

## **Foothill PFA Meeting November 12, 2008**

### **Attendees:**

Maria Kopf, Linda Hutcherson, Vicki Fraser, Janet Sheehy, Michele Ramia, Mary Hain, Mary Phalon, Lori Abele, Kathy Frattini, Barbara Amacker, Kristin Mortl, Megan Trowbrige, Kim Harris, Alisa MacCormac, Pam Lundgren, Linda Locke, Cheryl Brown

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. Vicki Fraser called for a motion to approve the October meeting minutes. Linda Locke made the motion and it was seconded by Lori Abele. The motion passed unanimously.

Alex Crane made a presentation about his Eagle Scout Rank project to those in attendance. The project was conducted in the front of the school by Cedro. Alex and about 16 other kids dug out the dirt and brought in gravel like that used on the track and then spelled out Foothill with bricks. He held a fundraiser at Rocco's and also received personal donations. He came to the PFA to request \$250 to cover the remainder of the project costs. He worked very closely with Mrs. Hutcherson and received the appropriate approvals on his project. A check should be made out to Steven Crane, Alex's father, since he paid all the costs.

### **Crisis Counselor Report: Lance Friis**

This will be a new addition to the monthly PFA meeting. Lance said that he and Jane Sondel are seeing typical issues associated with kids in middle school. These issues include: school, family, social (fitting in, not fitting in), and substance abuse (either by parent or student). They are seeing an increase in students suffering from the same issues as family members related to the economy, jobs, and finances. The counselors are also working closely with CARE and getting more formal referrals from them. A parent asked about the other referrals and they come from faculty, administrators, self-referrals, friends bringing friends, parents, and there is also a box in the office where students can leave notes. Sessions for the 6<sup>th</sup> graders tend to be group sessions because they don't want to come in on their own. Jane also holds bereavement meetings to help students deal with the loss of significant family members. On November 18 there will be a "2<sup>nd</sup> Cup of Coffee" meeting and the topic will be "Assisting Students During the Stress of the Holidays".

### **Principal's Report: Mrs. Hutcherson**

The Single Plan discussion will be moved to the next PFA meeting. There was an incident that took place on Thursday, November 6 involving a parent coming onto campus with a weapon. The parent came onto campus via the back gate and was talking to Mr. De Clercq. Two moms who live by the back gate saw the parent driving in an odd manner and went outside to see what was happening. They contacted the school to alert them of a stranger on campus. One of the Noon Supervisors, April, was out there and saw the gentleman. He asked if Northgate students were ever on campus. April asked who he was and he said that he was a parent. He showed identification including an SFPD badge. He never checked in at the office per the procedure of parents coming onto

school grounds during school hours. April notified the office and there was a lot of confusion. The Walnut Creek Police was contacted and Mrs. Hutcherson went to where the gentleman was seen. By the time she got there he was gone. The WCPD instructed Mrs. Hutcherson to lock down the school and move the students to the Multi Use Room (MUR). Students were released about 10 minutes after the lockdown began. What made the situation more difficult was that it took place right when school was getting out. Some students made it home and others had to go into lockdown. The day after the incident Mrs. Hutcherson met with WCPD to review what went right and what needed improvement. She also met with the office staff and noon staff. As a result of the lockdown, new walkie talkies are being ordered, for the PE office and the Creek. This will allow for quick and easy communication in an emergency. The school has a crisis policy but it is on paper and after the gun incident this will provide the school administrators a good opportunity to review it and make sure it is still current. Mrs. Hutcherson also stressed that parents must sign in at the office whenever they are on campus. She asked parents to send in any questions, concerns or suggestions. Mr. Dial created a pamphlet for the school of what to do in an emergency. Vicki Fraser asked if a soft-copy could be provided to the Board so that it may be uploaded to the school website. Mrs. Hutcherson will be sending out an Ed Connect reminding parents to sign in at the office when on campus before, during, or after school hours.

Mrs. Hutcherson reviewed the proposed projects for Strategic Plan for the 2008-09 school year. A motion was made to approve the total costs of the proposed projects, not to exceed \$64,145.00. Mary Phalon made the motion and it was seconded by Linda Locke. The motion passed. The Strategic Plan was then open for discussion. A parent asked if the new laptops would be secured. All the computers are locked up during winter and summer breaks, not during weekends and weeknights. The HOT Lab has bars across the windows so even if windows are broken, no one can get in the room. If the alarm is tripped, the signal doesn't go to the WCPD, but to MDUSD security. Mrs. Hutcherson felt that was sufficient as they have always responded very quickly to any alarms or other emergencies. One of the parents asked about the cost for the proposed purchase of 20 new laptops to be used by the Science Department. Patty Cochran said that the \$25,000 is inflated to cover costs of taxes, shipping and the trolley to hold the laptops. There will be money left over. Parents asked if we should reserve this money for the mid-year budget cuts. Mrs. Hutcherson is agreeable to this idea. The proposed Strategic Plan projects do not need to be acted upon immediately. She did assure parents that faculty would not be affected by the mid-year cuts, but could be impacted in the 2009-10 school year.

#### **Parking Committee Update: Megan Trowbridge**

Megan provided an update on the Parking Committee which was formed after the October PFA meeting. To date five people have signed up to be on the committee. They have come to school during morning drop off and afternoon pick up to see the traffic along Cedro and what some of the issues are. They have also met with Officer Harmon from the WCPD who was instrumental in helping with the traffic issues by Northgate High School. They will also be meeting with MDUSD Traffic Representative, Neil Harris. He said that he would be willing to work with the school to see what can be done

to alleviate some of the traffic concerns. We also need to account for the two handicapped buses and two school buses that need a spot to safely drop off and pick up students. The City of Walnut Creek will cut funding after December 2008 for Crossing Guards at the major intersections. If you have any concerns about this please email the City Council.

**Faculty Report: Mrs. Brown**

The school had a Hip Hop assembly to deliver the message about being safe and saying no to drugs. It was a great assembly full of energy and it was greatly received by the students. The first drama play is the week of November 17. The faculty is working to keep the students focused as we head into the holiday season. Mrs. Brown also thanked the parents for the Teacher Luncheon as they are always greatly appreciated.

**President's Report: Vicki Fraser**

Vicki asked for a motion to approve the \$250 to cover the remainder of the expenses for Alex Crane's Eagle Scout project. Lori Abele made the motion and it was seconded by Kim Harris. The motion was passed. A comment was made that future Eagle Scout requests for funding from the PFA should come prior to projects beginning as it is part of the process of earning the Eagle Scout rank. The funds for this project will come out of the Miscellaneous, Non-Recurring Budget.

Vicki thanked everyone for their hard work on the Directory. The Fall Social was a great success and we had a record number of teachers attend this year. The budget for the Fall Social was \$1,000 and the committee came in with a \$7,000 profit.

Vicki talked about a website for conducting searches called, Good Search, which will donate a penny to Foothill for every search conducted. There is also a site called Good Shop that will donate to schools if you shop on-line via their site. She went ahead and signed the school up for both programs and will be sending out a notice in the upcoming eNews.

**There will not be a PFA meeting in December unless something urgent arises. The next meeting will be in January.**

**Special PAC Update: Janet Sheehy**

Testing for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Algebra I is on hold pending a court decision coming in mid-December. This has been a California standard for a long time but the state has not been testing on this standard. Fifty percent of 8<sup>th</sup> Graders do not take this class and will be tested on it. The Federal Government has mandated that we test against our standards. MDUSD is looking at five different methods for identifying student preparedness for Algebra I. New math text books are coming out next year and two are being piloted this year. Both have sites and one also comes with a supplementary DVD. Fast Track testing is being done in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade at many schools and Foothill is looking at participating in this program.

**Treasurer's Report: Kathy Frattini**

Kathy will be allocating new costs to the budget based on the items voted on during this PFA meeting. The eight month CD is paying 4% interest. We receive some Ed Fund checks every month. We still need to pay for the Magazine Drive. A parent asked about gift card sales at Foothill and we do not participate in that program. Knob Hill has a card that parents can sign up for to have donations given to Foothill. The percentage donated by Knob Hill is higher than what Safeway gives.

## **Committee Reports:**

### **Directory Committee Report**

As scheduled, the 2008-2009 Foothill Middle School Student Directories were delivered during second period on Monday, October 13th with the help of directory volunteers. Extra copies are located in the school office. Barbara Martin, of the Directory Advertising Group is in the process of distributing a copy of the directory to each advertiser. Corrections or additions have been submitted and will be sent out in the next issue of the e-Gazette which will be November 12th. If more corrections or additions are needed, they will be sent out in a future e-Gazette publication. The main co-chairs, Misa Siemons and Melanie Hopkins are both stepping down from co-chairing the school directory for the 2009-2010 school year and are in the process of asking directory volunteers if anyone would like to take over the duties.

### **SMART Start Committee Report:**

- Have 17 volunteer teachers who are current Foothill parents
- Need 24 teachers for the 12 - 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading classes
- Have some volunteers who offered to come back and teach even though their children graduated, Also checking in with feeder schools for graduated parents
- Center for Human Development is updating the old Smart Start program. We will be teaching the new program in February/March 2009.
- The new program will be presented at the November 18 Refresher Day for trained PEP/Smart Start teachers – have 8 Foothill SS teachers coming, costs for some are shared with the elementary schools

### **PAC Committee Report:**

Notes from Nov 5th Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council

1. We spent over an hour reviewing and discussing the current and future Math program for all grades. This is an issue that has made the news recently due to the current federal requirement that the State of California test all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students on Algebra I (regardless of whether the student has taken Algebra I). Apparently, for 10 years the California "State Standards" for 8<sup>th</sup> grade math have, in fact, been Algebra I material. The state has not tested all 8<sup>th</sup> graders on those State Standards and that is the problem – we are not in federal compliance. So the federal government has "ordered" the state to test on the standards we wrote for ourselves, beginning in 2010. **Note:** this process is currently "on hold" as there is a restraining order and a December court date regarding the implementation of this mandate. So we do not know what is really going to happen – but this is the "background" from which you can make heads or tails of the news.

State-wide 50% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders do not take Algebra I currently, there is movement to increase that rate – new text books are rolling out next fall and they will incorporate "Algebra strands" from 1<sup>st</sup> grade on to attempt to rectify that. There are two text books in pilot programs within MDUSD at the moment, both provide this early algebra training,

both provide on-line work that can be done at home to supplement learning, to help struggling students and is available for students who miss class. At least one, if not both, also provide DVDs that can be “checked out” for students who need more than the classroom teacher can provide. The “math adoption” (when these books appear in classrooms) is next fall.

Within MDUSD a couple of sites have, this year, piloted a new middle school advance math track - doing a 5<sup>th</sup> grade math assessment to determine readiness for “advanced math” and offering Pre-Algebra in grade 6, Algebra I in grade 7 and Geometry in grade 8. This has an impact at the High School level as High Schools receiving those students must offer a rigorous high school math curriculum that allows those students to continue four years of high school math beyond Geometry. Foothill is looking at participating in this program.

The District is working on a 5-part evaluation of students to assess readiness for Algebra I, the components will likely consist of: 1) A “common assessment” (e.g. a standardized test) offered district wide 2-3 times/year; 2) Grades; 3) California Standards Test results; 4) Berkeley MDTP (a test that is a good predictor of course readiness); and 5) Teacher Recommendation. Interestingly, all these assessments are to provide parents/students a *recommendation* – parents/students can request inclusion in a more challenging course than is recommend. The District is just beginning the work towards implementation of this program, look for implementation in approx. 2 years.

2. The remaining of our meeting was devoted to the budget issues facing the District and the State. As was reported in the newspaper and in the Superintendent’s Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> e-mail message, the District is required to cut \$6.6 million from *next year’s* budget. The District began community and employee meetings last week, soliciting ideas from all the stakeholders within the District. I will have handouts at the PFA meeting with the “starter list” of ideas on where some of these cuts could come from (these were ideas offered last year during budget reductions but that were not included in that round of cuts). In addition, the Governor has proposed mid-year reductions that would take place during this present 08-09 school year. This will require Legislature approval to take effect, however if approved, the potential impact to MDUSD could be anywhere in the \$300-\$600 “per ADA” range. ADA means Average Daily Attendance – in MDUSD we have 33,397 students so that \$300-\$600 spread could mean cutting \$10,019,100 - \$20,038,200 *during this year* (Note: On Thursday the approx. \$300 per ADA was announced, so our potential cut could be approx. \$10 million during this year.) Contractual agreements with some bargaining units (e.g. MDEA – the teachers) prohibit eliminating certain positions mid-year; and some positions are “restricted” and “untouchable” but, as most of the District budget is staff to reach that \$10 million target people and programs will have to “go”. It is truly important that interested parents write their Legislative Reps to implore them to protect school funding. It is also important that ideas about cost savings/budget reductions be passed forward. Please attend “input meetings” or e-mail ideas to me and I will pass them along to the District offices. Our local (current) Legislative Reps and their addresses are:

Assemblyman Guy Houston

Senator Tom Thorlakson

Capitol Office  
State Capitol, Room 2130  
Sacramento, CA 94249  
Phone: (916) 319-2015  
Fax: (916) 319-2115

Capitol Office  
State Capitol, Room 5050  
Sacramento, CA 94248  
Phone: (916) 651-4007

The Board and District met last Sat., are meeting tonight (same as our PFA meeting) and will meet again 11/18 to discuss/brain storm budget reduction ideas. The 11/25 Board meeting should include some reduction proposals. The first interim budget for next year is due in December.

(Note for understanding the news: MDUSD is a “revenues limit” district, not all are. It means that we receive money per student; some districts receive money based on business tax in their area. So what affects Palo Alto’s “tax limit” district impacts MDUSD differently and vice versa.)

3. FYI: Sherry Whitmarsh, the new member to the Board of Education, begins her term with the Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## GOODSEARCH/GOODSHOP FUNDRAISER

What if the Foothill Middle School PFA earned a penny every time you searched the Internet? Or how about if a percentage of every purchase you made online supported Foothill PFA? Well, now it can!

[GoodSearch.com](http://GoodSearch.com) is a Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Use as you would any search engine; get quality search results from Yahoo, and watch the donations add up!

[GoodShop.com](http://GoodShop.com) is a new online shopping mall which donates up to 37 percent of each purchase to your designated charity! Hundreds of great stores including Amazon, Target, Gap, BestBuy, eBay, Macy's and Barnes & Noble have teamed up with **GoodShop**. Each time you place an order with a simple click of the button, you'll support your favorite cause.

Go to [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com); enter Foothill Middle school as your charity of choice, and shop! And, be sure to spread the word to friends and family. It's a fast, easy and fun way to support our school.

We're excited to welcome Foothill Middle School to GoodSearch and GoodShop! More than 69,000 nonprofits and schools are now participating in our program and 100 new organizations are joining daily! Your organization is up and running on our two sites:

[GoodSearch.com](http://GoodSearch.com) - The search engine with a unique social mission. It's powered by Yahoo!, so you get great search results, and each time you search, GoodSearch makes a donation to your cause!

[GoodShop.com](http://GoodShop.com) - The new online marketplace that donates a percentage of your purchase to the nonprofit or school of your choice. You can choose from hundreds of popular merchants and the experience of shopping through GoodShop is exactly the same as going to the retailer's websites directly.

PFA STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2008-2009

Proposal	Description	Cost
After School Intervention Class – proposed by Joan Lundahl	To pay for a teacher to provide additional support to those students at Basic and Below Basic, designed for students who do not receive other services i.e. Resource etc. based on STAR scores \$30 - \$35 per hour class would be 1 to 1.5 hours twice a week including payroll taxes, etc. Classes could be offered up to 16 weeks.	\$2,320.00
Science Department – proposed by Randy Monroe and Ariel Owen	New PC cart with 20 wireless laptops for classroom	\$25,000.00
Accelerated Reader Program and Star Assessment. Proposed by Katherine Thomas, Diana Conner and Karen Duggan.	This is an on line program with school wide access. This program allows students to know and improve their reading levels. Students can choose their books and then take quizzes. They earn points for passing the quizzes. This program is excellent for 6 <sup>th</sup> grade reading classes, ELD and Academic Success. There is a <u>yearly fee</u> for the software which will come out of other funds	\$3,825.00
Landscape	Monies set aside for work under the Heritage Oak by E wing. Benches around the school for students to sit and eat lunch. Other projects that may arise in the beautification of the campus	\$5,000.00

