

MARK T. SHEEHAN HIGH SCHOOL

PTAC

Minutes of Meeting: May 7, 2015

In Attendance: Ms. Brozyna, Ms. Burns, Ms. DeVince, Mr. Dirkson, Ms. Duthie, Mr. Marciano, Ms. Mellor, Ms. Palange, Ms. Riley-McCracken, Ms. Nation, Ms. Raccio, Ms. Ryan, Ms. Schlick, Mr. Wiesen

The meeting convened at 6:34 p.m.

The minutes from the March 2015 meeting were read. Motion to accept—Ms. Raccio; Second—Ms. DeVince.

The meeting began with a presentation by Mr. Dirkson concerning SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium) assessments. These tests are administered to juniors and assess performance in English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Unlike other assessments students have taken in the past, SBAC is administered online. The English and math sections of the test are comprised of two parts: computer adaptive testing and performance tasks. Computer adaptive testing adjusts to a student's ability by basing the difficulty of future questions on previous answers, thus creating a custom-made test for each student. Performance tasks include a classroom activity, which measures capacities such as depth of understanding, research skills, and complex analysis. Students will be tested in their English and math classes and make-up sessions will be available if needed. Beginning this year, students will receive individual scores based on their performance. Mr. Dirkson also reviewed questions from practice SBAC tests that can be found at <http://ct.portal.aircast.org/>. A question was raised as to whether or not an achievement award will be presented to students based on their scores on this exam (similar to the CAPT Achievement Award). Ms. Duthie stated that this has not been discussed at this point in time.

Ms. Duthie reminded the group that the June meeting is the organization meeting at which nominations are sought and elections held for officers for the upcoming school year. Offices include chairperson, vice-chairperson, representative to System-wide PTAC, and representative to PPS PTAC. Elected officials serve a one-year term, which begins on September 1 and ends on June 30.

Ms. Raccio shared information concerning recent events and also provided an update from System-wide PTAC. Information follows:

- Both the junior and senior classes supported The Prom Pledge campaign. Students who submit signed pledge forms are eligible to win free prom bids. The drawings will be held at each prom, with selected students receiving a refund on the price of their ticket.
- Approximately forty individuals attended the Underage Drinking and the Law presentation. An attorney, who is a member of System-wide PTAC, was the guest speaker. VIP seating at both high schools' graduations was the popular door prize at the event. Plans are in place to offer this program again as part of the town's Red Ribbon Week activities held in October. The presentation will be held at Town Hall and televised so that a larger audience can be reached. The VIP seating door prize will again be available.

- A handout was distributed detailing the results of the Mayor's recommended education funding (\$96,502,187). Although the district is able to move forward with full day kindergarten, a preschool expansion, and increased staffing for the English Secondary Language program, other staffing requests could not be funded such as the district guidance coordinator and wellness curriculum resource teacher. Central Office and the Board of Education will continue to review areas of potential savings such as unanticipated retirements, utilities and fuel usage, and class size on an on-going basis until the Board approves the budget on June 22, 2015.
- Volunteers are sought for the Parent Ambassador Program. Ambassadors speak with prospective or new families about the school system and unique characteristics of the schools. An orientation program for those who are interested is planned for next week. (An invitation from System-wide PTAC recruiting volunteers was distributed.)

Ms. Schlick commented on the number of students who achieved honor roll status and asked for an update concerning changes to the eligibility requirements. In a previous year, a high school committee was formed that reviewed honors bestowed on students and recommended a change for Varsity Scholar status, but not for honor roll status. Since the district is moving to mastery-based learning, it was felt that honor roll be part of the discussion based on the new grade reporting system.

Ms. Duthie asked if there were any parent volunteers to serve on the interview committee for a new physics teacher. There was no interest.

The following announcements were made:

- The baseball team is holding a bottle drive on Saturday.
- The band is holding a clothing drive on Saturday.

Ms. Duthie thanked the parent members of PTAC for their support and guidance during the past year and distributed a token of appreciation.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.