

Menlo-Atherton High School PTA
General Meeting
February 1, 2007

Present: Board Members Stacy Fredericksen, Leslie Murveit, Julie Brody, Pam Stoner, Marilyn Loftesness, Hilda Friedman, David Jones, Margie Lawrence and Debbie Verity.

- I. The meeting was called to order on February 1, 2007, at 8:55 a.m. by Co-President Leslie Murveit in the Rise Room of the J Building at M-A HS.
- II. Old Business
 - A. Approval of Minutes, Debbie Verity: Minutes of the January 11, 2007 PTA meeting were presented. The following addendum was made by Debbie Verity to Section III-E following the second sentence: "Andy pointed out that, counting high and moderate votes, 92% of the freshmen enjoyed the Challenge Day experience and 88% believed it would have a positive effect on the campus." David Jones moved and Judy Hood seconded to approve the minutes with the addendum. Motion passed.
- III. New Business
 - A. Public Comment: None made.
 - B. Treasurer's Report, Marilyn Loftesness: Cash flow report was presented. Income to date totals \$105,654 and expenses \$37,027.
 - C. Budget Amendment, Marilyn Loftesness: Due to speaker fees for Denise Pope, the parent education budget needs to be increased by \$1500.00. Maria Flaherty moved and Eileen Van Rheenen seconded to increase the parent education budget by \$1500.00. Motion passed.
 - D. Auditor's Report, Hilda Friedman: Hilda presented the audit report for Feb. 1, 2006 through July 31, 2006. She reported that all books are in order and the tax return has been completed. Leslie Murveit moved and Debbie Verity seconded to accept the audit report as presented. Motion passed.
 - E. Mini-Grants, Maggie King and Judy Hood:
 - i. All funding requests are reviewed and evaluated by the SDMSC. Each individual group then considers specific requests. For this round, the Foundation is considering items 10, and 16 through 19.
 - ii. Maggie and Judy presented 14 mini-grant requests for consideration. Margie Lawrence moved and Mary Hom seconded to approve mini-grant requests 1 through 9 and 11 through 15 as submitted. Total requests are \$10,069.19. Motion passed.
 - iii. Discussion was held about:
 1. The executive board will consider developing an inventory tracking system.
 2. A flier was sent at the beginning of the year asking clubs to submit mini-grants for any funding needs.
 3. Money set aside for mini-grants that are granted but never funded is returned to the general fund.
 - F. Adolescent Counseling Services (ACS), Liz Schoeben:
 - i. ACS is a non-profit agency, in operation for 30 years. They offer substance abuse counseling through the Palo Alto office; Caravan House, a group house for girls with high intensity needs; and on campus programs

at 6 schools, including M-A. The school-based staff, including a licensed therapist and interns, offers free service to students and families.

- ii. ACS at M-A typically sees 400 to 500 clients per year, though this year they have already seen 400 people. They see about 80 students per week, mainly for individual therapy, and are involved with the following campus programs and groups:
 1. For the first year, ACS is providing counseling services for the 130 students in the Compass Program throughout their 4 years at M-A.
 2. Free counseling and referral to community resources are offered to students in the Connections class for newly immigrated students every year they attend M-A. Presentations are made in Spanish and include conflict resolution, immigration issues, gang prevention, sex education and pregnancy prevention, and domestic violence.
 3. ACS is a Second Harvest Snack Program provider, having an unlimited supply of nonperishable snacks for needy students.
 4. Groups that they meet with include a Latino boys group that has been together for 3 years, a parents group that was self-formed, and girls support groups. Others can be started as needed.
 - iii. Three different services are offered:
 1. Ongoing counseling for individuals, families and groups.
 2. Crisis intervention, including 4 to 5 referrals for suicide per year.
 3. Referrals to outside agencies, and consulting with and for parents.
 - iv. **Question: Do you offer after school sessions?** It's possible to schedule sessions on Wednesdays and Thursdays after school so students don't miss class, as well as during brunch and lunch breaks.
 - v. **Question: Where are the interns from?** There are 5 interns who have their master's degrees and are working to complete the required 3000 hours of supervised counseling in order to become licensed. Interns are not paid by ACS, but are given a small stipend.
 - vi. **Question: What has the ACS response been to the recent shootings in EPA?** Many of the students who have been affected by the shootings are already in the program, so most of the students have been seen.
 - vii. **Question: Has ACS considered tracking graduation rates of the Compass students? Were new interns hired to handle the additional caseload?** Since ACS is a United Way funded agency, they are already required to track information such as GPAs and emotional functioning, conduct surveys on whether their services are helpful to the students, and conduct parent surveys. Graduation rate is not one of the factors tracked. Their involvement with Compass and Connections is separate from their normal services, and these programs pay for the intern.
- G. Administrative Speaker, Mike Guerra, School Resource Officer:
- i. Officer Guerra, a sergeant with the Atherton Police Department, announced that he will be leaving the school at the end of the year. What was to initially be a 2-year rotation became a 4-year assignment as the APD liaison in the collaborative partnership between the feeder schools, M-A and the APD. Officer Anthony Kockler will begin his 2 or 3-year

rotation as the School Resource Officer in August, with Officer Guerra acting as his supervisor.

- ii. 20% of the crime in Atherton occurs at M-A. Crime at M-A peaked at the time Judy Duran and Matt Zito were hired as Administrative Vice Principals in 2004-2005. With their new approach, the crime reports have not decreased, but crimes have changed, including a reduction in violent crimes on campus. More students now report small crimes because they think it will be addressed by the administration. Students often relay information on crimes to them.
- iii. Officer Guerra spoke about i-SAFE Inc., an Internet safety education program that has been approved by the Department of Education. There is a parent module that he is willing to present at a parent meeting.¹
- iv. **Question: Have you seen a change in the social atmosphere such as at lunch and brunch?** This hasn't changed in 4 years. Violence has decreased with Fred Kessler patrolling, supervising the campus aides and enforcing the school code. M-A no longer has violence right off campus. He believes this is due to the students having a pressure relief valve on campus by knowing that the staff is ready to intervene if conflicts escalate.
- v. **Question: Has the staff been trained in how to deal with such events?** A presentation was made on gangs last month to the staff, especially gang identification. The school's prior PI status impacted M-A's ability to address non-PI issues.
- vi. **Question: What happens to students who are expelled?** They attend school at a different district high school, including Redwood High School, a community day school or a school at juvenile hall.
- vii. **Question: How does the expulsion rate compare to last year?** There were more at the start of this year. A decision was made to address small things, such as the same students being in the vicinity of fights repeatedly.
- viii. **Question: How will the new officer be introduced?** At Arena Check-In. No uniform is required for this position. Officer Guerra has found that students don't talk to him when he is wearing his uniform.
- ix. **Question: Are you armed?** Yes, with a taser gun and a regular gun.
- x. **Question: What are the requirements to be a Student Resource Officer?** To be reliable, able to work independently, and be flexible. Officer Kockler is now an acting sergeant.
- xi. **Question: How does M-A compare with Sacred Heart and Menlo School?** The 20% crime rate is largely attributable to M-A.
- xii. **Question: On theft at school.** Much of the theft is due to unattended possessions.
- xiii. **Question: How do the students reconcile passing on information to the administration when there is a strong attitude against snitching?** This happens due to the development of good relations with the students. 16 to 18% of his time is spent mentoring staff and students.

¹ For more information, go to www.isafe.org.

- H. Committee Reports for February Events
 - i. Big Band Dance, Mary Hom: The dance will be held on Friday, March 2nd from 8 to 11:30 pm. Auction items are on the Web site. This is the largest fundraiser of the year for the music program.
 - ii. SOS Panel/Denise Pope, Charlene Margot: Denise Pope, leader of the Stressed Out Students program at Stanford University, will speak at M-A on Monday, Feb. 12th at 7:00pm to both parents and students in conjunction with a panel discussion. Charlene reported that the task force will be administering an online survey on related issues to the school.
 - iii. Senior Challenge Day, Stacy Fredericksen: Volunteers are still needed for Senior Challenge Day on Feb. 20th and 22nd.
 - iv. Home Tour, Stacy Fredericksen: The executive board is still considering this possible fundraiser so it will not be presented today for a membership vote.
- IV. Upcoming PTA Dates and School Events:
 - A. Spring Sports Meeting – Mon., Feb. 5th, 7-9pm, J Building
 - B. Speaker Denise Pope and the SOS Panel – Mon., Feb. 12th, 7-8:30pm, J Building
 - C. Deadline for Trivocis article submission – Mon., Feb. 12th
 - D. Lincoln’s Birthday and President’s Day – No school on Fri., Feb. 16th and Mon. Feb. 19th
 - E. Senior Challenge Day – Tues., Feb. 20th and Thurs., Feb. 22nd
 - F. Winter Formal – Fri., Feb. 23rd
 - G. PTA General Meeting with speaker Principal Denise Plante – Thurs., March 1st, 8:45am in the Rise Room
 - H. Big Band Dance – Fri., March 2nd

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Verity
M-A PTA Secretary