

December 4, 2007 GES PTA Meeting

Agenda:

- 1) President's report
 - a. Book fair, art show, teacher's lounge, directory
 - b. Events: Ice skating Dec. 16. Tickets \$6. Possible events after Christmas: Move It night, Board Games night, Math night, movie night.
- 2) American Education Week – Jacob Novick
- 3) Treasurer's Report
- 4) Reading is Fundamental (RIF)
- 5) Principal's Report
- 6) PreK-8 Update, form committee
- 7) General questions & comments.

President's report

- Homework passes, cookies
- Scholastic Book Fair report by Amy Hansen.
 - Better than last year by \$1000. Bigger room helped. No power outage this year. Having art fair brought people in.
 - \$7315.17 worth of books. Gave 260 books to teachers, which counts as \$1700 of book profit. Leaves us \$700 in vouchers and \$932 in cash. Could adjust the balance.
 - Only 10 volunteers, needed more. Need 2 people per shift. Amy worked too many shifts.
 - Included Pre-K kids this year. They were very excited. Also good practice shopping in a safe place.
 - Insisted that they bought books, not just gizmos.
 - Q: only once per year?
 - A: we do a 1-day book fair during Spring Fair.
 - Idea for next sale: get the 6th graders to calculate the sales tax.
 - Got thank-you notes from Ms. Wright and Ms. Bennett.
- Art show went very well. Kids had a lot of fun. Elizabeth Morisette worked tirelessly with the instruction, administration, etc.
 - Need the stapling refreshed.
 - Complaints that the things were decided by vote. This became a popularity contest, and kid's whose families didn't come were at a disadvantage.
 - Q: was every grade represented?
 - A: almost everyone, not pre-K and one 1st grade didn't do it.
 - Teacher appreciation for EM: gift certificate and flowers on TV.
 - Proposal to hire EM for a workshop – it was pointed out that for the PTA to pay a parent was a bad idea.
 - EM also interested in having an artist in residence here.
 - Featured in Greenbelt News Review.
- Councilman Ingrid Turner visited.

- Teacher's lounge
 - We're painting on Friday. Come dressed in paint clothes. 7PM Friday Dec. 7.
 - Need donations of sheet cloths, painter's tape, brushes.
 - Asking for donations from Lowes.
- Directory
 - Directory is a list of names and addresses. It is voluntary, so you have to submit a form. The directory will be mailed to your home. (Printing and mailing is expensive, so want advertisements.)
 - Coming along. Can still submit forms with the information, or email Kristin Dabelko.
 - Will be out in January.
 - Soliciting advertisements.
- Fundraising opportunities by ordering on-line. Go through SmartRaise or BoxTops for Education.
 - Register Giant and Safeway cards.
 - Greenraising.com – order before Dec. 13 for delivery by Christmas.
 - Co-op: we can buy certificates. Return is a couple of percent.
 - Ms. Plogman will contact the Co-op to ask if they would be willing to simply register the membership number.
- Events:
 - Dec. 13 science fair.
 - Dec. 16 Ice skating night, 5:30-7:30. Buy tickets in advance for \$6.
 - Need volunteers to help with the ticket orders.
 - Possible other events:
 - Move-It night. Need volunteers. Games and physical activity.
 - Board games night.
 - Math night.
 - Amy Hansen might run a take-apart party, sponsored by the PGTAG group.
 - Dec. 17 School winter concert. 7PM.
 - Jan 8 PTA meeting (first Tuesday back at school).
 - Feb 26 – information about MSA
 - Apr 5 – spring fair, silent auction, games crafts
 - May 14 – Multicultural Dinner. May combine it with an international fashion.
 - Q: Will Pre-K be involved?
 - A: Yes.
- Treasurer's report
 - Currently have about \$16,000 in our account.
- Blue Sky puppets was a great show.

RIF Program.

- Last year, under program, children got to keep 2 books; we paid \$750, RIF paid \$2250.

- We were removed from the program, since we don't have enough children in the free and reduced lunch program.
- Proposal: we use our scholastic vouchers to buy books from the warehouse. Amy will go and spend the \$750 that was budgeted.
- Q: can we do this again if it is successful?
- A: There is another warehouse sale in April.

Principal's Report

- Thanks to PTA for funding the Blue Sky puppets.
- Thanks to Elizabeth Morisette for all her work on the art show.
- Grandparents day, probably February.
- Thanks to PTA for putting so many books in the classrooms from the Scholastic book fair.
- Got 108 new Dell computers. Some classrooms have 4, 6 or 8 computers.
- Slide in playground was damaged. It was regular wear and tear, so school system will not replace it.
 - Q: Huh?
 - A: AJ worked hard on this, and that is what he got from the school system.
 - Q: What does the county do when things wear out? If it is up to the PTA, what do we do?
 - A: Ms. Seidel will try to call the county and find out.
- Coming up on half-way through the year.
- Attendance for the school is rated by the county. Parents must send in an excuse.
- Cell phones are allowed in class if they are turned off. If they ring, the teacher will confiscate.
- Need volunteers to help with Science Fair.

PreK-8 update by Kristin Dabelko

- At October school board meeting the idea came up.
- No concrete plans, and not even really a concrete proposal.
- GES was dropped from the plan.
- PTA board discussed it and came up with:
 - Currently, our gym is not large enough and doesn't have changing rooms (doesn't need showers).
 - There may be site improvement funds, maybe not.
- No matter what, many of our children will go to Greenbelt Middle, either if we are preK-5 or if boundaries change.
- Board decided to form a committee to address preK-8 and also how to improve the transition to Greenbelt Middle School.
- GMS will have new building by 2010 (maybe?)
- Building bridges to GMS.
 - Doesn't make sense that GES and ERHS have active PTAs, but there is a gap in the middle.
 - Need parents of 6th graders. Need parents of young children as well.
- Please sign up for the committee.

- Q: what can parents who have 4th, 5th, 6th graders do?
 - A: need them on the committee to help affect change.
- Plan is to keep the children in the old building until the new building is built.
 - Old plan was to move the kids, but this is not the current plan.
- GMS has a parent liaison, who could be contacted by us.
- Ideas: Joint meetings? Getting the staffs together?
- We got a grant from Ingrid Turner to build bridges between the schools.
- GMS principal invites parents to come and visit. Call first to make an appointment. This is a community.
- ACE chair is Jeff Morisette. City is very interested in the issues. Meeting that the City Council had with the BOE was only on the GMS building plan, it happened before the preK-8 idea.
- Construction on the GMS is breaking ground in 2009 and finished in 2010.
- GMS has International Baccalaureate program.
- Beth Novick: GES staff does go to workshops with GMS staff. There are some relationships. Would want some mechanisms to communicate information about student's academic abilities.
- Social event, but needs directed activity, like GES vs. GMS basketball game.
- Should we have teachers involved?
- A: yes.

Other business

- New email list GreenbeltEducation@yahoogroups.com
 - Already a lot of messages about the preK-8.
 - Ann Davidson of Berwyn Heights has a lot of knowledge.
- Q: there was a report about checking driver's licenses for all visitors.
- A: this was in Virginia. The objection was due to illegal aliens worried about having the information reported to INS. No indication that this will be applied here in Maryland.
- Q: The purple bus is always late. Some kids grab their breakfast and carry it to class.
- Call county transportation: 301-513-5059, ask for Jeannette.
 - Form ad-hoc committee to address this. Chair will be: Jennifer Lynch.
- Membership cards should have gone home, unless you joined very recently.
- Gazette had a story that the PTA got a Unit Recognition award for an increase in membership. What is the membership?
- A: about 110.
- Another point about this is that the local papers will run good news when we send it to them.
 - We have a publicity committee that needs more people to be involved, including people to write or take pictures.