

**Alexander Science Center School PTA**  
**GENERAL PTA MEETING MINUTES**

**February 3, 2010**

Minutes recorded by Lupe Ramirez

**In Attendance:** Exec. Board: Dwain Morris-Irvin, Lupe Ramírez, Amini Aubrey, Lilia Benjamin, Kristyn Cota, Mary-Ann Perez, (See Sign-in Sheets for general membership names.)

**Meeting came to order at 5:56PM.** Professional interpreter available for Spanish speaking members

PTA President, Dwain Morris-Irvin started the meeting with an overview of the agenda.

**Agenda item #1: PTA Board Members**

- A. Announcement of Dana Orme- Reese leaving her position as PTA Corresponding Secretary. Her replacement will be Marie Geib, effective immediately.
- B. Notification to membership that the Exec. Board meets one week before the general meeting, so if there are items that want to be placed on the agenda, contact the exec. board at this time.
- C. Dwain's office hours: 2 times a month starting this month. 8:30 – 11:30 AM every other Friday.

**Agenda item #2: Approval of November PTA General Meeting Minutes**

- A. Time was taken to read the minutes from the Nov. PTA general meeting.
- B. Dwain motions to approve the minutes, Carmen Veazie seconds the motion. Motion approved.

**Agenda item #3: Financial Report (Zahid Rafique/Dwain Morris-Irvin)**

- A. Dwain presents the financial report in place of Zahid.
- B. Reviews money raised totaling \$18K. Reaffirms that the money raised this year should be spent this year.
- C. Return funds from Innisbrook orders for three orders: (see agenda for individual names). First order, items were never received, and the other two orders were placed after deadline. Dwain motions to approve these refunds. Marie Geib seconds the motion. Motion approved.

**Agenda item #4: Membership (Lilia Benjamin)**

- A. 72 current, paid members. We are striving for a 50% membership level.
- B. Lupe reminds the membership that the membership fee covers the school year calendar, September to June.
- C. Amini suggest the purchase of a banner to advertise PTA mtgs. with a pocket to change the dates
  - a. Things we currently do to advertise: email blasts, phone blasts, flyers sent home.
- D. Meetings are the last Wednesday of each month with an occasional Saturday mtg. and they rotate from morning to evening meeting times.

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**Agenda item #5: Presentation from the Peace Center, USC (Presenter's name??)**

- A. Describes and answers questions regarding a new Peace Making Program for children and youth. Objective is to teach how to handle conflict by way of peace discussions, crafts, gardening, cooking, theater, music, etc.

**At this time a presentation by ASCS parent, Richard Parks regarding ASCS's report card/student achievement (Please see handouts provided by Richard Parks)**

- A. After passing out the school's report card, Richard Parks points out several items such as the low percentage of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students who are language proficient. Kids are falling behind at this school and this concerns him.
- B. He attended the Governance Committee meeting raising these same concerns and was met with excuses such as our students are from lower income families, a large percentage are English language learners, etc.
- C. As a result Richard put together a comparison graph of ASCS and Synergy Charter Academy, that has very similar demographics. Synergy has been able to close the achievement gap in 2 years. Can ASCS? Let's stop making excuses and work to bridge the gap here.
- D. How can our parents become advocates for our students? How can we use the money/budget to invest in resources to help our kids.
  - a. Ideas: parties for kids on test days, trip to Disneyland, a parent commitment, workbooks for the summer break, prizes, etc. There is an agreement that there should be incentives for students
- E. Is it possible to consult with the folks at Synergy and get pointers?
- F. Richard spoke with Ms. Denen regarding this subject also.
- G. Dwain thanks Richard for putting this information and presentation together, recommends a committee be set up to tackle this issue, with Richard Parks spearheading. Richard agrees and two lists were started to get other on the committee.

**Agenda item #6: Principal's Report (Ms. Paula Denen)**

- A. What does the school needs in terms of financial support from PTA?
  - a. Additional field trips not a priority for the teachers.
  - b. Because each grade level has different needs, teachers are asking the PTA to designate an amount that the PTA is willing to donate back to the school to the donation account and the money will be evenly distributed among all the teachers.
  - c. Teachers submit a proposal of what they want, and the school approves and purchases the items, not the PTA membership, but PTA can see what teachers ask and what the school buys.
  - d. Everyone's needs are met: Ms. Denen has a paper trail, teachers get the items they need, and the PTA has the chance to help the school.
  - e. Parent, Georgina suggests that the items purchased be items that will be used this year and the next and sooner rather than later.
- B. Ms. Denen also suggests a yearbook for the school. Estimated cost \$10-\$15 per book, total cost ~\$7-\$8K

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- a. Disagreement with prefunding this venture, unless there is a pre-order of interested parents.

**Agenda #7: Discussion, Q&A**

- A. Dwain: PTA will find out how much money it currently has to give back to the teachers?
- B. Ms. Denen: Make sure PTA pays their bills, what ever is left over give to the donation account. Consider \$ to have in reserves. Any additional money fundraised the PTA can come back to the staff and decide to offer more if possible.

**Agenda #8: PTA Activities/Fundraising for remaining school year**

- A. Teacher Appreciation Lunch this year?
- B. Catalog fundraiser this spring a possibility: Chocolates or academic items
- C. T-shirt sales continue
- D. Monthly or bi-Weekly sales such as Chocolate bars, to peers (like the 5<sup>th</sup> graders do)
  - a. Ms. Denen comments that this type of sale is not allowable because 5<sup>th</sup> graders already have their own sales for Catalina trip, graduation, beach trip, etc.
  - b. M. Denen: would consider helping in chocolate sales if the money would go back to Student Body Account for the 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Would need to work together
- E. Something physical such as; Walk-a-thon, or something similar with hool-a-hoops, or jump rope
- F. Something academic like a Read-a-thon
  - a. Logistical issues; tracking money, honor systems. Ms. Denen: Can't become a teacher responsibility
- G. Fundraising Dinner using the USC Galen Center
  - a. Community can use the Galen center for free. USC can organize, parents just fill the tables
  - b. Arrange for a Speaker (possibly talking about a clear vision to close the Achievement Gap)
  - c. People would be moved and the equals money
- H. End-of-year event with admission fee to off set cost and/or ask for donations
- I. Raffle (tickets to Disneyland)

**Next General PTA Meeting will be Wednesday, Feb. 24<sup>th</sup> in the morning**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:19pm**