

Minutes
John Eaton Elementary School Home School Association (HSA) Meeting
May 8, 2007
6:00-8:00 pm
John Eaton Library

Present: Gwen Wright, Kelley Ellsworth, Mark Boss, David Shapinsky, Laura Broach, Carolyn Barnhardt, Jocelyn Drakeford, Leslie Tune, Joy Carroll Wallis, Shaun Seaberry, Marla Blount, Lisa Woods, Carla Hillery, Sarah Bax, Marjie Lidoff, Marianne Eby, Mary Oates Walker, Eileen Langholtz, and Karen Hardy McAdoo.

Absent: Mercedes Lemp, Kimberly Hughes, Phronie Jackson, Claudia Withers, Kim Bayliss, and Deborah Evans.

Approval of Minutes: Lisa Woods moved to approve the minutes of April 10th. Mark Boss seconded. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: (given by Mark Boss and Gwen Wright): Our Treasurer, Deborah Evans, has resigned due to family issues and time constraints. Deborah has given over the checkbook, records, etc. Mark and Gwen are serving as acting treasurers.

Our bookkeeper, Pat McLane resigned in mid-April because she felt she was not getting the information she needed to do her job. Perhaps she will return at a later date. Mark and Gwen are looking to hire a new bookkeeper to get things all in order for next year's HSA. They will get the records in order, but need someone to input it to Quicken and provide some oversight. They hope, for the next meeting, to have something ready to present to the HSA to close out the year. Sarah Bax offered to input the information into Quicken. We do not own Quickbooks.

We are meeting the goals of many items on the budget and are not aware of any large, unusual expenses. Except for Sallie Foster and ENF, we have met the mark and gone above for all projects. Lisa said ENF was at \$54,000. The goal was \$75,000. We hit the goal for the auction, went over for raffle. The Gilbert Arenas money went to the Eaton school budget, not the HSA.

There was discussion about hiring a new bookkeeper. We were paying Pat McLane \$450 per month. She is not being paid for April, May and June, so we have that money saved.

MOTION: David moved that we let Gwen and Mark deal with this at their discretion since they are the ones that have all the information. It passed.

There was some discussion about how to deal with these issues in the future. Perhaps we could get Shannon Penberthy to serve as Treasurer again. David Shapinsky suggested that we get a resource list of parents with special skills. Dr. Drakeford requested this

previously, but there were few responses. Karen McAdoo suggested that we post HSA position descriptions, listing skills required and time commitment.

Parent Literacy Night (Laura Broach): Parent Literacy Night will be held Thursday June 7 from 6-7:30. This event is to guide parents of students in grades 3-5 to help their children by reading aloud short stories. This is an adult event. Snacks will be provided. Flyers will come in backpacks.

Principal's Report:

Enrollment: Ms Berman and Ms Baretto are going through the enrollment sheets. By the end of this week we should have most of them in. Parents must respond by the end of May. Most have already responded, and many have already come in to do paperwork. Those on the waiting list have been calling repeatedly. There are about 60 children on the waiting list for many grades.

Chinese Instruction: Dr. Drakeford informed us that the Rhonda, the Chinese teacher, will not be teaching all PreK through 6th grade classes as planned. This program is sponsored by the Embassy of China for two years only. For DCPS to pick up the expense after two years, they will need to see dramatic results. Therefore, instruction will focus on 4th-6th grades, and will be held either 3 times/wk for 45 minutes or 5 times/wk for 30 minutes each. David Shapinsky objected because younger children are better at learning language and this is backwards; and this is another example of DCPS changing the rules in midstream. Karen McAdoo is concerned that the increase in intensity will mean this will be another special that will take time away from the core subjects. David would rather have a pedagogical reason shape the program and not a financial reason. Dr. Drakeford says that she inherited Chinese. Those that hold the purse strings do not necessarily have a background in early childhood development. DC Government wants results so there will be a buy-in.

Gwen suggests we have more focus on the older grades and a lesser focus on the younger grades. She suggests Dr. Drakeford ask if we can present our own plan to produce results. Sarah Bax suggested we run our own study, and do PreK and 5th and 6th to see the results. Karen wondered if someone from the HonBon Chinese Language program can come to talk to us and have a discussion about this.

Rhonda will be conducting two classes over the summer in conjunction with summer school. Kids can do just those classes and not sign up for summer school. She has been attending workshops and visiting established programs in Fairfax and Montgomery County. They hope to use an established curriculum. Next week she will be here all week and get acclimated to Eaton.

Maggie, the Chinese teacher at Deal, bought a Deal raffle ticket her first week in town, and won a \$4,000 flat-screen TV!

Trip to China: The Chinese Embassy asked that the Superintendent put together a delegation of DCPS staff to go to China to look at their educational system. Dr. Drakeford was invited, and HSA parents put up a collection to help pay for the trip. The delegation will visit schools in Beijing, and then will split off into small groups and see different provinces. They will look at daily routines and how the Chinese formulate their education policy. The trip will take place June 24-July 2. Other participants will include the Superintendent, Dr. Rice, the Deputy Superintendent for Accountability, and Principals from Deal, Thompson and Eaton. The entire trip is funded by the Embassy of China except the \$750 registration fee. Dr. Drakeford had approached the HSA for funding, but it was decided that the HSA itself did not have sufficient funds to pay for this, so some individual parents chipped in for it. Dr. Drakeford will make a presentation upon her return.

Early Childhood Special Education: Dr. Drakeford talked about a program in Early Childhood Special Education that had been discussed at the last LSRT meeting. This program is designed for children who are developmentally delayed. They would come primarily from Ward 3. Representatives from this program came to the LSRT to request that Eaton adopt the program, since there is currently no such program in Ward 3, forcing Ward 3 children to go to school elsewhere. Dr. Drakeford stated that she has heard from teachers and concluded that Eaton is not yet ready. There is resistance to change. There would need to be training, space, etc. This is too much to do before September. We can discuss and work through this more next year.

David Shapinsky pointed out that we still need to improve communication. Dr. Drakeford stated that we need to take the time to work on this as a community. The LSRT requested more discussion and more feedback. They had requested that Dr. Drakeford take this idea to tonight's HSA meeting and the staff meeting tomorrow.

Karen McAdoo, who had attended the LSRT meeting, clarified what happened. This is an early intervention program for children who are "Level 4 Developmentally Disabled." Ward 3 is the only ward that does not have this program. Those children in Ward 3 have to go elsewhere for this program. This would be 2 classrooms of 8 children each. The money, resources, aides, would come for the children. The children would get art and specials with the other children and they might be mainstreamed at age 5-7.

Laura Broach, who had also attended the LSRT meeting, said there was much enthusiasm at the meeting, but also questions re: whether our teachers are ready for the mainstreaming of these kids, etc. The minutes for this LSRT meeting are on the website. www.eatondc.org

Gwen said that if this will be put off until next September then it should be on the agenda for discussion at one of the very first HSA meeting.

Recent Events:

Raffle and Auction: Mark pointed out that Carla Hillery and Tysan Williams did a phenomenal job. The raffle made \$16,000 gross profit. The total auction brought in \$90,000, including the raffle. The expenditures were under the \$20,000 budget. Carla and Tysan set their goals in July and at the end they were met. They also tried many new things. They gave the catalogue a face lift, changed the music, added a photographer, and added the community service piece. Their goal is for every child to have a lapel pin to show school unity, and to give a portion of the proceeds to help Bono and the Global Relief Fund/The Red Campaign.

They will be holding a “Second Byte at Excellence” from now until May 19 (at the end of the play) when bidding will conclude. There are 157 items left. There are leftover Excellent Chances bags and there will also be a \$20 table. All items will be \$20. They will sell these the Friday night and Saturday night before the play.

We will have final numbers for the Auction for the next HSA meeting. They did a Fund-an-Item to raise money for a storage shed for the HAS and for improvements to the school office. Hamlet Bent will build a cover for the sheds. Next Day Blinds will replace the drapes in the office for \$600. A new shed would cost \$2690. We have already raised over \$2,000, so we should have enough for both.

Upcoming Events:

The Musical: The Musical is May 18 and 19. Tickets are for sale in the office anytime, and next week in the morning before school.

HSA elections: Elections will be held June 1st.

Documentary about Cleveland Park: A documentary about Cleveland Park has just been completed and will be screened at a Cleveland Park Historical Society community meeting to be held at Eaton in the multipurpose room on May 31 at 8 pm. Children are welcome.

Teacher Appreciation Luncheon: The teacher appreciation luncheon will be the last day of school: June 14, which will give us time to contact Whole Foods and perhaps Chipotle. Last year there were 7 or 8 parents who helped out during the event. This is for about 40 people. Sarah Bax talked about how at her school where she works that each teacher gets a cake to take home.

Karen talked about how this week is teacher appreciation week and today is teacher appreciation day, and we have nothing planned. Last year, Phronie brought in her company to give the teachers massages and they loved it! Marla suggested that we at least put together a card for the kids to sign. Last year the teachers really liked having the luncheon on the last day because they did not need coverage of their classroom, did not

have to rush back to work. Karen stated that, even though we do the Teacher Appreciation at the end of the year, perhaps the roomparents could get out the word to the parents to remind them to give something for their teacher. Lisa will post this on the listserv.

Renovation of Macomb Playground (ROMP): The Cleveland Park Historical Society is trying to raise funds to make some improvements to the playground. Last month the HSA decided that, in lieu of making a donation, we would urge parents to donate to the project in Eaton's name. Kelley will put something on the listserv about ROMP donations.

David suggested that in the future perhaps we could do a match. We could invite them to come to the play to solicit donations. Kelley will make a lockbox available for that and will invite the organization to come.

Meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.

Submitted by

Kelley Ellsworth, HSA Treasurer
