

Woodrow Wilson High School, Washington, D.C.
PTSA Meeting
May 14, 2008
7:00 p.m.
Held in the Wilson High School Auditorium

Columbus Spruell, Co-President
Mary Giffin, Co-President

Columbus and Mary opened the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Wilson Management Corporation report

Jack Koczela: Fort Reno, across the street, is closed. There is a National Park Service Press Release (<http://www.nps.gov/rocr/parknews/upload/FtRenoNR51408.pdf>) In response to a USGS satellite survey, Fort Reno was closed today because the satellite image shows high levels of arsenic. The levels are similar to Spring Valley, where WWI chemical munitions were developed.

Arsenic does occur naturally in the soil in our area.

The Wilson football field has been reopened.

The EPA will do more testing.

A robo-call has gone out from Principal Williams and another one will go out soon.

Every classroom is now equipped with an air conditioner.

On May 22nd the architect Grimm+Parker will make a presentation about concepts for modernization. The meeting will be at 6:30 at Wilson High.

There had been a message from DC Stoddert Soccer that implied that Wilson had not been fair about sharing the Fort Reno Field. But, the policy for use was put in place in January with input from all interested parties. It will be revisited again in January of 2009.

Salute to Principal Williams

Columbus: This is one of the last times we will see Jackie Williams in action as principal. She is retiring.

This year has been very challenging for the PTSA and Ms. Williams. Throughout, she has been calm, compassionate, and open. She was always there to help us, the parents and the principal were always engaged. \

(Applause)

(A cake was presented in thanks to Principal Williams, and there was a short break so that everyone could get a piece.)

Best wishes to Principal Williams.

Principal Williams: You just can't hide that Tiger pride. I have been in DC public schools for thirty years. I wish you all well.

Thank you to outgoing PTSA executive board presidents

Susan Carter (PTSA VP for membership): Thank you to Mary and Columbus from the PTSA. You put together a lot of things for the parents! Columbus, you worked so hard getting those Saturday math classes together, too. Columbus and Mary both worked hard on the principal selection committee. Thank you!

(Applause)

Susan presented Columbus and Mary with flowers.

Thank you to outgoing PTSA and LSRT volunteers and others

Mary Giffin: On the back of your agenda hand out, you will see a list of some of the volunteers that have helped PTSA and LSRT throughout the year.

Of special note is Sarah Whitener, who volunteers in multiple places, as liaison to the LSRT and in hospitality and elsewhere.

Some of our wonderful volunteers will be “graduating.”

Vilma Williams, who has been doing English to Spanish translations at the PTSA meeting and on other occasions, has been a great asset to the PTSA. She will be missed! Thank you, Vilma!

(Applause.)

Mary Froning: We will miss the Stromans. Ron Stroman has been on the principal selection committee this year, and Vanessa Stroman has served on the LSRT. The Stromans have worked hard to improve Wilson High School. Good luck to you and your son, and thank you, Vanessa and Ron!

Erie Samson will also be “graduating.” She has been on the LSRT, as well as other committees. Thank you!

Chuck Samuels, who has served on the LSRT for several years, including two as chair, will be “graduating” as well. This year, in addition to his LSRT role, he worked on the principal selection committee. Thank you Chuck! You have worked tirelessly for our school!

All the outgoing LSRT members have worked hard and done an enormous amount.

(Applause.)

Chuck Samuels: Thank you for letting me represent you on the LSRT for the past four years. This is my last PTSA meeting!

Mary Giffin: And thanks go to Kathy Rosenbaum, who has been chair of the PTSA’s grants committee for at least five years! She lead a team of parents who helped teachers apply for and receive small grants from the PTSA to cover things like travel expenses for a class excursion or classroom materials. Thank you, Kathy!

And more thanks - to Lori Yudin, who worked on the PTSA directory.

This is the last year for Ellen Leander and Melissa Friedland, who have been running the teacher lunches for the past four years, and for two of those they ran the entire hospitality committee. It is estimated that they have served upwards of 1,000 pieces of cake here at Wilson, and 1400 full

course lunches to teachers and staff! Ellen has also been the PTSA recording secretary for the past two years. Thank you, Ellen and Melissa. You have worked hard for Wilson High and we really appreciate it!

Angelica Gregory, Student Government Association president, will be graduating. Angelica has been a delight and an inspiration. She attends every meeting, and contributes her thoughts and views from the student perspective. She has shown great leadership with the SGA. Angelica, we know you will be a great success. We thank you. (Applause.)

I know all of you here volunteer for Wilson, and give support financially and with your time. There is not time to mention all the people who stand out as volunteers, but the appreciation for your help is heartfelt. Wilson works because of the parents, students, and teachers work for it.

Mary Froning: Finally, let us not forget the people who served in the groups that formed the proposals for restructuring. While there are too many to name here, we should point out that many of the ideas that the restructuring committee proposed were adopted by Michelle Rhee in her document about new management for Wilson. Except the teachers all having to re-apply. We did not ask for or suggest that.

PTSA and LSRT elections

Mary Giffin: Now I will name the prospective PTSA executive board and LSRT members, and they will please stand when their name is called.

PTSA Co-presidents: Mary Giffin and Susan Carter

PTSA VP -Fundraising: Marcio Duffles

PTSA VP -Membership: Venecia White

PTSA VP- Outreach - 12th grade: Beth Perry

PTSA VP - Outreach - 11th grade: Daria Shumaker

PTSA VP- Outreach - 10th grade: Leticia Long

PTSA VP- Outreach - 9th grade: Mack James

PTSA Co-treasurers: Jude Landis and Katherine Abraham

PTSA Recording Secretary: Andrea Vincent

PTSA Corresponding Secretary: Toni Hughes

LSRT candidates

Margot Berkey

Carmen Carrera

Verna Clayborne

Leigh Dickerson

Mary Froning

Lisa Jensen

Lisa Tabaku

The ballots were handed out, and collected to be counted.

Student Government Report

Angelica Gregory, SGA president: We have done volunteering at SOME, So Others Might Eat. The SGA has been participating in restructuring. We have also met with the architects.

Two Wilson seniors and an adult spoke about the Kenyan relief fund. The students have been collecting pennies in the classroom, and sending the money to the Kenyan Relief Fund. The adult spoke about the need for the money. The fund-raising goal is \$4,000.00.

Election Results Announced

Columbus: Here are the results of the elections for PTSA and LSRT:

The entire slate of PTSA candidates was running unopposed. The slate was voted in.

Here is your new PTSA Board for the 2008-2009 school year:

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PTSA VP -Membership: Venecia White

PTSA VP- Outreach - 12th grade: Beth Perry

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PTSA Corresponding Secretary: Toni Hughes

The LSRT positions were filled as follows:

Margot Berkey

Carmen Carrera

Verna Clayborne

Mary Froning

Columbus: Thank you to everyone who ran for a PTSA or LSRT position.

LSRT and Restructuring Notes

Mary Froning: The SREB (Southern Regional Education Board) <http://www.sreb.org/> will be our school partner for moderate restructuring.

Regarding the Wilson school budget, we will get additional money this year, with ten additional faculty positions. This year, we had a formula budget, we got money according to a formula. But we will have to make some changes to include academy coordinators. We got two extra

custodians in the budget. The budget is \$11,200,000 plus \$372,000 in title one funds. We have projected 1548 students next year. The title one funds are based on the number of students receiving free or reduced lunch.

Parent Question 1: Do we get any funds for older 9th graders?

Mary Froning: Michelle Rhee is looking at a unique program for the older ninth graders. She is looking at a combination of work and community activities along with twilight school, which would meet from 3:30 to five p.m.

We will also have a coach for literacy and numeracy.

We will do what we need to do to get out of restructuring.

Mary Giffin: Here is an update on the principal selection process. We will be hosting an informal reception for the principal candidates on Friday from three to 5:00 p.m. in the cafeteria.

The principal selection panel was formed last June, and Saturday we (the panel) will interview all the candidates.

Parent Question 2: Can we see the resumes or statements from the candidates?

Mary Giffin: No, we are not allowed to hand out resumes beyond the panel.

Parent Question 3: Are there issues with their current employers?

Mary Giffin: That is between them and DCPS Human Resources.

Parent Question 4: Can we give the panel any feedback on our impressions of the candidates after we meet them at the reception?

Mary Giffin. You can tell me or Columbus your impressions.

Mary Froning: There will be a summer bridge program. The chancellor will not give us the money for the summer bridge program, but we will at least have some sort of orientation.

Chuck Samuels: The principal candidates are all excellent. All the candidates have been vetted by the chancellor.

The format of the reception is a little awkward, but the very next day we will be interviewing the candidates.

Mary Giffin: We have seen the resumes, and “googled” the candidates.

America Calderon will not be able to be there to interview the candidates. She has another commitment. However, Mary Ball is an alternate and she will be there.

Parent Question 5: Will be able to ask the candidates questions on Friday?

Mary Giffin: Yes, you can ask the candidates questions, but it will be informal.

Meeting adjourned

Columbus: Thank you for the opportunity to serve you. I came four years ago to Wilson from Hardy. I saw there was under representation of African-American and minority parents in the PTSA.

Some kids were left out of the National Honor Society. The process was not fair. Rejections were not valid. We are making the process more transparent, more clear-cut.

Why did 60 9th graders fail math (algebra one or geometry)?

I am excited about modernization.

Again, thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve.

Next year, give Mary a break. She is great! Mary and Susan, good luck with the PTSA.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen Leander

Wilson HS PTSA recording secretary (outgoing)