

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
NOVEMBER 19, 2008

The meeting was called to order by President Andrea Shosfy at 9:22 a.m.

Trisha Jarrett/Angie Lima: Ms. Jarrett and Ms. Lima distributed copies of the MPSH Mission Statement, Our Vision, Our Motto, Our Core Values, Alma Mater, and Beliefs. They told us that we look at it constantly and get feed back from the stakeholders. They are frequently reviewed and revised by leadership teams of parents, students, staff, and community members. Ms. Lima asked us to take the time to look at these statements and give us your feedback, additions, and suggestions. How can we bring this to all our students – not just the 9th graders during character education programs?

Ms. Jarrett, a mathematics teacher at Palmetto, said we don't want these beliefs to be a plaque on the wall. We want them to stand for something substantial. She quoted Joel Barker: "Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the World." She believes this is what MPSH stands for and it should be reflected in the classroom. We are focusing on the vision of what strength and knowledge means.

Principal's Report: Principal Howard Weiner thanked the members of the 50th Anniversary Committee for doing an outstanding job. All went smoothly and was very enjoyable. The College Fair was a magnificent success and he thanked the PTSA for the \$350 donation to rent chairs and provide a dinner for the college representatives. Without the help of Barbara Davis and Barbara Toland, we would not have been able to organize it all. In 2½ hours, our Girls' Volley Ball team will be competing to win a chance to play in the State semi-finals. In their most recent game against Krop, our team was behind 7 to 0. They did not give up. Our team turned it around and won the game. If they win, the final game will be tomorrow in Lakeland and he will be driving up to cheer them on.

The Teacher of the Year committee was at the school this morning. Patty Valois, a Special Programs teacher, is a regional finalist. Hopefully, we will have some good news and she will receive this well deserved honor. We finally have an agreement with Maintenance to do cosmetic work in the bathrooms. They will be painting, replacing broken fixtures, re-grouting, etc. It costs \$250,000 per restroom for a total remodel; so, we are doing 'cosmetic remodels.'

A member had a question about technical help with the Parent Portal. Mr. Weiner said Debbie Karcher is in charge of ITS at District. The plan is to have savvy-tech students man a technical hotline for community service hours. Students would man it at their respective schools for both Parent Portal and Student Portal issues. It is being worked out now. If you are having trouble, contact at Trish Maggio in the office or try using the Student Portal. It is more user friendly than the Parent Portal.

Dr. Larry Feldman – School Board Member – District 9: Ms. Shosfy introduced Dr. Feldman who was inducted yesterday. He thanked the people that supported him and said he is here to serve and will try to earn everyone's support over the next 2 years. For the past 35 years, Dr. Feldman has been a teacher and principal and he appreciates

people who work hard. He feels Principal Weiner is doing a great job. His plan is to start a student advisory committee from the 5 high schools in District 9. It would meet monthly with him to get a feel for what is happening and what their issues and concerns are. He will need the high school representatives to get feed back from the area middle and elementary schools. By the end of this month, either he or someone from his office will be here once per week for 1 hour to field questions. He is trying to reach out and make sure everyone is represented. For example, Pinecrest Elementary has 3 professional development labs. He feels these rooms should be available to parents and teachers (for training or meetings) and he wants two of them to be placed elsewhere throughout the district.

He addressed the District budget matters discussed at yesterday's Board meeting. As a result of miscoding kids, \$200,000,000 plus was lost and overtime charges of \$27,000,000 are owed. The prior administration did not plan for \$30,000,000 of additional health benefit costs and \$70,000,000 for employee raises. The State decided in a committee meeting last year, to move the cut off to April from November (our normal cut off date). As a result, Superintendent Dr. Alberto Carvalho said \$24,000,000 was lost. There is also a salary "lapse" match issue (\$40,000,000 vs. \$100,000,000 per year) and back pay issues. It all adds up to a \$158,000,000 deficit. Two days ago, Governor Crist sent a letter mandating an additional 4% roll back. What Dr. Carvalho has inherited and the Board has realized is how do you find \$123,000,000 by January? Where have you over allocated? Superintendent Carvalho decided to cut back in administration first including 71 Assistant Principals (reduced from 110 previously proposed). They will be placed in classrooms based on their seniority.

Dr. Feldman hopes that principals begin to cull those APs who aren't performing as they should. By January, Career Specialists will be cut or will have to be paid from the principal's own internal funds. Internal funds can be used for staff starting in January. This change gives the schools the ability to model what they need for their situation. If Gifted Clerks are certified, they will go back to the classroom. Second or third Media Specialists, if certified, will go back to the classroom, as well. Hourly workers without certification are the ones being affected. Many people aren't being cut; they are being reabsorbed into the system in other positions.

A question concerned the budget cuts effect on permanent substitute teachers who work without a contract. Dr. Feldman replied that approximately 320 people moved out of downtown and most of them (250 plus) were certified teachers. We may have to put one of them in and remove substitute teachers. For example, the boys' lacrosse club sponsor has been a permanent substitute for two years. If he is forced to leave, the club will cease to exist because of the strict sponsor and booster club rules (sponsor can't be a coach, sponsor must be a teacher, required expensive bus and transportation rules, etc.). Schools get the benefit of the sports club, but the rules disenfranchise parents and kids. For only a \$400 stipend, the sponsor must be at all games and practices five times a week. Dr. Feldman said now principals will have the discretion to use their money to keep a permanent sub or pay for a coach, etc. He will look into revising or changing some of the club restrictions. Mr. Weiner said the budget changes don't represent the human toll. He will do as much as he can to keep teachers that work to their full potential and ability.

In response to a question about the status of allowing advertising within the schools, Mr. Weiner said that the District's legal department advised that individual principals have to find their own sponsorships, etc., which will take a lot more work and may not get done. Dr. Feldman said he will ask the School Board attorney about it.

A recent article in *The Herald* newspaper mentioned an under performing subgroup of students at MPSH. Dr. Carvalho wants to look at those individual

subgroups to see if the District can help. Our PTSA is already trying to help them, too. Recent changes will enable Mr. Weiner to use internal funds to pay for things that he was restricted for paying for before.

Approve Minutes: The minutes of the October 15, 2008, General Membership Meeting were presented. A motion was made by Jennifer Wollmann to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded By Cecilia Prah and approved without corrections.

Treasurer's Report: Isabel McBrayer distributed the budget monthly report and explained that part of the \$25,000 Special Projects money that was previously approved has been paid out as broken down on the bottom of the page.

Committee Reports:

Membership/Donations: Ms. Shosfy said our membership is at 1,251 and has really increased this year. Donations are up, as well: \$17,269 in general donations and \$2,517 for staff appreciation. She thanked the membership for being so generous.

50th Anniversary Weekend/Brick Project Chair: Cheri Ball told us that it was an amazing weekend with great weather. The total income received was \$54,985 and we had expenses of \$35,725. The net income from the events and sale of the memory book and bricks exceeds \$17,000. The most profits were derived from the brick program. The planning committee recommended a distribution of the profits as follows: \$1,000 to the Athletics Department; \$6,000 to PTSA Special Projects; and \$10,000 to Student Activities/designated line items. We need a chair for the very profitable brick program. The program is simple to run because everything is done online. Ms. Ball will help train the volunteer program chair.

Claudia Glasson has 50 Memory Books left for sale at \$10 each. Memory Book contributors include teachers, alumni, and current students. To purchase, contact her at glasson@bellsouth.net. Media Specialist Dian Adjamah advised that a student volunteer has collected many pictures from the various anniversary events and plans to share them on the school and PTSA websites.

Old Business:

Special Projects: Jennifer Wollmann has placed the orders for requested items and deliveries should start within the next couple of weeks. Another push will be made in January for additional items, if needed.

Legislative/Convention: Sandra West, who represented our school at the Florida PTA Convention, thanked the membership for sending her. Our school was presented with two awards. The first, a trophy for having over 1,000 members in 07-08 (one of 7 schools in Miami-Dade), and the second, a certificate for the Golden Early Bird Award for 08-09. She announced that Karin Brown is the new President-elect for the State PTA and Eileen Segal is a VP on the Board of Directors. In addition, three new platform positions were passed at the Convention:

1. A resolution supporting legislation that will deter child trafficking in Florida.
2. A resolution supporting legislation that makes newborn congenital heart testing mandatory in the State of Florida.
3. A resolution supporting and expanding the service learning program and not cut its funding (students work on a community service project and are graded on it).

The past President challenged current PTA members to let our Legislature know that we want no more budget cuts to education. A motion from the floor was passed that Florida PTA and its constituents tell Tallahassee that we are not going to take it anymore. Plans

are to fill buses to send to Tallahassee and have an old fashioned sit in. Keep a look out for more information in your emails before the holidays.

Holiday Luncheon: Debbie Rosenthal advised the 50th Anniversary-themed luncheon is scheduled for Thursday, December 11th. If you haven't signed up to serve, help, donate, or cook yet, please do so. All assistance is appreciated.

Media Center/Magazines/Volunteers: Ms. Adjahmah addressed the group and thanked the PTSA for all its support – not just financial - but that we think the library is important. Four out of 5 days a week, volunteers come in and help with the lunch crowd. She is seeking additional volunteers to help in the mornings and after school so that the school library can remain open (it is now closed in the mornings and afternoons). In addition, due to budget cuts, the media center cannot order \$4,000 worth of magazines like it has in the past. With the Junior magazine sale going on now, you can support the Junior class and the Media Center at the same time by giving a gift subscription to the library. Ms. Adjahmah passed out a flyer with a list of magazines, costs, and instructions.

Emails: Ms. Shosfy has received a suggestion that two times a month the PTSA should send an "email newsletter" to the membership with information and upcoming events. We need a volunteer to receive the club and school information and compile an "email newsletter" to send to Lynne Schaefer, E-Mail Communication Chair. If you want more information or can assist, contact Ms. Shosfy.

Taste of Pinecrest: As explained by Chair Caryn Tanis Boren, the event is a tremendous fundraiser for the area schools. Participants include area businesses and restaurants. There will be a juried student art show and entertainment. It is scheduled for Sunday, March 8, 2009, at Pinecrest Gardens. In January, she will be looking for volunteers to help at the event. Ms. Boren has cards to give us to hand out to our favorite restaurants and businesses to solicit them to take a booth at the event.

Miscellaneous: Beth Bagwell, Social Studies Chairperson and European History teacher, asked Ms. Shosfy to tell the members that the school is participating in the "Euro Challenge." A team mentor is needed to meet with the kids, preferably an economist or international banker familiar with the Euro zone. Contact Ms. Bagwell directly if you can volunteer.

The teachers and office staff wanted to thank the copy room volunteers for all their help. The program is working out well. Cipora Auslander, 1st Vice President, announced that the PTSA newsletter went out Monday. Joanne Rigl invited everyone to the Drama Department Garage Sale to be held Saturday, November 22nd, near Coral Reef Park and the church on the corner of 152nd Street.

Ms. Shosfy announced that our next General Membership Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 21, 2009, at 9 a.m. in the Media Center. On behalf of the PTSA, she wished happy holidays to all.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Roxy Lancellata, Recording Secretary