

CITY OF GREENBELT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Minutes of Meeting of May 26, 2009
Meeting commenced at 7:00 PM.

PRESENT: ACE Members: Laretta Baugh, Jon Gardner, Sudhanshu Sinha, Dave Whiteman and Staff Liaison Wendy Wexler.

Also present: From Greenbelt Middle School: Parent Liaison Silke Pop and Guidance Counselor Wayne Davis. From Greenbelt Elementary School: Principal Kim Seidel and teacher Beth Novick. GES & BHES Teacher Darelynn Fung. City of College Park EAC Chair Denise Mitchell.

Parents present: Maria Hernandez, Jeni Copetill, Josue Joge, Juana Joge. Jesus Gomez, Jose Jimone, Amy Hansen and John Transrud - representing Springhill Lake, Greenbelt and Berwyn Heights elementary schools.

GMS Principal Judy Austin was also briefly present at the beginning of the meeting.

PLEASE NOTE:

This was not the regular monthly meeting of ACE, but instead a meeting to address issues related to the development and support of a viable parent teacher organization for Greenbelt Middle School. But in order to keep our notes up to date the notes taken by Jon Gardner, chair, will be kept as our monthly "minutes". Those notes are as follows:

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Greenbelt Middle School Parental Involvement meeting on May 26, 2009 at GMS. This meeting was sponsored by the Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Education (ACE) and the Berwyn Heights and College Park Education Advisory Councils (EAC).

Notes taken by Jon Gardner, Greenbelt ACE chair.

The meeting began with a moment of silence in memory of Brodie Frederick.

Judy Austin stopped in briefly at beginning of meeting:

- 744 students are registered for next year. Expect about 50 more to move to the area. This is about 50 less than current 850 students.
- The GMS will no longer be a special ed "magnet school." There will just be the special ed children from the local area. Other special ed kids will go to their own neighborhood schools.

Ideas for PTLO

- Recruit parents

- On-line communication:
 - Silke's list has 270 email address
 - Set up a yahoo group
- Start easy: Choose a couple of events or activities to focus on this year.
 - Spring fair
 - Provide snacks at a concert or game
 - Get the word out
- Purpose of the PTLO:
 - Voice for students and parents to the administration
 - Funding for extras that teachers want
 - Nominate teachers for awards
 - Happy teachers = happy students
 - Parent visibility
 - Communication – both ways
 - Education – get speakers
 - Survey – what do parents want?
- How do you get parents to attend?
 - Hold regular meetings so people know when and where to come
 - Provide babysitting for young children Provide extra credit or a homework pass to the children of the parents who attend
 - Provide food
 - Get an interpreter to translate the meetings into Spanish
 - Attach the PTA meeting to a concert or other meeting
 - Get the teachers to attend
 - The teachers get free food only if every member of staff joins
 - Maybe the teachers could send a representative from each team
 - Or cycle through the teams: one month the math teachers, the next month the English teachers, etc.
- Silke maintains a Parent resource room with coffee and info
- Discuss issues
 - Myspace
 - Cyber-bullying
 - Physical bullying
 - Relationships
 - Peer pressure
- Hold English (as a second language) classes at the school for parents
- Discipline
 - Phone calls home when students are not in attendance
 - Open communication lines
 - Security
 - Locker inspection
 - Locker safety and responsibility
 - The school needs probable cause to search a locker due to privacy rules. Only once in last 10 years have they had a school-wide locker search.
- Membership fees are \$10 per year.
 - In 2008-2009, 44 parents and 3 teachers joined.
 - But almost nobody came to the meetings
- Should the PTLO become a PTA by joining the MD state and national PTA?

- Cost: about \$3 per member, plus pay for insurance
- Advantages:
 - Insurance for events is fairly cheap
 - Tax-exempt status means tax-deductible donations and grants
 - Support from the state PTA: officer training, magazine, etc.
- Process:
 - Get bylaws approved by state PTA.
 - Need officers: President, VP, Treasurer and Secretary.
 - File forms annually with state & IRS for tax-exempt status.
- Send a flyer home with each 6th grader that has a membership form.
- Hold one meeting per year of the Elementary School PTAs at the Middle School building.
- Hyattsville Middle is a performing arts magnet school – but the only difference is they have an after-school program
 - We could do this too! Darelynn Fung wants to organize this for the 2010-2011 school year.
 - Raise money with grants to pay the teachers to run the program.
 - There are at least 200 band students currently in 5th grade, between GES, BH and SHL. Adding in the other three schools, and this will be a great 7th grade band in two years – can go to state!
- Final ideas/action items:
 - Amy Hansen and Darelynn Fung will help staff the PTLO table at the GMS concert on June 10, signing up members for next year.
 - The Greenbelt Co-op gives out grants, but doesn't get many applications. Ask for a "start-up" grant of \$500 to pay for joining the MD State PTA. Deadline is September.
 - Apply for grants from PGC Arts Council, Ingrid Turner, Greenbelt Community Foundation, Washington Post, etc., for money to run an after-school arts program. Start with instrumental music, and if money allows, add chorus, visual arts, etc.

Jon Gardner will set up greenbelt_middle@yahoo.com. Silke will forward an announcement of the group to her email list, so that people can

ACE CALENDAR – Please let Wendy know if you are NOT able to attend.

Unless noted all meetings will now take place in the Second Floor City Council Room, City Municipal Building.

6/30.....Regular Monthly Meeting: 7 PM – Greenbelt Community Center, room 103
