

Delaware Township School PTA

October 14, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Volunteers are unpaid, not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.

I) Call to Order

In attendance: P Ryan, S Rosenberg, M Knappe, P Spurrell, J Bailly, J Hyatt, B Benta, K Falk, R Brenner, T Apostolis, R Nguyen, L Ubry, A Mikula, M Froedermann, J Mongelli, L Panella, J Serrone, J Colalillo, T Bruhl, J Badore, L Davis

II) President's Welcome and Remarks

Thanks to Tim & Liza Davis, and to 42 adult and student volunteers, for a great Book Fair.

III) Presentations

a) John Serrone: Technology priorities for the district

Mr. Serrone displayed a Power Point presentation on a Smart Board identifying Technology projects, with associated costs, that could be funded by the PTA using the proceeds from the sale of DTS Cookbooks last year. Specific projects include: additional Smart Boards, including remotes and training; digital cameras; lights and a tripod for the Broadcast TV Studio; and a new sound board for the school sound system. [PTA secretary's note - only the main points of this presentation are summarized. Please see the PTA webpage on the school website www.dtsk8.org/community/PTA/pta.html for the whole PP presentation.]

Mr. Serrone noted that digital cameras, a microphone, and a number of Smart Boards are already in use at DTS. Smart Boards are becoming the method of choice for teaching, and benefit both teachers and students. Some students who struggle with other media feel more comfortable using Smart Boards. For stage productions and the broadcasting program, a new soundboard is badly needed, because the system used now is very old and inefficient. General discussion about the broadcasting program followed. One person asked, "What is the motivation for developing a broadcasting program for DTS?" It is primarily a middle school initiative that develops public speaking and presentation skills, leadership and teamwork, technology skills, and literacy. Students are already working on a second broadcast.

Technology has many direct and indirect benefits, realized both by training and developing teachers in its use, and by providing opportunities for students to learn and present with technology. DTS can use funds to either develop programs using technology, or to put the technology directly in kids' hands.

[Note: to view the broadcast, go to this link, and then click on TEST on the bottom of the left hand corner. <http://www.dtsk8.org/Internet Links/Faculty Links & Resources.htm>. You will need Windows Media Player, version 11.0.

It was noted that the PTA has about \$5500 (plus \$450 from last year) to spend on technology. We will make a spending decision at a future PTA meeting.

One of the items in the Technology presentation was the purchase of viewing rights to an "electronic field trip" program offered by Colonial Williamsburg. These are a series of interactive podcasts that complement the social studies curricula of the 4th through 8th grades. They are professionally produced theatrical productions of historical lessons. We viewed a sample of a broadcast.

b) **Pat Ryan:** DTS needs request

Mrs. Ryan presented a prioritized list of school needs, including cost estimates, for the PTA to consider in funding decisions and activities. The list consisted of additional books for MS classroom libraries; digital cameras for the Computer Labs (same item included in Mr. Serrone's Technology presentation); funding to support the DTS broadcast network; books on CD and listening centers for ES classroom use; framing materials to frame student art around the school; and establishment of a school garden.

Mrs. Ryan noted that when she came to DTS, many rooms didn't have classroom libraries. Now every class has at least some books.

Listening centers are also a priority for the elementary school. These are more than just a tape recorder. They are set up so that three or four children can listen to a book at a time, and there are activities and exercises on the tapes/CDs for them to do together. [See the one in the Library if you are interested; it was funded by the Book Fair.] Ultimately, it would be great if each class could have one, but we can start with a few on a rolling cart and build up.

A **school garden** is a project that Mrs. Ryan would like to explore at DTS. She envisions it as a parent-child-teacher collaboration. Parents could be involved at a curricular level in the classroom. It addresses many areas - soils, environment, bugs, food, experiments, weather, cooperation, health. There is a whole curriculum that has been developed for this program. It would involve a working with the Master Gardener's Program, which is out of Rutgers Cooperative Extension.

IV) Motion to approve September meeting minutes

It was noted that the PTA dues were erroneously reported as \$12.00 and should be corrected to \$10.00. Karen Falk moved to approve the September meeting minutes, with the above noted correction. Beth Benta seconded. There were no nays or abstentions, and the motion was approved.

V) 2009-2010 Budget: presentation, discussion and vote

We focused on expenditures first. We went through the Income section of the proposed budget. The question arose - How does the Board support kids who need extra financial help? Answer - with field trips as they relate to curriculum, but not books, photos, yearbooks - we need to have these types of needs clarified by administration. Jeannie Colalillo has discussed with faculty developing a **Helping Hands** fund, and proposed the amount of \$500, which could be increased in the future. The guidance counselor, nurse and office could identify the needs, and together we can work out a respectful procedure to request funds. The amount of \$1000 was then suggested. The PTA Executive Committee will report of development of a process at future meetings.

Then we discussed income. It was suggested that the \$1500 projected from **SilverGraphics** might be too ambitious and that we should change it to \$1000. We discussed the fact that we will need a Chairperson and Volunteers for the **Spring Plant Sale**. Joan Bailly offered to coordinate the eighth grade service effort to cut and prep the **BoxTops** for submission.

Tom Bruhl moved to approve \$1000 for the new Helping Hands fund, and to change SilverGraphics income to \$1000. Theresa Apostolis seconded. There were no nays or abstentions, and the motion was approved.

Roseann Nguyen discussed a grassroots effort to educate families about using the BoxTops For Education link to shop through and support the school. There is a link on the PTA webpage, and families can go to www.btfe.com and select our school from list.

VI) Officer's Reports

- a) President - Jeannie Colalillo (no specific report offered)

b) Vice-president ES - Tom Bruhl

Presentation on the Colonial Williamsburg Electronic Field Trip - we would pilot the program (at a cost of \$120) before committing to the entire program at a cost of \$500.00. The podcasts tie in with curriculum and technology, as well. One grade at a time would watch the live broadcasts, and then we would be able to record them (or access recordings) to play for other groups of students.

Karen Falk moved to approve \$120 to purchase the Electronic Field Trip for November 19, 2009 for the eighth grade, from the PTA Middle School budget. Beth Benta seconded. There were no nays or abstentions, and the motion was approved.

Various assembly topics will be explored, to include Hispanic culture as a follow up to last year's Multicultural Assembly, and a recycling programs to support the DTS Goes Green efforts. We will be working with the DTS Cafeteria Committee and Rutgers Master Gardener Program to establish a DTS School Garden. Finally, we are working with Mrs. Mikula to see what we can do to support some Art projects for this year.

c) Vice-president MS - Karen Falk

The new DTS social awareness program for students was discussed. This program was developed over the summer, to align with the NJ Core Curriculum standards for character development. Homerooms will select a cause to research and to support, and students will also be encouraged to pursue their own charitable work.

d) Janice Badore – treasurer's report given as budget presentation

e) Secretary - Liza Davis (no specific report offered)

VII) Committee Reports

- a) Communications Committee
- b) Finance Committee
- c) Elementary School Committee
- d) Middle School Committee
- e) Events Committee

VIII) Open discussion

IX) Old Business

X) New Business

XI) Reminders:

- a) **NEXT MEETING:** Wed., November 11, at 7:00 pm
- b) **Family Movie Night** Fri., Oct. 16, Cafeteria: 6:00Pizza; 6:45 Movie
- c) **Candidate's Night** Wed., Oct. 28, 7:00 pm, Performing Arts Room

XII) Adjourn

Thanks to a generous grant from the Susan and Chelsea Makara Foundation, DTS PTA is pleased to offer complimentary child care for regular PTA meetings, and for certain other events, to those who pre-register. Pre-registration requests must be emailed to dtspta@hotmail.com on or before 12 noon of the Friday before the date of the event for which you are requesting childcare. Please include the names and ages of the children. Kindly note we cannot accept children younger than 2 years old. Pre-registration confirmation will be emailed to those whose requests are received prior to the deadline and for whom places are available - please bring a copy of your email confirmation to the event.