – Jacqueline Bouley, DC, Live Well Chiropractic;
“Chiropractics and the Growing Active Spine”**

The guest speaker talked about kids and sports, specifically education and injury prevention. Keeping the pelvis and spine in alignment can prevent further injuries from happening in kids. Kids are adjusted differently than adults; the adjustments are “lighter” and not considered aggressive. Live Well Chiropractic has patients from infancy thru age 18. It is encouraged that if a parent sends their child to a chiropractor that they ensure that the practitioner has a background with children.

Questions:

What about prevention? What can a parent do while kids are playing sports?

Pre- and post-exercise warm-ups, i.e. stretching. Kids need proper cool-down, even if it's just for five minutes.

What non-organized activities cause injury?

Snowboarding seems to cause a lot of injuries as does gymnastics and dancing.

What sign(s) should a parent look for before coming for a chiropractic evaluation?

Kids who talk about back pain, kids who have had a major collision on the field, kids who have rolled their ankles, and when you notice changes in the ways kids use their bodies.

Ideally kids should be checked on a regular basis.

The guest speaker portion of the meeting adjourned at 9:40am.

HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTC
Meeting Minutes of April 13, 2011

The meeting came to order at 9:05am.
Attendance was 9 members.

Co-President's Report – Katie Rutter

Katie Rutter opened the meeting.

Spring Enrichment Fundraiser

The raffle tickets went home this past Friday and are due April 29th. So far, many envelopes have already been returned. This Calendar Raffle fundraiser is a new idea compared to past Silent Auction fundraisers at Hillside.

School Council Nomination Process

The School Council is an organization of parents, teachers, and Mr. Kascak. As a group, they make recommendations on how to make improvements to the school with meetings taking place once per month. For parents, membership is a 2 year term and soon we will be in need of one new Member (the information will be going home soon with students). The vote for the new Member will take place at the main meeting.

Mrs. Margolis Retirement

1st Grade teacher Mrs. Margolis will be retiring at the end of this school year. She has expressed not wanting a big party or gifts of any kind. This has inspired the PTC to come up with the concept of a Professional Development Fund for Hillside teachers. The PTC plans to talk to Mr. K and Room Parents about the idea of collecting funds at the end of this school year to start this new fund in Mrs. Margolis' honor. Classrooms could do this instead of collecting money for end-of-year teacher gifts which are now under very strict guidelines anyway. The PTC plans on presenting this check to Mrs. Margolis at the Faculty Luncheon held at the end of the school year. Details on how the fund would be operated need to be discussed and decided.

Open PTC Positions

Co-President – Beth Tallarico has offered to be the Co-President for the 2011/2012 school year.
Co-Secretary – During the 2011/2012 School Year, an additional Secretary is needed to switch off meetings with the current Secretary who records for the morning PTC meetings. Anyone who normally attends the evening PTC meetings and has an interest in being the Co-Secretary is asked to contact the PTC.

New PTC members will be voted in at the May PTC meeting.

Principal's Report – Mr. Kascak

Mr. K was unavailable due to a meeting.

Committee Reports

Talent Show

Beth Tallarico reported that the Hillside Talent Show went very well and commented that the kids took it very seriously. There were approximately 350 attendees. The kids who didn't make it into the show got involved thru other roles such as ushers, stage hands, and making posters. The revenue is reported at \$1500.00 while the expenses to date are reported at \$300.00. The video that was taken will be made available to parents either via DVD or possibly online (to be downloaded). It is unclear yet as to whether or not a cost will be associated with the video. Ideas for next year including improving the sound and possibly relocating the piano to the stage.

Hillside vs. Eliot Basketball Game

This was a very successful event full of energy. The revenue is reported at \$1700.00 per school. 827 tickets were sold. The Green Team reported \$120.00 in water bottle sales and each school will receive \$100.00 from Wild Willy's (the food vendor). Ideas for next year include seeking a larger venue along with revisiting the food issue.

Playground

The Playground Committee recently met with the playground builder. Due to the unknown future of the Hillside school site, the PTC is leaning towards retro-fitting the current playground instead of completely rebuilding it which will likely prove to be more cost-effective.

Spring Fling

Spring Fling planning is well under way and all areas seem to be taken care of by their respective chairpersons. Some changes to this year will include less inflatables, changes in prizes, and the addition of Barnyard Babies to the event. This event will take place on Sunday May 22nd from 12pm-4pm at Hillside.

Treasurer's Report – Kathy DeMayo

Kathy presented the PTC Income Statement and commented that overall, things are looking good this school year in reference to the budget. Each event has created more revenue than anticipated. In particular, the Hillside vs. Eliot Basketball game revenue was discussed as well as the additional cookie sale (Otis Spunkmeyer) being quite successful.

School Committee Report – Dr. Barnes

The topic of most interest continues to be the Sexual Education program. Parents of 9th Graders were invited to a presentation last week on this topic; about 40 parents were in attendance. The consensus is that everyone was very pleased with how the information was presented. After April vacation, the new 9th Grade curriculum will begin. Email comments can be left at bewell@needham.k12.ma.us. Aside from reporting about the Sexual Education program, Dr. Barnes also reported that we are anticipating the upcoming school budget approval at the next Needham Town Meeting.

Guest Speaker Presentation – Joanne Allen-Willoughby, Ph.D., “30 Actions-Living the Dream of Cultural Competence and Equity”

30 Actions is bringing together approximately 35 members of the Needham community to learn about cultural competence and equity through a series of monthly Saturday morning workshops April-June 2011 and continuing in the Fall of 2011. The group of 35 will be assembled to

represent different voices, different perspectives, and different experiences. It will include community members, parents, school staff and students. Led and facilitated by the Cultural Proficiency Collaborative (CPC), group members will learn, share, converse, develop relationships, articulate a common vision, and take action for equity in our community and in the education of our children. If you are interested in learning more about 30 Actions or becoming a leading member, please contact Joanne Allen-Willoughby at Joanne_Allen-Willoughby@needham.k12.ma.us with your name, phone and email or call 781-455-0800 x2542.

The PTC minutes from the March 23, 2011 meeting were unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00am.

HILLSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTC
Meeting Minutes of May 18, 2011

The meeting came to order at 9:06am.
Attendance was 7 members.

Co-President's Report – Katie Rutter

Karen Dunne Dasey opened the meeting.

Spring Enrichment Fundraiser

130 families have purchased tickets so far. 75% of that group purchased all 5 tickets that were sent home. The approximate revenue to date is \$6000.00 (less the \$500.00 grand prize and 5% tax). Tickets continue to be purchased; the goal is to raise \$7000.00.

Marjorie Margolis Teacher Professional Development Fund

The plan is to launch the fund during the end of the school year which tends to be the teacher gift-giving season. The PTC will be asking room parents to talk to classroom parents about collecting money for this fund instead of giving money to the teachers which has become strictly regulated at this point. With this new fund, the teachers can apply yearly for their own professional development (the money cannot be used for classroom supplies).

Collection for Japanese Association of Greater Boston

The school has raised \$630.00. This money will be mailed today to the association. A Hillside 4th Grade Girl Scout Troop volunteered by rolling the coins and by writing letters to families in Japan.

Teacher Grants

The PTC would like to improve this process for the new school year with a committee of representatives to make this more of a hands-on process when the grants come thru. Changes have been made to the grant application; these changes will be presented to the teachers at the end of the school year or at the beginning of the new school year. Each applicant will have a contact person from the committee throughout the process. The grants will continue to be approved at the PTC meetings.

School Council

One parent slot is currently open on the School Council. There are 3 candidates to vote on and ballots will be going home soon in student folders and will be available online. Votes must be in by June 2nd.

Open PTC Positions

Co-Secretary – During the 2011/2012 School Year, an additional Secretary is needed to switch off meetings with the current Secretary who records for the morning PTC meetings. Anyone who normally attends the evening PTC meetings and has an interest in being the Co-Secretary is asked to contact the PTC. The PTC will re-group at the end of the year with all PTC committee chair-people and board members at a coffee (date to be announced).

Approval of 2011-2012 Board Members

Beth Tallarico was voted in as the PTC Co-President, Mary Buffinger was voted in as the PTC Treasurer, and Stephanie Orsini was voted in to continue as the PTC Co-Secretary.

Principal's Report – Mr. Kascak

Mr. K informed the group that the most pressing issue to date is the Bike Rodeo which had to be postponed.

Committee Reports

Spring Fling

The Hillside Spring Fling is this coming Sunday and there is a big push for volunteers as many time slots have yet to be filled. The grand prize drawing (\$500 cash) will be at 3pm. The Silent Auction winner for a Peter Reynolds original illustration from the Hillside Literacy Night will also be at 3pm.

Playground

The Playground Committee continues to work with the construction company on the design as well as trying to get the cost down. Some local companies may be donating money for the playground in the near future. Construction will begin this summer so that it is ready when school opens in the fall. A rendering of the proposed structure will be on display in the lobby once it is finalized with the construction company.

Treasurer's Report – Kathy DeMayo

Kathy presented the PTC Income Statement and informed the group that the final figures for the school year will be presented at the upcoming coffee. The final figures are not yet available due to money still coming in from Spring Fling.

Guest Speaker Presentation – Massachusetts MENTORS

Two representatives from Massachusetts MENTORS came to Hillside today to present information about their organization including its purpose, a bit of its local history, upcoming community out-reach plans, and volunteer opportunities. This organization provides foster care placement for children of all ages, a short-term shelter program, a young adult life transition program for people ages 18-22, as well as an adult program for people with disabilities over the age of 22. Volunteers are needed in the foster care program but the organization is open to accepting volunteers who are available in other capacities depending on their skills and strengths.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55am.