

Richard Montgomery High School PTSA Meeting Minutes  
January 15, 2008

**Kate Savage** brought the meeting to order at 7:35 PM. Kate asked that the December meeting minutes be approved. The minutes were approved.

**Gail Rothberg gave the Treasurer's report.** Gail reported that the PTSA contributed deserts and drinks to the Staff Appreciation event.

**Mr. Carrasco gave the Principal report.** Mr. Carrasco discussed the following items:

1. **New building** – Mr. Carrasco noted that the move into the new building has been stressful, but everyone seems to be settling in. Everyone has worked very hard to make the move happen as smoothly as possible. Thursday, January 17, at 6:30 PM there will be an open house for parents to visit the new building and participate in tours. Some of the problems with the new building include science labs make for younger students, the incompleteness of the Auditorium (which should be done by the end of January), and the lack of a sound system in the cafeteria. The gym should be ready for PE classes by January 23<sup>rd</sup>. There is not enough staff to clean both the old and the new buildings. The old building has been condemned, forcing indoor sport teams to use other schools for practices. The first game in the gym will be this Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup>. If for any reason the gym is not ready, they will play the game at Springbrook. Mr. Carrasco noted the complaints about office space; however, this was out of his control. The Board of Education approved the artificial turf on the new stadium field. The available seating for 2500 will be expanded to 5000. The school will have a partnership with a professional soccer program. The attractiveness of the turf field should afford the new Sports Academy more opportunities for hands-on education. Mr. Carrasco noted that they are enforcing the requirement that all students must wear their ID's at all times in the school. This new requirement has allowed the administration to quickly identify people that do not belong in the building during the school day. All doors to the school are locked except the main entrance after school starts.
2. **Budget** – Mr. Carrasco noted that MCPS revenue is tight and they are expecting budget cuts. This may impact programs in schools and typically results in the loss of classes that have a smaller enrollment. There will be testimony tomorrow night on the budget.
3. **Increase in enrollment in challenging classes** – Mr. Carrasco reported that enrollment has increased in the MYP program and students applying to the IB program from the MYP program have more than doubled from 31 applicants last year to 71 applicants this year.
4. **Summer school classes** – Classes offered during summer school will be declining. The High School Plus after-school program is intended for students not doing well in classes, which has replaced some of the need for summer school. The summer school classes that are offered will be open to Churchill, Wootton and RM students. Mr. Carrasco said that they would send a communication home to parents about the classes that will be offered. The Health class usually costs \$340 and is also available on-line.

**Kate Savage gave the President's report.** Kate discussed the following items:

1. **New building** – Kate noted that the transition has been difficult, but she appreciates the support and the volunteers that helped teachers as well as those that offered to white wash the gym.

2. By-Laws – Kate announced that the PTSA by-laws needed to be reviewed. The review and changes must be prepared by March, approved in April, and submitted in May.
3. Every 15 minutes program – Kate announced that any 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders may participate in the every 15 minutes program to be held in April. Mr. Reed announced that there would be an information meeting in the cafeteria on January 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 PM about the program. On January 24<sup>th</sup> there will be another meeting at 6:30 PM for volunteers. Parent volunteers are needed as well as students.
4. Staff Appreciation luncheon – On January 22<sup>nd</sup> the PTSA will sponsor a lunch for all of the staff. They are asking for donations of deserts and drinks. There will be door prizes, some of which will be much-needed donations of gift cards. The PTSA will celebrate the new building with the staff.
5. MCCPTA delegate – Chris Kelly has volunteered to fill the vacant MCCPTA delegate position. The MCCPTA meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month at Carver.

**Kate continued with the Committee and Liaison reports.**

1. Membership – nothing new to report
2. SGA – Rosa Greenberg thanked all of the staff and parent volunteers that helped with the “good bye to RM” event prior to winter break. The profits from the event were donated to the memorial fund. The SBA is currently having elections for new first-period representatives. They are also planning the Mr. RM event, which will be March 7<sup>th</sup>. They will limit the participants to 24.
3. Boosters – Ralph Lary reported that the Booster Club has three major fundraising events this spring, namely, the mulch sale that has been rescheduled to April 5<sup>th</sup>, the Casino night on April 11<sup>th</sup>, and the Mike Curtis celebrity golf tournament on May 5<sup>th</sup>. The Boosters have also planned several Black & Gold nights at the home basketball games to recognize some of the other winter sports. Indoor track will be recognized on Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, Swimming on January 29<sup>th</sup>, and Wrestling on February 1<sup>st</sup>. February 1<sup>st</sup> is also Cluster night at the home basketball game. Ralph noted that announcements would be made for the annual Booster Club scholarships to be awarded in the spring.
4. Pedestrian Safety – Several new safety features have been implemented including the new 3-way stop in front of school, the new traffic light at Richard Montgomery Drive, the addition of medians in front of school, the new crosswalks across Fleet Street and the pedestrian signage. Trudi asked about lights in the parking lots. John Hall noted that PEPCO has been dragging their feet on this, but they should be operational by the end of the month.
5. School Open House – There will be music performances and tours provided by the SGA and Rocket Corps at the January 17<sup>th</sup> open house.
6. MCCPTA – Liz Wheeler reported that the current focus of the MCCPTA is the MCPS operating budget. Tomorrow evening RM has been granted the 9:08 PM time slot for testimony on the budget. The topics that they wish to present include pedestrian safety requirements, the elimination of free rides on Ride-On buses for students effective 4/1/2008, the lack of funding growth for high schools relative to elementary and middle schools, the elimination of 6 magnet school positions at RM, Blair, and Poolesville, and the \$40-\$50 million backlog of maintenance needs. There will be a delegate assembly on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. On February 6<sup>th</sup>, there will be testimony in from of the County Council on the capital improvement budget. February 11<sup>th</sup> is PTA night in Annapolis. February 13<sup>th</sup> is the first

mini-training of officers. On March 19<sup>th</sup> there will be a program on school improvement plans. On April 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, there will be operating budget testimony at 7:00 PM.

7. Post Prom – Kate announced that they are still looking for volunteers to help with the Post Prom, which is on May 16<sup>th</sup> at the Potomac Community Center. There is a fundraising event at ZPizza on January 28<sup>th</sup>. RM will get 50% of the sales between 5-8 PM on dine-in, carryout, and delivery.

**Kate solicited old business reports.**

1. Parking Permits – All seniors that applied have been issued parking permits. There are 6 spots remaining and they will be filled on an as-needed basis.

**Kate solicited new business.**

1. Practice SAT and ACT – A practice SAT and ACT has been scheduled for March 8<sup>th</sup>. On March 22<sup>nd</sup>, the results will be available and explained at a meeting. Each test will cost \$15.
2. AP exam registration will begin later this month.
3. IB entrance exam has been rescheduled for Tuesday January 22<sup>nd</sup>. This is the test given to 10<sup>th</sup> graders interested in entering the IB program.
4. PSAT – MCPS Principals have decided that they wish to pay for 11<sup>th</sup> graders and not 10<sup>th</sup> graders.
5. Graduation information is all on the RM website and is scheduled for June 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM at DAR Constitution Hall.
6. MCCPTA delegate – Chris Kelly was nominated and approved to fill the vacant MCCPTA delegate position.
7. RM Cluster Educational Foundation – Margaret Chao asked for approval by the PTSA to allow information about the Foundation to be put on the Listserv and PTSA Newsletter. To the extent that the Foundation information directly benefits RM students, it was approved.
8. New RM website – It was noted that there is a new RMHS website. All of the information needed by seniors for Graduation in on the new website.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM. The next meeting will be on February 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM.