

Math and Science Academy
8430 Woodbury Crossing, Woodbury, MN 55125
Parent Team Committee Meeting - Spring Meeting
April 15, 2010 7:00 pm

Opening

1. Meeting called to order at 7:04 pm by Nancy Creeger.
2. There were 16 people in attendance.
3. Introductions were made by the officers: Nancy Creeger, Chairperson; Jeni Crump, PT Volunteer Coordinator; Lori Nixon, Treasurer; Amy Sunderman, Secretary.
4. Minutes from the January 14, 2010 Parent Team Meeting were reviewed and no changes made.

Board Liaison Update by Julie Runge

1. April 8, 2010 was the most recent Board of Directors meeting.
2. A three year lease was signed with the owner of the building. This will provide MSA with additional space. As a result, 20 additional sixth grade students and 20 additional seventh grade students will be accepted into MSA – for a total of 40 additional students.
3. May 6, 2010 is the next Board of Directors workshop and meeting. A tentative schedule for how the new space will be used (which classes and what grade levels.) is being proposed. MSA is planning for two additional staff and looking at a seven period day. One parent asked if class size will change. Class room size is hoping to remain at their current sizes.
4. Next week there is a meeting on MSA's budget. These are open meetings and anyone is welcome.
5. Darrell Schoberlein announced his retirement for the end of the year.

Parent Team Leadership by Nancy Creeger

New officers are elected every year. All parents are invited to run for a position. A brief description of the Parent Team officer positions and responsibilities were given. The election will be held at the end of the meeting.

Volunteer Activities/Opportunity Highlight by Jeni Crump

1. Dinner was provided for the teachers one evening during the fall conferences. A HUGE thanks to Lori Makela who solicited donations from parent volunteers, prepared and coordinated an excellent meal. The teachers were extremely appreciative of the great meal.
2. Jeni is looking for a volunteer to coordinate a reward program for a box top advisory challenge. This is only to coordinate to party – there is another volunteer already in place to do the counting and bundling of box tops. No parent volunteered at this time.
3. Senior Class Lock-in. Jeni is looking for parents of the junior class to consider

helping set-up the school for the senior lock-in event. (June 10th is the last day of school as well as graduation night.) In order for the parents of the seniors to be with their families in the afternoon/evening other parent volunteers are needed. Please see Jeni if you are interested. Parents of sophomore and freshman students are welcome too.

4. Please consider purchasing a MSA Blue Ribbon school t-shirt or sweatshirt. There are selected sizes available for purchase. It is a fundraiser event for the High School First Robotics team

Treasurer's Report by Lori Nixon

Items of key interest are:

1. Speaker Money – The budgeted money for this event will not be spent this school year and will be carried over to next school year.
2. April 23 is MSA School Clean-up and pizza will be purchased for the volunteers.
3. Many of the items listed on the budget have not taken place yet. These events (prom, graduation; school beautification, Cinco de Mayo etc...) are expected to happen and will spend all their budgeted money.
4. A budget for school year 2010 – 2011 will be put together shortly after we have all the information we need. Especially, we need to know if teachers are planning to will continue to run their same programs.
5. If there is any money leftover in the Parent Team budget, the teachers can submit a one-time request for special consideration. Then under the advice of Paul Simone, the Parent Team will honor the requests. The Parent Team anticipates that we will use all the budgeted money this year.
6. Several years ago, the Parent Team accepted requests for money from the students. That is no longer available. The Parent Team is here to support the needs of the teachers and other school events.

Open Discussion by Nancy Creeger

Health and Wellness

(There was much discussion. Major points and discussion are included below.)

Background: At a recent Board of Directors meeting a parent expressed concern over the availability of high fat/sugar foods to the student body. The Parent Team was asked to get feedback from parents on this issue. This discussion is to allow parents to express their concerns, ideas and provide information that can aid the Board in writing a Health and Wellness Policy for MSA.

1. Paul Simone explained that schools with a hot lunch program are required to have a Health and Wellness policy. MSA does not have a hot lunch program. While a Health and Wellness Policy is not required for MSA the Board is looking to write a one for MSA.
2. One parent said it seemed like there were a lot of announcements on the rewards and fundraising activities which many times involved unhealthy foods. (For example, large cinnamon rolls, candy, six pack of pop for Character Counts program.)
3. One parent said she was not concerned with what people bring from home and is not looking to control those things, but her concern was for things offered by the school that would be healthy. An example of unhealthy items available at school was the

pop machine. One thought was that the pop machine should not be in the school lunch room. The pop machine is a fundraiser for the student council.

4. All parents seemed to be in agreement that this concern does not include special events such as mol day, pi day, pizza day and other fun activities unique to MSA.
5. There was discussion on improving the beverage choices in the pop machine. MSA has an older population and it is appropriate to give them some responsibilities and choices; however some felt that the middle school age students were not yet ready to manage this responsibility.
6. Other ideas for rewards such as MSA t-shirts and sweatshirts and I-Tunes gift cards could be considered. A point system and redemption idea was suggested too.
7. Fundraisers for various clubs and organizations tend to pick the most successful events which have been selling candy, cinnamon rolls and other junk food.
8. There was discussion on posting a list of the calories, sugar and sodium in the items being sold. One parent said this was done at one of the Healthy Snack days and the students were not interested in the information.
9. It was explained that fundraisers need to be approved by the Board. One consideration is that the club/organization would need to provide the nutrition information to the Board before approval.
10. The staff's job is to educate the students and they too should promote healthy choices and lead by example.
11. One parent commented that the main focus of the school and teachers is to provide good academic education. While there are certainly areas that can be improved in the fundraising events and rewards, his concern was that we be careful not to detract from the main focus of education.
12. MSA started selling milk a couple of years ago. Since that change, the health teacher has observed that there are more students buying milk rather than pop.
13. The health teacher said there are some kids who become overly concerned and cut out all fat from their diet. We need to be sensitive to kids in the event there is someone with an eating disorder. There needs to be a balance, a focus on the good things in their diet and that there are certain things that are ok to eat in moderation...except for trans-fats which are never good.
14. Energy drinks are a problem and these are not sold at school. Students bring them from home. The health teacher has talked about the harmful affects these energy drinks have. The students continue to bring these from home.
15. The discussion came around that there must be more creative ways to come up with fundraising money. One idea was to ask for funding from the parents for the kids in the clubs.
16. Jeni Crump received and was requested to read an e-mail from a parent. This parent felt that education for healthy choices begins in the home. It is the student's responsibility to extend that outside the home. The school should not eliminate options but rather offer choices.

Conclusion to the Health and Wellness Discussion

There appear to be three main categories: Fundraisers, Rewards and Special Events. The Board's goal is to write a Health and Wellness statement that will work for MSA. The statement is to be balanced, considering the entire school population, and have the

ability to be modified as necessary in the future.

There was discussion on MSA providing sports equipment for students at lunchtime

1. This would need funding. We could ask for equipment donations from families.
2. Equipment used for MSA's Physical Education program would need to be stored separately from the lunchtime equipment. This is necessary to keep the school equipment in good condition and from being lost.
3. Supervision and safety are priority. This lunchtime equipment suggestion will be reviewed/considered in the fall.

High School at MSA

1. This is an event for parents and students to find out about high school at MSA. A panel of various parents, students and a teacher put together an informational evening. This event is to be held in the fall.
2. One parent said their student was heading into 10th grade & wondered if fall was too late to learn about AP Classes and other pertinent information.

Other Open Discussion Items

One parent asked if there is a way to have collaboration between parents and teachers. The parent suggested having parents list their place of employment & job. That way if teachers wanted someone with a certain background, such as engineering, to participate in their class they could reference this list. This has been looked into before, but we didn't have enough manpower (volunteers.) Another comment was that parents have become less willing to provide additional information (for example, employer information...) There was discussion that maybe we could include this in with the fall registration packet.

One parent asked if registration was going to be on-line this year. At a minimum, the forms will be online. Registration forms should be retrieved from the school website. Paul Simone will talk to the technology department to see if registration can be automated.

Election and Voting for Parent Team Officers for next year

Lori Nixon was nominated and seconded for Treasurer. Lori accepted.
Nancy Creeger was nominated and seconded for Chairperson. Nancy accepted
Amy Sunderman was nominated and seconded for Secretary. Amy accepted.
There were no nominations for Vice Chair/Volunteer Coordinator position. This position remains open.

A vote was taken and passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.