

W. T. WOODSON PTSA BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 11, 2008 ☞ Woodson Library

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Attendance: Catherine Potter, Jeff Yost, Sandy Barron, Chris Hoover, Sandy Hoch, Donna Greer, Joy Salpini, Bob Robyak, Cecy Krill, Jim Scutt, Carole Post, Jennifer Lewis-Cooper, Stefan Schwarz, Peter Brandman, Ed Hackett, Bianca Seward, Susan Crawford, Dung Pham, Maureen Burt, Andrea Savoca, Sara Schneider, Vicki Chamlee

I. Welcome and Introductions—President Catherine Potter called the meeting to order and introduced Bob Robyak of FCPS Renovations and Cluster III Assistant Superintendent Cecy Krill.

II. Woodson Renovation—Bob Robyak (cell 703-898-4468) discussed Woodson's renovation project. *Target: September 2009*, with only punch list remaining. Reviewed what has transpired thus far: brought all classrooms up to county code from windows to quiet heating/air-conditioning units, added current technology (LCD projectors, SMART boards), and updated bathrooms, hallways, and all rooms to meet ADA codes. Design and Construction provided budget and purchased all new furniture, etc., recycling whatever pieces possible. Instituted new key system; keys cannot be duplicated. *About December 29–30:* new Home Ec, finance, career center, and special ed areas. New auditorium will have new padded seats and will accommodate deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students with new auditory system. *In March*, will start work on main gym, planetarium, and remaining classrooms. New kiss-and-ride area out front will be installed, and a Fairfax County arborist will design and monitor the planting of 560 shrubs and trees. *Q&A responses:* students can assist with courtyard designs; arborist will monitor new plantings, making any necessary replacements; Design and Construction team will replace soccer field's broken sprinkler system; stairwell tiles will be covered in white tile while stair treads will be covered with rubber nonskid treads; all sidewalks will be redone; and the exterior brick will be powerwashed. Painted steel benches will be anchored throughout the school's grounds.

III. Minutes from October 2008 meeting approved unanimously.

IV. Treasurer's Report—Treasurer Sandy Barron presented budget (current through November 11, 2008). Craft Fair brought in \$2,000 less than projected. Paid national, state, and local PTA dues, and tax return filed this week. Report approved.

V. Academic Practice Tests—Catherine Potter for Wendy Hecker—Need parent volunteers for November 15 test date (Carole immediately offered to assist). About 100 students (80 for SAT, 20 for ACT) have signed up, with another 100 scheduled for the January date. Advantages of practice tests: scores do not go to colleges, the practice helps

expose kids to real test conditions and questions, and they are cheaper than taking the actual test as “practice.”

VI. Principal’s Report—Jeff Yost

A. *Athletic districting*—Woodson will join the Patriot District, which includes Annandale, Lake Braddock, Lee, South County, T. C. Williams, West Potomac, and West Springfield High Schools.

B. *Budget cuts*—FCPS may have to cancel some sports. As Ms. Krill pointed out, the board has allotted the budget in tiers, with different sports falling in those tiers. Seems girls’ gymnastics and indoor track might be cut. William Curran is the DSA in charge of those decisions. Meanwhile, expect parking fees to increase and the institution of athletic and testing fees. Expressed appreciation to PTSA for processing the Teacher Funding Requests.

Nell Hurley advised that at a special budget meeting of PTSA presidents, parents agreed to protect kids on free and reduced lunch programs, but those folks who can pay will pay extra fees and pitch in to help their schools. The proposed FCPS budget is available online.

C. *Principal’s Coffee*—Discussed FCPS budget at last coffee. Next one conflicts with the December 4 Tiny Tots concert, so trying to reschedule. Laura Meade is also planning an evening meeting at her home.

D. *Summer School*—Highly unlikely except for special needs students and maybe for those exceptional cases where a student needs a class to graduate.

E. *Front Page*—Woodson’s website will link to other schools in pyramid and vice versa.

F. *Parent Portal*—Come to school and get access to Blackboard accounts. **[I missed some of this discussion]**

G. *Décor*—Main lobby currently has portraits of National Merit Scholars and so on. Going to obtain matching trophy cases and carry design to other areas of school. Discussing what symbol and color to use on outdoor benches. Teachers are decorating own spaces, and bond money will help defray costs of personalized touches.

H. *Korean and Hispanic Parents’ Meeting*—Liaisons are scheduling separate back-to-school-night-style meetings with translators present for these parents. DHH students’ parents (not hearing impaired) attend the regular meeting.

I. *Renovation*—Will be about 90 percent finished after completing the December renovations. Have saved money. *Mr. Scutt’s reminder*: let Mr. Yost know of anything wrong in any classroom so that it can be added to the punch list.

J. *Electives Fair Meeting dates*—Course recommendation day and information nights: February 3 for rising tenth through twelfth graders and February 4 for rising freshmen. AP information sessions after school: February 9 and 10. No catalog will be printed (money savings); instead, it will be provided online and on CD (for PC and Mac; target date is January 28). Likewise, future interims and report cards will not be mailed. Except for the final report card, all other reports will be sent home with students. Teachers can email grades or school can fax reports, if necessary, but reports cannot be disseminated through Blackboard.

VII. PTSA President’s Report—Catherine Potter

A. *Craft Fair*—Vendors and attendance decreased, but thanks go to Nell Hurley, Sandy Barron, Susan Crawford, Annie Schwartz, and the Crew team for stepping up and helping this year. Next year, Woodson will be available as the host site, but the project needs a devoted team to run it.

B. *FAIRGRADE*—During a meeting between FAIRGRADE representatives and Business Alliance members, the business group expressed support for change to other grading system to combat grade deflation. Email the board members and push them to finish the report. Board members are not moving on it, and this year’s seniors will lose out as, realistically, it is too late to implement grading system changes this year.

C. *School Profile*—Fairfax County does not use class rankings, making it difficult for colleges to appreciate how well students from our area have performed compared to other candidates from school systems that do use a class ranking. Superintendent Jack Dale’s office has agreed to provide more information in the profile sent to colleges, and the profile will now include some additional information regarding the grade distribution for the student’s school and for the county. The profile accompanies students’ college applications and transcripts. The principals will be meeting in the next few weeks to determine exactly what information will be provided; however, the decision as to whether to send the new profile to the schools for which the students have already applied for early admission has not yet been made. Since the colleges have already seen the profile, it is an open question whether admissions counselors will disregard the old profile and revisit applications in light of new information.

Showing deciles is important for merit scholarship consideration.

Sandy Hoch received outside advice: alert admissions counselors that this information is coming for your child’s file and to substitute it for the old information. Sandy also wants to structure “support rallies” for FAIRGRADE at School Board meetings (next one is Monday, November 17). She’s already contacted Sharon Bulova (“That’s a School Board issue”) and Jack Herryty (“just getting information about it”). It was agreed that interested parties would discuss potential rallies and other actions to convince the School Board about this issue after the meeting.

Jeff Yost—November 20, Association of Fairfax County High School Principals will decide how to implement new school profile for early admission college applicants—i.e., send out as a county profile or from individual schools.

VIII. Committee Reports

A. *Baccalaureate*—*Chris Hoover*—Needs volunteers for the multi-faith service held the Sunday before graduation (June 14). Planned by parent volunteers, it includes a guest speaker and student participation. Primary purpose: serves as blessing and sending off of seniors (about three-fifths attend). Bonus: the seniors get to wear their caps and gowns in Woodson (graduation ceremony held elsewhere).

B. *Athletic Boosters*—*Maureen Burt*—New sports schedule is on website. Check these links: wtwoodsonsports.org and woodsonfootball.com. Fall Athletic Awards Night is November 13. Tryouts are this week for winter sports, with Monday, November 17, to meet the coaches. Also, check out ice hockey event on December 3.

New activities hotline phone number is 703-503-4683.

Have done a great deal of fund-raising (all through parent volunteers) and paid for lights, scoreboard, etc., and working toward new track and turf. Golf tournament was

successful, and Capital Campaign is under way, with the help of alumni and feeder schools, for projects that coincide with renovation. Have \$115,000 in account and additional funds in a CD. Hosted a hospitality tent at Homecoming and received many positive comments from alumni. *Current fund-raisers:* Spirit Wear purchases (available online through school's Web page), Verizon FIOS installations (mention WT Woodson when signing up and boosters get \$60), and sales of White House ornaments (available in front office for \$18). On Tuesday, November 18, go to Baja Fresh and Boosters get 20 percent of proceeds.

C. *Cavalier Cruise—Joy Salpini*—One-third of the seniors have signed up already. Every announcement garners more interest.

D. *Woodson Coalition—Jennifer Lewis-Cooper*—Held a Drug Paraphernalia Presentation November 10 with good information. Handouts show what was covered: Parents Who Host Lose the Most (underage drinking); What Do You Know? (drugs); Save the Date, March 28, 2009, for Unified Prevention Coalition Conference; and sheet of resource information. The Woodson Coalition will also host a Saturday Night in the Suburbs meeting in March and will need PTSA help. Youth survey results to come.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Next meeting December 9, 2008, at 7:00 p.m., Library.