

PLEASE NOTE: THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THE MEETING.
OFFICIAL MINUTES WILL BE POSTED ONCE APPROVED
BY THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP AT THE NEXT MEETING.

MIAMI PALMETTO SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PTSA
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
APRIL 15, 2009

The meeting was called to order by President Andrea Shosfy at 9:13 a.m. She welcomed Pinecrest Mayor Cindy Lerner.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the March 25, 2009, General Membership Meeting were presented. A motion was made by Nancy Harter to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Isabel McBrayer and approved. President Shosfy recommended that the summary version of the March minutes be read online on the PTSA website if you were unable to attend the Teen Alcohol and Drug Abuse program presented that evening.

Principal's Report/Uniform Guidelines: Principal Weiner had a few announcements for the parents of seniors, their friends and families. Prom weekend is a wonderful event, but student safety is most important. He wants parents to be aware of any pre-prom activities. If you have hired a limo, have a private conversation with the driver to insure that there are no unscheduled stops. Stops at unsupervised homes are very dangerous. Last year, students showed up at the prom in no condition to be admitted and had to be taken to the hospital. Grad Night is scheduled for the following week. You can participate as a chaperone and have an opportunity to stay up all night. Contact Ms. Lima if you are interested in volunteering.

We are in the 4th marking period and the final exam schedule has been approved. It will be on our website in a few days. One of the major focuses today is that we are going to hold a vote on a mandatory uniform policy. EESAC voted on February 3rd to authorize a vote to take place the week of April 20th. Ballots will be sent out today or tomorrow. A committee of students, administrators, etc., was formed to develop uniform criteria which are currently posted on the school's website. He has also sent out two Connect-Ed messages and the criteria are listed on a hand out here today. Current 9th, 10th, and 11th grade families are authorized to vote. Each family gets one vote per student on one ballot. Incoming 9th graders don't get a ballot, just current 9th, 10th, and 11th grade students. It is very important that everyone votes. The outcome will be decided by 50% plus 1. We are sending out 2,100 to 2,200 ballots. If we get back 100 and get 50% plus 1, those few people are making a decision that impacts everyone. Everyone should have a say in the uniform policy vote.

The uniform policy is about safety, not control. It is about being able to identify who belongs here and who does not. He has spoken to principals at Killian, Coral Park, Sunset, South Dade, etc., and has been told that the wearing of uniforms has decreased the number of confrontations that students have, decreased trespassers, and calmed the campus down. We have a responsibility to make our campus as safe as possible. Whether you are for it or not, one thing we share in common is that we are all in favor of making our school as safe as possible.

Several students wore uniforms today to show parents. A variety of tops were selected by the committee. Bottoms can be shorts, long pants, or jeans (without holes or decorations on them). Pants must be waist high and not real baggy. The policy is modest, coherent, and fair. This policy was designed by parents, students, teachers,

and administrators. School Board rules allow you to put a logo on the shirt as a requirement if you wish. These clothes can be bought anywhere, but we prefer that you put the school logo or crest on them. Any other logos on the shirts can't be bigger than one inch in size. We have to be able to make uniforms affordable to all socio-economic classes. School logos are optional. Most important to Mr. Weiner are the colors and style. The administration can easily identify who doesn't belong here. If it is passed, we have the ability to revise and adjust the policy.

The committee was comprised of a diverse group of 25 to 30 people and met three times. We looked at other school's policies. Killian has similar demographics to our school. We went line by line and revised, modified, and added criteria to our uniform policy. A parent asked what the consequences are for a student who doesn't wear the uniform. Mr. Weiner said they cannot be suspended or disciplined; however, the administration can convince the kids and their parents about the positive impact of wearing the uniform. A waiver is available for parents that want to opt-out. It is his responsibility to convince them otherwise.

At North Miami Middle on the last day of school, 8th graders donated their uniforms so they could wear what they want on the last day. So when a kid during the year showed up out of uniform, they had clean shirts, etc., for them to wear – as a temporary uniform for the day. Eventually, the kids understand that they are part of a group and they tend to participate. Another parent stated, "If you can't get kids to wear the lanyard for safety, how will the uniform policy help?" Principal Weiner explained that the identity tag is a school-based program and not part of School Board rules. Uniforms are authorized by the School Board rules. The ID program has not worked because not all stakeholders (students, parents, and teachers) are willing to work 100% on it. A staff member that chooses not to help enforce the ID program cannot be disciplined in any fashion. Teachers make a personal decision to enforce the ID and electronic device programs in our building. Some teachers don't want to get involved in it. There is nothing contractually that Mr. Weiner can do to help convince a teacher to do otherwise. Contractually, teachers are here to teach.

We have a school built in the 1950s that is wide open and we are now in the 21st century. The world has changed dramatically. The world is not perfect and the plan is not perfect. There are 32 to 40 different ways to enter this building and he just doesn't have the security personnel to patrol the school. By wearing uniforms and using IDs, we are trying to make it more difficult for people who should not be here to be here. We have a responsibility to be diligent and take the next step to help circumvent problems. Ms. Shosfy suggested we wait and see how the vote comes out before we discuss this issue further. Mr. Weiner said the results have to be in by the 28th of April. We will know by the May meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Isabel McBrayer passed a copy of the financial report and stated we have two items to go over. First, she needs members to volunteer for an audit committee. It involves a couple of hours in the month of July to review her records and verify that everything is okay. It is an opportunity to see how the PTSA spends almost \$100,000. Karen Kett, Nancy Harter, and Hal Rosenfeld volunteered.

Secondly, she needs a motion to close the Birthday Celebration account which was set up for the 50th Anniversary Celebration. We gave the committee \$5,000 seed money. We have received the \$5,000 back plus another \$1,000. Karen Kett made a motion to close the Birthday Celebration account and transfer the funds into the regular operating account and further moved to create two subcategories under Birthday Celebration expense: (1) Birthday Celebration to be used for Student Activities at the

discretion of the school's activity director; and, (2) Brick Program. Claudia Glasson seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Legislative: Cheri Ball reported on the "Rally to Tally." The education budget has been the PTSA's focus for pretty much of the whole year. Fortunately, we have had good media coverage on this issue. She was able to visit seven legislator's offices when she was in Tallahassee and attended three different committee meetings. It was inspiring for both the adults and students who attended. When we were in a legislator's office or at a committee meeting and a student started talking, the legislator actually paid attention. Even now, it is important for your high school students to call and/or write their legislators.

Unfortunately, many representatives believe that in Miami-Dade we are wasteful spenders and our schools are fine. A lot of our legislators don't have kids; or, if they do, most of them are in private schools. Aides are a problem in the legislators' office, too. For example, one aide said that Miami-Dade public high schools only produce criminals.

Jennifer Wollmann thanked Ms. Ball for going to Tallahassee and representing us. Over 400 post cards and 1,000s of signatures on the petition were delivered to our legislators. Both the Senate and House budgets are going to devastate public education. Right now, they plan to take money from construction funds and change the millage. This will be explained tomorrow at the Palmetto Middle School Financial Forum. The capital out lay program will take construct funds for building and maintenance and move it into operations. The result will be that we won't have the funds to pay off construction loans. A second effect is the equalizing factor. Miami-Dade will get zero dollars from the State once the legislature "equalizes" statewide funding.

Miami-Dade schools suffered \$33 million in additional cuts in May. Now, an additional 4% of funding cuts (\$167 million) are proposed. AP/IB funding will be cut in half. These programs make our school the high achieving school that it is. Ms. Wollmann thanked Mayor Lerner for her advocacy on the public schools behalf and in promoting the Financial Forum. This is an economic issue for the State of Florida. Mayor Lerner thanked Ms. Wollmann and Ms. Ball and encouraged members to go tomorrow night to arm themselves with information so we can counter the legislators' attitude that we are wasting money. Call the local office of your representative and let them know how angry you are. The Legislature is totally out of touch. You need to contact the Governor as he is the one who promised to hold education harmless and tell him he needs to veto this budget. Claudia Glasson shared that the governor really believes that Miami-Dade is throwing our money into a black hole somewhere. It is all coming directly from the top. We need to let them know we are mad and we aren't gong to take it anymore.

Old Business: Taste of Pinecrest Report: Nancy Harter advised that the March 8th event was very successful. Over 3,900 attended down just slightly from last year. The Art Show and performances were better than in the past. We had 20 restaurants and 20 businesses participating. Approximately \$4,200 to \$4,500 will be given to area schools at the April 21st luncheon. She thanked the volunteers who helped that day and especially thanked Caryn Tanis-Boren for all her work in finding and coordinating the volunteers.

New Business:

Executive Board Elections: Claudia Glasson was thanked for chairing the Nominating Committee whose members included Anne Flanders, Denise Kranichfeld, Elaine Quartin, and Isabel McBrayer. The proposed slate for next year's Executive Board is:

President:	Isabel McBrayer
1 st Vice President:	Diane Wysong
2 nd Vice President:	Sue Montesinos
3 rd Vice President:	Nancy Harter
Treasurer:	Hal Rosenfeld
Recording Secretary:	Cipora Auslander
Corresponding Secretary:	Roxy Lancelli
Parliamentarian:	(An appointed position that will be announced by the President at a later date.)

Ms. Glasson requested nominations from the floor for each position, but none were made. Ms. Shosfy called for a vote. Ms. Glasson made to motion to accept the slate as presented, which was seconded, and unanimously passed. Finally, Ms. Glasson said we are missing some committee chair spots. The most important one is Book Fair (Lynne Schaefer will train you). She urges parents to get involved and, if you know of new parents coming in who are willing to volunteer, let her know.

Teacher Appreciation Week/May 3rd – 9th: We will again work with Ms. Ross, the Culinary Arts Department teacher. The PTSA will purchase the food and she and her students will prepare the luncheon. Other suggestions or ideas are welcomed. The boys' lacrosse team has volunteered to do something one day for Teacher Appreciation Week.

End of Year Staff Luncheon/June 3rd: Co-chairs, Lauren Mayer and Cindy Eisenberg, passed a sign-up sheet for volunteers to help set up, serve, and clean up. A second sheet was passed for parents willing to donate food, baked goods, sodas, etc. The theme is "Stay-cation." If anyone knows a parent who might own a travel agency or business, let Ms. Eisenberg know.

Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast: Dee Jordan in the office is putting together a "thank you" breakfast and she would like everyone's name, email address, and phone number so she makes sure everyone receives an invitation. The date of the event is unknown at this time.

Parent Involvement Benchmark Survey: A flyer was distributed and parents were told that the school would appreciate it if we would go online and fill out the survey.

EESAC: Claudia Glasson said that next month we will need to find more EESAC members as many current members will be leaving. We will have a lot of openings. Ms. Shosfy suggested it be handled at the first PTSA meeting next year. Nancy Harter invited interested parents to the next EESAC meeting in Room 1005 next Tuesday.

Next PTSA Meeting: Our final PTSA meeting of the year will be at Lynne Schaefer's home, 12085 S.W. 65th Avenue, at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, May 20th. Parents who will be new to the school are invited, too.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Roxy Lancelli, Recording Secretary