

Highcrest PTO General Meeting
October 4, 2006

Jenny Frentzel, Co-President, called the meeting to order at 9:15am.

Approval of Minutes -- minutes from the September 6, 2006 meeting were approved.

Teacher's Report

Hilary Harvey, 5th grade social worker, reported that Mrs. McAuley's 6th graders are working on an archaeology unit and in P.E., the children are starting their non-traditional elective courses. Katie Fox, French teacher, reported that, in Technology, the 5th graders are rehearsing and filming commercials. In Art, the 6th graders are collaborating with the LMC to create 3D artifact boxes of famous artists. In French, the 5th graders are finishing classroom objects and the 6th graders are working on 5-minute mystery movies.

Principal's Report

Dr. Cathy Rosen reported that on October 9, a Teacher Institute Day, the staff will continue their work on curriculum mapping. The next phase will be vertical mapping to eliminate redundancies and fill gaps with the elementary school curriculums.

The school's crisis team will be reviewing their policies. If students are expressing concern regarding any issues (for example, bullying or school shootings in the news), please let Dr. Rosen know.

The School Improvement Plan has a number of goals, including increasing the level of achievement in math, so that more students fall into the "exceeds" category on the state tests. Ninety-nine percent of Highcrest kids fall into the "meets or exceeds" category, so the plan hopes to raise children from "meets" to "exceeds". Our new math curriculum is fairly challenging and offers areas of differentiation. Another goal is to determine how gender issues play a role in the classroom .

Committee Reports

Ways and Means

Barb Shields reported that to date, \$16,000 has been collected in the Kids are Key campaign, with \$20,000 being the target number. 161 families have already turned in their form. Invitations for the purely social Parent's Night Out (taking place on November 3) have recently been mailed.

Special Events

Mary Beth Cyze discussed “Make a Difference Day”, which is a 5th grade service project coinciding with the National Day of Service on Oct. 21. Next week, students will deliver solicitation letters to their neighbors, requesting items from a list that the New Trier Volunteer Center has compiled. The kids will bring these items to school until Oct. 20 and parent volunteers will be needed on that day to help sort and box the donated goods. Parent volunteers will again be needed on Oct. 21 to help out at the Indian Hill train station where the charitable agencies will come to collect the donations. Dr. Rosen that last year, the agencies were literally overwhelmed by our generosity.

Jenny Frentzel reminded us that Freaky Friday is coming soon and that many volunteers will be needed. One price will cover wristbands which will allow the children to participate in unlimited games and to buy 3 food items. Younger and older siblings should not attend this event.

5th grade Enrichment

Laurie Cavalier stated that the “Yes You Can” presentation was very positively received and that “Arthmetickles” is coming soon.

Legislation

Lori Goldstein reminded us that in order to be a board or committee member, to vote, or to obtain a PTO directory, one must actually join the PTO. Over 500 families are already members. Maggie noted that Cecilia Clarke, who is compiling the directory, just received the final contact information from the district, and can therefore now finalize the directory.

Presentation by Youth Connection

Bill Perkins, VP Community Relations and Sarah Whittaker, Program Director, gave an introduction to the group. Youth Connection is a non-profit organization that supplies after-school programs for the 5th-8th graders. At Highcrest, this is held in the cafeteria from 3:30-6:00pm (Mon-Thurs) and is known as “RAD”. Kids can get a snack, socialize, play games, do service projects and work on their homework. YC is offering a theatrical production of “A Midsummer’s Night’s Dream” on Nov. 10 at 7:30pm. They noted that Katie Hauser is our PTO liaison and that Dave Nisson is the new Executive Director of the program. Maggie Belliel, PTO co-president, gave an endorsement of the organization and reminded parents that since YC is a non-profit, any parent donations would be appreciated.

President’s Report

Jenny Frentzel reported that the gift wrap fundraiser would be over soon, so orders need to be returned. Please respect the deadline for Highcrest Hawk articles -- they need to be turned into Peggy Wilson by the 15th of each month.

Also, when submitting information for any Highercrest's communication vehicles, please ensure that the information is school related and is intended for all families. In response to requests from working parents, the February meeting will be held in the evening. Maggie noted that she and Jenny are always willing to hear new ideas for the PTO, so please call either of them. The Variety Show will be occurring this year, and they are looking for more volunteers to act as committee heads.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00am.

Minutes submitted by Kathy Freedman