

PTSA Recap: November 2012

By Lexi Miller

The Peters Township Parent Teacher Student Association met on Wednesday, November 7 to discuss a wide variety of topics. The meeting was led by Vice President Nancy Glicksman, in place of President Minna Allison, who was not able to attend. Here are a few items you may have missed.

Upcoming Events: The organization discussed a number of events. First, the date for the brunch with the principals was set for December 6 from 9-11:30 in the morning. Also, they announced the date for the career fair to be Friday, December 7. Parent volunteers were needed for both events.

21st Century Learning: Principal Christian Lesnett held a presentation about the student-led PTHS Executive Council. He explained that in the past, students were simply the recipients of information, and had little feedback or participation in class. In the 21st century, students are active participants, and are the source of inquiry. "This is their school, and we want them to take ownership of it," said Lesnett. Here are a few highlights of his presentation.

A New View on Leadership: At PTHS, leadership positions were previously a popularity contest that students used to obtain a resume-building title. Clubs and organizations were for the most part, if not entirely run by parents or adult sponsors. The executive council wants to change all of that. The group has several goals:

1. To create a student-centered atmosphere, both academically and socially.
2. To provide the executive council students with an opportunity to gain leadership skills that will benefit them in college, while still in high school.
3. To reinvigorate PT pride.
4. To put the tools for change in the hands they matter most to-- the students.

The Executive Council is comprised of all 16 class officers and 5 student council officers for 21 total members. Together, they wrote a constitution, made amendments to it as deemed necessary, and now regularly meet on Wednesday mornings in a round table format to collaborate with administrators. There is a prominent school board presence and an importance of communication among the group. They are characterized into five committees:

1. Character Committee- Chairs Jesse McElroy and Ted Elettrache lead the group with a common goal: to improve school spirit and promote character. They are working to get a red-out for the first home basketball game this year in order to support the American Heart Association, and have partnered with SADD to make a public service announcement for drug and alcohol awareness. Their biggest project yet is to get rid of the white space in the school by creating a mural about school spirit. They will be starting a contest for the design soon.
2. Technology Committee- Chaired by Chase Mazsle, the committee works with BYOD and also does their part to advance the school from a technological standpoint. They created a video which is featured on the PTSD website that explains BYOD and how to use it.

3. Interconnectedness Committee- The group meets with other schools who have successful student governments to figure out ways they can apply their methods to Peters. Carla Hoge and Garret Warmbein are the chairs for the committee. They took a field trip to Mount Lebanon this year and decided that they want to bring together the student leaders and administrators of the high school together. "We want everyone to be on the same page," said Hoge.
4. Elections Committee-Brian Hall serves as chairperson for the committee. They obtain voting records and keep attendance records for each member of the executive council. They want to allow the students to have awareness and knowledge of each member running for re-election. Their goal is to stop the popularity contest. They also plan to hold freshman class officer elections in 8th grade and make the overall process more realistic.
5. Gatherings- Chaired by Rachel Hobbs, the committee's main focus is on event planning. They want members of the executive council to join school society. The group planned the last two pep rallies, which were more accepted and participated in than ever before. They were highly involved in the planning of the Stephen Chbosky event, and are planning the Honors Students breakfast. They are actively recruiting new, outside members.

Book Fair Info: The High School Library department will be holding a book fair at Barnes and Noble Booksellers at South Hills Village and also online on November 17 from 10 A.M. to 9 P.M. The Library Advisory Council will be selling raffle tickets in advance for five dollars. The discount cards offered work on everything in the store except for gift cards and Starbucks.

Keystone Update: Mrs. Pavlik announced the testing dates for the Keystone testing. Algebra testing will be on January 9, and they are expecting about 800 students to take it. Biology testing will be on January 10th and will be taken by 500 students. On January 11th, the Junior class will be taking the Literature test. There will be an altered bell schedule only for algebra and biology testing.

Mini Assembly Announcement: Senior Mike Minjock was presented the Extra Effort award by WPXI the same day of the meeting, said Mrs. Pavlik. There was also filming for the PTHS video club's "Lip Dub" contest. The school could win \$5000 if they win.

BYOD Update: BYOD is now building wide, and is used by every teacher, every day.

College Planning Night: The guidance department is preparing for the new and improved college planning night. The event will feature many presentations and advice from college representatives.

The next meeting's date is to be announced. See you there!