

**PARENT TEACHER STUDENT ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 1565
Nome AK 99762**

Minutes of November 19, 2007 Meeting

President Julie Kelso called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m., in the Nome Elementary School library. The following individuals were in attendance:

Barb Nickels
Todd Hindman
Stan Lujan
Janet Balice
Sandi Keller
Carl White

Sylvia Matson
Betsy Brennan
Margaret Thomas
Julie Kelso
Barbara Pointer
Janeen Sullivan

Elections

Julie Kelso nominated Sandi Keller for Vice-President. Barb Nickels seconded the nomination.

Julie Kelso nominated Lori Head for Treasurer, noting, in her absence, that she had previously agreed to be nominated for the position. Betsy Brennan seconded the nomination.

Carl White nominated Julie Kelso for President. Stan Lujan seconded the nomination.

Stan Lujan nominated Janet Balice for Secretary. Betsy Brennan seconded the nomination.

All nominees were elected by unanimous consent, without discussion.

Vision Screenings

Carl White noted that vision screenings would take place at Beltz on December 10 and NES on December 11. Anyone interested in helping with these screenings should contact Julie Kelso via email. He thanked the PTSA for its support during the hearing screenings held earlier in the fall. He and Janeen Sullivan both thanked the PTSA for providing turkeys as door prizes for parents attending parent-teacher conferences. Julie noted that Barb should be thanked for negotiating the purchase of the turkeys from local merchants.

Science Curriculum at Nome Elementary School (NES)

Beginning in 2008, students in fourth, eighth and tenth grade will be given Standards Based Assessments in Science. As of now, these results are not factored into a determination of whether a school has made AYP.

Carl stated that NES would begin examining the science curriculum in January 2008, with the process to be completed by May. Parents would be invited to serve on the committee.

Specific topics raised/discussed during this portion of the meeting were:

1. Carl noted that NES could either procure stand-alone science materials or enhance reading and math instruction with topics addressing the science Grade Level Expectations (GLEs). With one hour a day of instruction dedicated to math, and 90 minutes to reading, it will be difficult to add science instruction as a separate subject, in addition to music, physical education and other regular school-day activities.
2. Julie stated that she had looked at California's GLEs and found them to be more detailed than Alaska's. They might be a good point of departure for interpreting the more broadly-worded Alaska GLEs.
3. Todd was asked for his input into the discussion, since he served on the committee that drafted the Alaska science GLEs. He explained that the GLEs are grouped into seven strands (Inquiry and Process, Physical Science, Life Science, Earth Science, Technology, Cultural/Social/Personal Perspectives and History and Nature of Science.) Because the GLEs specify what students at each grade level should know about all seven strands, there is a lack of depth to the GLE strands at each grade level. He stated that the school might be well-advised to consider assigning different strands in science to different grade levels, rather than trying to touch on all GLE-strands at every grade level. For example, even though GLEs for each grade level state what students in that grade should know about the strands of Earth Science, Physical Science and Life Science, it might be a good idea to say that third graders would study Life Science, fourth graders Earth Science, and so on. A more in depth and meaningful study of each strand would result.

4. Todd noted that the GLEs were explicitly designed to be a “bare bones” guide to science instruction. They specify the minimum that students at each grade level should be expected to know. They should not be construed as a full-fledged curriculum.
5. In light of Todd’s statement, Carl, responding to a question from Julie, stated that the committee will decide whether the GLEs themselves will constitute the curriculum for science.
6. Todd, speaking for teachers, and Julie, for parents, expressed an interest in having the final curriculum worded clearly enough for all participants to understand it.
7. Carl noted that the Houghton Mifflin science textbook was designed to mesh with those already adopted at NES for teaching reading and math.
8. Margaret referred to correspondence she had had with a parent-volunteer involved in selecting instructional materials for the science program in Pasadena, California’s public schools. Kits were recommended as a viable alternative to textbooks, particularly for populations with struggling readers. Parent volunteers were used in Pasadena to compare state GLEs with different programs before decisions were made about purchasing them. She suggested that the administration contact the PTSA for assistance with such a project in Nome. Parent-volunteers could help determine how well various programs align with Alaska’s GLEs.
9. Betsy suggested that scientists from various sectors of the community, including Nome-Beltz graduates, could be invited to participate in the committee. She mentioned Fish and Game as one potential source of expertise.
10. Todd stated that gains in consistency and standardization would result from the adoption of a comprehensive science curriculum and instructional materials. Though some “pet projects” might be sacrificed, making sure teachers followed through in implementing science GLEs would insure that instruction was thorough and comprehensive.
11. Barbara Pointer and Sandi Keller pointed out that the existing Houghton Mifflin instructional materials provide links to science projects and concepts. Julie cautioned that these would not necessarily result in comprehensive, systematic instruction. She noted that the California Dept. of Education website provides detailed reviews of various

instructional materials.

12. Todd noted that there are important codes contained in the Alaska GLEs. For example, when the term “i.e.” is used, students may be tested on the material, whereas they may not be tested on “e.g.” topics. The letter “L” is used to designate “local” standards that will not be tested on State assessments. He thought it would be valuable for District science teachers to review the GLEs.

Celebration of NES making AYP

Julie thought the PTSA should consider sponsoring a celebration marking the fact that NES made AYP this year. Todd thought that an event that preceded testing might help motivate the students to do their best on SBAs. Margaret suggested that the PTSA help sponsor healthy breakfasts in each pod between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m. on test days. A sign could be placed next to the food encouraging students to do their best and congratulating teachers and students at NES for last year’s accomplishment.

Deceptively Delicious

We all enjoyed tasting the food made from recipes from Jessica Seinfeld’s book *Deceptively Delicious*. Puree made from cauliflower, spinach, squash and sweet potatoes was “hidden” in coca, baked goods, meatballs and rice balls. Thanks to Julie for coming up with this wonderful idea for “spicing up” the meeting!

Spelling Bee

Nanci Tungwenuk is leading practices and organizing the Bee at NES, and Todd is in charge of participants from ACSA and Beltz. Due to some confusion last year regarding participation rules, Todd will send home a Letter of Intent with all eligible students in early December asking parents/guardians to sign and return it if their child will be a participant in this year’s Bee. He will follow up in January via phone and email with those who indicate that they do plan to participate. It is not necessary for a student to participate in practices to be eligible to participate in the Bee. Carl will send email to teachers advising them of the sign-up rule and procedures.

Santa Shop

The Santa Shop is scheduled to take place the week of December 3. After extensive discussion, it was decided that the store hours this year would be from 2:00 p.m.

until 6:00 p.m. The shop may also be open during the weekend of December 1 and 2.

Community Calendar

Julie thanked the following individuals for their help with the calendar project:

Barb Nickels
Betsy Brennan
Janet Balice
Laura Lawrence
Melinda Erickson
Elizabeth Coler
Linda Steiger (who sold calendars AND input the names!)

Julie Kelso's name should, of course, be added to this list.

Listings for 2008 were 2442, compared with 2261 in 2007. We sold 549 calendars in 2008, compared to 506 in 2007. Our expected profit this year is \$5,272, compared to \$5,019 in 2007, an increase of 5%.

PTSA Finances

Julie noted that the two large expenditures for the PTSA are the senior scholarships and support of the Spelling Bee, with relatively smaller expenditures for Teacher Appreciation Week and savings bonds for Students of the Month. At the moment, our income and expenses are balancing out.

Approval of Minutes for November 2006 and May 2007 meetings

Barb Nickels made a motion to revise the May 2007 minutes to indicate that those present agreed that the Santa Shop should operate after school, rather than during the evening. Sandi Keller seconded the motion. The minutes were approved, as amended, by unanimous consent.

PTSA Goals

Betsy proposed that the PTSA sponsor a "door prize" for individuals attending Data Night, scheduled for November 28, 2007, at NES.

Margaret asked when the District Report Card for 2007 would be released. Stan agreed to post it on the NES website by November 21, a week before Data Night.

Adjournment

Julie moved to adjourn the meeting. Sandi seconded the motion. It carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.