

**Atholton High School (AHS) Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA)**  
**Monthly Meeting Minutes**  
**October 25, 2011**

Ellen Makar called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the AHS Career Center.

The following were in attendance: Amy Bagley, Susan Bottomley, Lisa Bader, Judy Bruce, Joan Brittingham, Tina Burgan, Bob Chalmers, Jennifer Clements, Debbie Clutts, Kathy Faber, Caryn Lasser, Ellen Makar, Elaine McAuliffe, Mindy Myers, Laurie Remer, Shari Underwood, Sherri Tatum, and Carol Zimmerman.

Ellen distributed the agenda (Attachment A).

The attendees read the "Objects of the PTA."

There were no changes to the minutes from the Monthly Meeting held on September 27, 2011.

**President's Report (Ellen Makar)**

- Ellen thanked Tina Burgan and Debbie Clutts for organizing the "Pizza with the Principal" event. She also thanked all those who baked cookies. Approximately 20 parents participated. Leftovers from the dinner were donated to JROTC. The notes compiled during the discussions will be available soon.
- The Guidance Office will be releasing a survey for parents to provide feedback about their services.
- Ellen reported on the various advocacy issues that the PTSA was involved in this month and thanked all for their feedback. 1. Ellen attended the hearing on Delegate Turner's bill to change the electoral process for the Board of Education (BOE), and the PTSA submitted testimony against having two members appointed by the County Executive. The bill was withdrawn. 2. Ellen attended the BOE meeting with the PTA Presidents and the Community Advisory Council (CAC). There was much discussion on the placement of students in advanced level classes. On behalf of the AHS PTSA, Ellen requested restrooms for the stadium and reported to the BOE that the Family Portal had rolled out smoothly at AHS. 3. Ellen collaborated with the Athletic Boosters to advocate for turf fields at AHS and all county high schools. This issue has been deferred.
- Larry Crouse will no longer be able to continue as the CAC liaison.
- The PTA Council of Howard County (PTACHC) is looking for people to help with policy review committees.
- The After Prom Party Committee needs more team leaders. The contract with Lifetime Fitness will be signed next week.
- The Academic Life Skills (ALS) students helped advertise the SAT preparation classes by hanging posters. Thank you to Mrs. Cantor and Mrs. O'Donnell. ALS Students are available to help with tasks that require skills such as counting, sorting, and cutting.

- Ken Roey, Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) Executive Director of Facilities Planning and Management, is available on Wednesday, November 16, to provide an update on the renovation. Therefore, the next monthly meeting will be moved from Tuesday, November 15, to Wednesday, November 16. The PTSA meeting will start at 6:30, and Mr. Roey will start his presentation at 7:30. The community will be invited.

**Administrator’s Report (Jen Clements)**

- The details regarding turf fields have evolved quickly. A report on other potential projects that could be funded with the revenue from the state alcohol tax increase will be given at the November 17<sup>th</sup> BOE meeting. The school system must make a decision by January regarding how to use the funds.
- Thank you to those who facilitated “Pizza with the Principal.” There was a good turnout, and it was nice to see new faces. The discussions were helpful, and the notes will be given to Ellen, the administrative team, and the counselors.
- Students have been enjoying Homecoming week. Thank you to all the volunteers who have helped with the Homecoming activities.
- Upcoming events: November 3 is the end of the quarter; there is no school on November 4; report cards will be distributed on November 11; pick-A-time will be used to schedule conferences; conferences will be held on November 21, 22, and 23; the fall play performances will be on October 27, 28, 29, and 30.
- The renovation is on track to begin in April. The following sports will be affected: the field hockey field will not be available for the next couple of years, one-half of the tennis courts will house the portable classroom buildings, and the cross country course may need to be changed.

**Treasurer’s Report (Mary Acker)**

- Ellen reported on the budget. The Snack Shop numbers are not up to date. Donations to the PTSA are combined with Membership Dues. Mindy Meyers will check with Mary about this. The Front Office Lunch Fund has been paid.
- We received seven Student Support requests (Attachment B).

<u>Group Requesting</u>	<u>Amount Requested</u>
REACH Program	\$500
National Honor Society	\$400
JROTC	\$500
Health Room	\$75
It’s Academic	\$240
Mock Trial	\$300
Spanish Honors/Culinary Class	\$248

Total: \$2,263

Sherri Tatum asked whether the JROTC Boosters provide support to the JROTC. Tina Burgan explained that the Boosters group is new this year and has not raised much money so far. The Health Room request was for a thermometer, and Joan

Brittingham asked if this is an appropriate PTSA expense. Carol Zimmerman will ask about this at the next PTACHC meeting.

**Laurie Remer moved to give conditional approval to the Health Room request (subject to the information Carol receives at the next PTACHC meeting) and to approve the others.** Susan Bottomley seconded the motion. A vote was taken, and the Executive Board unanimously approved the motion.

There is still confusion regarding the difference between Student Support requests and Student Activities requests.

### **PTA Council of Howard County (PTACHC) Delegates' Report (Kathy Faber and Carol Zimmerman)**

- Kathy Faber attended the last meeting and submitted a written report.
- The coat drive has not been very successful to date. The deadline is Halloween. One more appeal went out today.
- Kathy helped with the practice SAT, but the doors to the school were not opened in time for the volunteers to set up. The custodial staff was not aware that the practice SAT was taking place, and the volunteers did not know who to contact to unlock the doors. The practice ACT takes place a week from Saturday. Mrs. Clements will talk to Mr. Senisi to make sure it is on the schedule and that the doors will be opened on time.
- The issue regarding whether to have appointed members to the BOE has not been resolved. People seemed concerned about the process and the way the issue was being pushed through so quickly.

### **Corresponding Secretary (Sherri Tatum)**

None.

### **Student Government Association (SGA) Report**

None.

### **Unfinished Business**

- **Debbie Clutts nominated Carol Zimmerman as one of the PTACHC Council Representatives.** (Debra Kafami who was originally elected was not able to continue in the position). Laurie seconded the nomination. A vote was taken, and the Executive Board unanimously elected Carol.

### **New Business**

None.

### **Committee/Liaison Reports**

- Caryn Lasser reported on a number of issues. 1. The PTACHC minutes included information on the Student Assistance Program and reported that staff can refer students to the program. Parents can also refer their children. 2. The Office of Children's Services is sponsoring a presentation on issues facing middle and high

school students (including social media, adolescents and dating, and bullying and cyberbullying) on Thursday, October 27. 3. **HC Drug Free** is looking for student members. In addition, HC Drug Free would like teenagers and young adults (under 25) to take a survey. Ellen forwarded the link for the survey. 4. The **School Improvement Team (SIT)** is working on finalizing plans that are due at the end of the month. This year, the school system will provide feedback. Mrs. Clements reported that she will provide a snapshot of the plan on the AHS web site. 5. Caryn will forward the plan for the elementary school redistricting (affects the southeastern corridor). Decisions have not yet been made. Public hearing dates are November 8 and 15. Ellen suggested that we inform AHS parents about the redistricting as the changes may affect younger siblings.

- Judy Bruce reported that **Snack Shop** gave recently expired chips to the front office because they were not comfortable selling them. Snack Shop will not be selling baked chips any more because the students do not buy them consistently. Snack Shop is well staffed with volunteers. The ALS students will help Judy unload her car when she is restocking the Snack Shop.
- Debbie reported that the **Volunteers** Committee distributed the volunteer lists. They do not know to whom to give the lists for Community Connections, Awards, Landscaping, and Projects from Home. There were many volunteers selling Homecoming tickets. Volunteers are still needed to help with the coat check and refreshments at the Homecoming Dance. Judy said that the ALS students usually help with the coat check.
- Judy reported for **Music Boosters**. The fruit sale is in progress. Contact Judy or look on the web site for more information.
- Sherri reported for the **Athletic Boosters**. The PTSA's Homecoming Breakfast donation was received.
- Sherri reported that the **HC Drug Free** Emotional Rollercoaster presentation will be held at AHS on November 29. There was discussion as to whether teachers could give incentives for students to attend (e.g., homework passes, extra credit).
- Shari Underwood reported for the **After Prom Party** Committee. Eileen Jones will provide guidance to the committee. Many of last year's committee chairs graduated, so volunteers are needed. Debbie and Kathy will chair the prizes committee, and Amy Bagley will head up the requests for college donations. Chairpersons are needed for the food and decorating committees and more.
- Approximately 400 families have signed up to have listings in the **Directory**. This is not enough representation given that there are 1,487 students and approximately 1000 families. Another request will be included in an upcoming HCPSS newsletter. There was discussion as to whether people might be concerned about security of the Directory information, and it was suggested that a bulletin regarding security be sent in one of the newsletters.
- Lisa Bader reported that a new **Driver's Education** class will be starting soon.
- Tina reported that **Hospitality** was planning to provide refreshments at the SAT Information Night. Laurie reported that Kaplan usually brings refreshments, so the Hospitality Committee will not need to provide anything.

- Laurie reported for **SAT Preparation**. There were issues using PayPal for the SAT practice test. It was too complicated, so next time participants will be asked to pay by check.
- **Parents on Patrol (POPS)** is in need of more volunteers.
- Susan Bottomley reported for **Staff Appreciation**. Treat bags will be distributed to the staff and bus drivers on Halloween. The conference dinner will be on November 22. Mrs. Clements will let the committee know how many staff members will attend. A letter asking for donations for the December lunch for the staff will go out soon.

### Adjournment

Ellen adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

### E-mailed Committee/Liaison Reports

- **Staff Appreciation** (Susan Bottomley): Staff Appreciation is doing Halloween goodie bags for the staff and bus drivers on Monday the 31st. A conference dinner by Three Brothers is set for Nov 22nd. The letter requesting donations for the December Holiday lunch will go out in a few weeks.
- **Hospitality** (Tina Burgan): As Ellen mentioned Hospitality hosted Pizza with the Principal on Oct. 5th with approx. 20 parents. The remaining food was donated to the Custodial staff & JROTC.

Volunteer Committee: many thanks to the parents that sent in all those terrific baked goods for the evening! The parents really appreciated it!

Lessons learned:

> community notification: send out the notification early and repeatedly. While I did receive a handful of RSVPs, more folks showed up than RSVP'd, which is a good thing. Additionally, the notice was only posted on one side of the announcement board - on the side facing the teacher's parking lot. Perhaps more folks could have been reached posting it on the side facing the football field.

> food & supplies: scale back the quantity as we now have two years of attendance data.

> date of the event: unfortunately, we were competing with the GT Program that evening, so to speak. I heard from a couple of parents later in the evening that they were headed to Pizza with the Principal, but upon seeing the GT Program meeting in the auditorium opted for that instead.

Our next event is to support the Community Connections SAT Information Night program, but I need the date confirmed from that committee. Is it Nov. 1st or the 7th?

- **Grocery Receipts** (Joan Brittingham):  
Giant Program: 237 enrolled. No YTD dollars have been awarded yet.  
Safeway/Escrip Program: 360 supporters. January – August 2011 Net Contributions: 698.04

Harris Teeter Program: 119 Participants, 2011-2012 Earnings: \$195.35  
Bloom: 188 Enrolled, 6996 points\*\*  
Food Lion: 60 Supporters, No awards to date

\*\* Just a reminder, no points have been utilized yet

- **Webmaster Report** (Kayle Simon): 1.) We have someone interested in taking over one or more of the websites next year; I will meet with him soon.  
  
2.) We tried using paypal for an upcoming event, to take registrations and money in two separate steps. It didn't go particularly well; it seemed people would register but then not pay, and that resulted in a headache for us to track down whether they were coming or not. I would suggest only using paypal for things that are not time sensitive. Not events and classes and etc. Just use it for memberships and donations.
- **SAT Preparation** (Laurie Remer):  
**SAT Practice Test—Saturday, 10/22**  
39 attended; 44 registered  
Dual system of paying by check or PayPal's was more work than collecting checks. I spent too much time tracking payments and figuring out who paid for which student since often parents have different last names than students.

#### **SAT Give Back is Wednesday, 10/26**

Kaplan is meeting individually with students and families this year to make the process more personalized than in past years.

#### **ACT Practice Test Saturday, Nov 5**

23 registered to date

Will make around \$1000 for the school.

- **Membership** (Sue Bell, Irene Halkias, Mindy Myers, Robyn Siegel): The PTSA membership drive is going quite well - we have a total of 619 members. There are 159 from Pay Pal and 460 through the membership form. Of the 460 there were 73 staff memberships. This month we continued to process the membership forms and distributed PTSA Cards to all staff members.
- **School Improvement Team (SIT)/Anti-Bullying Committee** (Caryn Lasser): The School Improvement Team continues to develop the plan for this year. The plan is expected to be completed during the SIT meeting this week on October 27.

The Anti-Bullying Committee is meeting monthly to plan areas of focus for this year for students, staff members, and parents/community members. A guest speaker is planned for January.

Please find attached the notes I took and shared with the Anti-Bullying Committee which captured statements and concepts from both the student and adult panels at the October 5 Choose Civility Symposium. Below please find links to the Choose Civility Symposium website which lists dates and times of the taped replay of the panels.

[http://www.choosecivility.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=105:symposium&catid=61:for-whats-new](http://www.choosecivility.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=105:symposium&catid=61:for-whats-new)

Additionally, these links (noted at the bottom of the notes page) share an article from the Columbia Patch and a link to the live blog they hosted during the forum.

<http://columbia.patch.com/articles/experts-students-look-at-growing-complexity-of-bullying-in-internet-age>

<http://columbia.patch.com/articles/live-blog-students-and-experts-take-on-bullying>

- **Parents on Patrol** (Sue Cabot): POPS is in need of coverage for this Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup>. Also in November, we have 15 full days of school and 9 volunteers signed up. In November there are 15 full days where lunch coverage is needed. I need to get at least one person to sign up for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. During Thanksgiving week where we have early dismissal, there is no need for volunteer coverage since the students have a short brunch and the staff monitors the hallways during this time. I will be sending out an e-mail for help today.
- **Directory** (Erica Carpio): There's been a delay in printing out the directory due to a lower amount of registrations than anticipated. A school wide email went out recently encouraging more parents to register on the directory maker's site. Since then about another 100 parents have signed up and we are around the 400 mark. Another freshman parent, Maria Esquela, has assisted me in entering data that was handed in to the front office - Thanks Maria!

Once we've hit a comfortable amount of parent/student registrations we will move on to the printing stage. I've also made contact with the rep at Directory Maker and she advised that mydirectoryanywhere really is a useful and technologically savvy tool that many schools are phasing into while still keeping their hard-copies for those who'd prefer them.