

James Hubert Blake High School  
PTSA General Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, November 17, 2009

*The PTSA General Membership meeting was held on Tuesday, November 17, at 7 pm at Blake's Media Center.*

### **Introduction and Presentation**

Attending were Robina Barlow, President; Brenda Pullen, Treasurer; Catherine Kugelmann, Secretary; Carole Goodman, Principal; several PTSA committee chairs, general members and new Blake parents and students (sign in sheet is attached).

Robina Barlow welcomed all in attendance and introduced the guest speaker, Robert Roth.

Robert Roth is Coordinator of Adolescent Behavioral Health at Montgomery General Hospital.

Here is a brief synopsis of Robert Roth's presentation:

Mr. Roth said that many of the problems that teens have are "situational depression". There is a spike in activity at the hospital during report card time, Homecoming and even more so during Prom. Kids are using drugs like marijuana, alcohol and tobacco to self-medicate problems like anxiety or ADHD. Violent crimes among teens have increased. Heroin accounts for 30 percent of drug use among Montgomery County teens. Alcohol is the most dangerous drug when it comes to teen suicide.

Young people may be overmedicated for situational depression, but not for clinical depression. Parents need to give their teens unconditional love and approval. Exercise is a natural anti-depressant.

Parents need to watch their teens closely for warning signs: change of friends, bad grades, antisocial behavior. Parents more than anything need to simply pay attention and follow through.

After Mr. Roth's presentation, Ms. Barlev informed parents about the Blake Student Assistance Program. Students can either fill out a concern form, on-line or on paper, which is completely confidential. It is not a law enforcement tool, but a "getting help" tool. Blake is a community, and we all need to pay attention to teens showing any change in behavior.

### **Business**

#### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

Robina introduced Jennifer Lien, Student Government Association president and liaison to the PTSA. Jennifer reported that

- \$5,000 was made at Homecoming.
- The SGA will be sponsoring a toy drive, and they ask parents to purchase new toys to contribute.

- Representatives will be getting together tomorrow (Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>) during first period for a SGA meeting.

It was moved, seconded, and carried that the minutes from the October meeting be approved, with one correction.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Brenda Pullen submitted the November Treasurer's report to General Membership.

Brenda explained 2 updated forms introduced by the Maryland PTA. One is a Cash Verification Form, which requires 2 signatures, the other is a Receipt Reimbursement Form, which requires originals of all receipts.

### **PTSA POSITIONS: COMMITTEE'S REPORTS**

Membership – Chairs: Edith Salazar and Robin Ford could not attend.

Robina said that the PTSA has 630 members. There will be an end of year push with both membership and Direct Appeal.

After Prom - Chair: Diane Bush and Maura McMullen. Diane said that the next Dine Out will be on Wednesday, November 18 at Mama Lucia's in Olney.

The next After Prom committee meeting will be on December 7 at 7:00.

Special Education - Chair: Debbie Gartland

Nothing to report.

Education – Chair: Jonathan Arias could not attend.

Robina said that it is the desire of the Education Committee and the PTSA to have a partnership with the administration and to have transparency.

The Education Committee would also like to work more closely with the Counseling department.

Information is being given to kids, but parents need the information, too. Triumph is a SAT prep. program which is geared to juniors in the spring and seniors in the fall. It is a crash course (per Ms. Goodman).

Nominating Committee – Robina asked for volunteers to chair this committee. There were no volunteers at this time.

PALA – Parent and Student Latinos in Action – Chair: Ruben Escobar could not attend.

Robina reported that the financial aid program was held in Spanish in the career center at the same time as the program held in English in the amphitheater.

Robina introduced Francoise Domaas, administrator of Eubie Mail. Francoise said that if anyone has any information or corrections, please e-mail her, and she will take care of it.

NAACP – Chairs: Sharon Mosley-Ramsey and Bobette Banks

Bobette reported that the Veterans' Day Donuts for Dads was fairly well attended. Resources, for instance, Naviance, were explained. Mr. Tyrrell spoke about launching a mentoring program. He is looking for volunteers (fathers) who can come in 1 week a month after school to tutor.

The NAACP chairs would like to have a joint meeting with PALA with Mrs. Kathy Moore.

Teacher/Staff Liaison – Ms. Katz

- Photography classes are looking for 35mm SLR cameras to replace student cameras that have lost or broken, and that are too costly to replace or fix.
- Mr. Keegan, Blake Beat sponsor, is asking for financial support. He is asking parents to purchase an ad for the next Blake Beat.
- Mrs. Gelb announced that the senior parent meeting will be on March 25 at 7 p.m. Graduation practice, which is mandatory, will be on May 28 at 7:30 in the gym.

Comedy Night/Book Sale – Chairs: Beth Blevins/Orit Chicherio could not attend.

Comedy Night is planned for March 12.

The Book Sale is February 19 – 21. Robina asked that people start to bring in books, and other media like DVDs, to the office next month. The date will be announced.

Reflections – Chairs: Mimi Browne and Jack Goble.

Reflections is a PTSA-sponsored national arts competition to promote visibility of art programs.

Entries are due December 1 at 3:00 p.m. in the main office.

Mimi reported that there are currently 4 judges: 2 for visual arts, 1 for dance and 1 for literature. More judges, at least 8 in total, are needed. Please have possibilities e-mailed to Mimi.

Links are available on PTSA website outlining guidelines for Reflections.

Silent Auction – Chair: Dawn Dolan could not attend.

Robina said that a few parents with auction experience are now on board, but many more parents are needed to help. There is a committee meeting on Monday, November 23 at 7:00.

MCCPTA Delegates – Delegates: Jack Goble and Bill Halpin

Bill said there was no new action. The five resolutions that were amended were processed and voted in at the end of the October meeting.

Jack said that 3 representatives from Montgomery County were elected to the state PTA.

NEC Cluster - Coordinators: Lee Ann Doerflinger (for Blake) and Dawn Dolan (could not attend) (for Paint Branch

Lee Ann said that the next cluster meeting will be Wednesday evening at BCMS.

Information on the meetings can be found at the MCPSTA website <http://www.mccpta.com/>

The meetings are also on MPTV, channel 34.

Lee Ann reported that PTSA lobbying efforts are successful. Recently the County “Council rejected the Planning Board’s proposal to raise the threshold to require school facilities payments by developers from 105 percent of capacity in a high school cluster to 110 percent. Had the Council approved the change, which was opposed by the Montgomery County Council of PTAs, it would have been possible for a majority of the elementary schools in a cluster to be substantially overcrowded, but for the average for the elementary school cluster overall to fall below the 110 percent threshold.” \*

*\*(from the <http://www.mccpta.com/> website).*

PTSA Website – Chair: Beth Blevins, Communications VP, could not attend

The PTSA website is <http://www.blakeptsa.org/>

Hospitality – Robina asked for volunteers to chair this committee. Maura McMullen, the current chair, has a graduating senior, so someone will need to take over. The time commitment is minimal, and includes Back to School night and an event in December. There were no volunteers.

Foundation – There is an exploratory meeting on November 30 in the Career Center. Robina would like to create a fund to get things for the school that the PTSA cannot, because of restrictions. An example would be a language lab.

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT: Carole Goodman

- The Washington Post has been at the school interviewing students and teachers about Blake’s lunch hour. Calvert County is beginning the single lunch hour.
- While some students are expelled due to drug use, most of them come back to finish, under Ms. Goodman’s watchful eye. Ms. Goodman took the opportunity to point out that Mr. Lowry is remarkable at working with kids.
- The numbers for the choice program for the upcoming school year will be at 450 or 470.
- Blake’s volley ball and field hockey teams were successful and Ms. Goodman is very proud of them.
- Laura Berthiaume of the Board of Education visited Blake on Tuesday, Nov. 17.
- New permanent, opaque shades will be installed in the amphitheater.
- Scott Sussman completed the Blake alumni website, which has had 1,300 hits.
- Blake is above the county average for Algebra I completion by the end of 9<sup>th</sup> grade among African American and Hispanic students. Blake is ahead of Springbrook and Paint Branch.
- Mr. Tyrrell and Mr. D’Anna will work with Ms. Goodman to plan a symposium during Black History Month. This will include a performance, a guest speaker and an interactive experience. Ms. Goodman is asking for parent connections and community resources.

**New Business**

The next Staff Appreciation Day is Thursday, November 19. Bring in pies (front office) by 10 am.

\* Next PTSA meeting will be on December 15.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Catherine Kugelmann, PTSA Secretary