

**MINORITY STUDENT ACHIVEMENT COMMITTEE**  
**SEPTEMBER 26, 2006**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

The MSA committee held its first meeting of the new school year on Tuesday September 26, 2006 in the Lecture Hall. Mr. Mark Richardson chaired the meeting. The following members were present:

Richardson, Mark, (Committee Chair)  
Thomas Tim (Principal)  
Jasper, Carol (parent/BITS coordinator)  
Peterson, Celeste (parent/newsletter editor)  
Pike, Susie (ESOL teacher)  
Spain, Evelyn (parent)  
Campbell, Jennifer (PTSA president)  
Dillard, Zoe (teacher)  
Davis Moran, Jacquelin (parent)  
Bernstein, Bill (Bits tutor)  
Scott-Mouzon, Cheryl (parent)  
Vargas, Lourdes (parent)  
McKenzie, Paul (parent)  
Richardson, Alice (parent)  
Bellamy, Cynthia (parent)  
Hobbs, Shelia (parent)

The following agenda items were covered:

**1. Principal's Vision:**

Mr. Tim Thomas presented his vision to the group and emphasize his can do attitude. Mr. Thomas stated that he fully supports the mission of the committee and will work hard to implement programs and solutions proposed by the committee. Mr. Thomas emphasized the need to reach out to all parents, both English and non-English speaking parents. He noted that it is important to query his faculty on what is working and what is not working and using what is working more across departments. His vision is to involve students at all levels of learning, including more student participation in extra curricula activities. He also noted the importance of teachers setting high expectations for all students. He will call upon his eight years of cultural diversity experience through teaching Spanish at Centreville High School as a plus to reaching out to Hispanic parents.

Mr. Thomas also provided his thoughts on ways to obtain inputs from students through periodic informal gatherings and small group settings. A Teacher's cabinet was mentioned as one potential student outreach program.

## **2. Welcome by PTSA President.**

Jennifer Campbell welcomed the committee members and encouraged members to actively participate in the PTSA. It is important that committee members join the PTSA as this committee serves under the auspices of the PTSA.

## **3. MAC Theme for 2006-7:**

**The group discussed themes and goals for the committee for the year. It was agreed that the primary theme should be to increase parental involvement and to develop processes for establishing new programs for increasing parent involvement. In general, the committee will focus on new processes that will increase minority achievement.**

## **4. BITS Presentation by Mr. Bill Bernstein.**

Mr. Bernstein provided a brief summary of the statistical data from last year's BITS program. He highlighted areas of student improvement and other areas where students require additional assistance. It is imperative that students attend the BITS sessions on a regular basis and that tutors work in concert with teachers to focus tutoring on teacher curriculums. It was recommended that the BITS program be highlighted at the back to school nights and that more parents get involved in helping out as tutors. BITS will start on October 14 and continue through the first week in June. Three extra sessions were added this year as a result of Carol Jasper coordinating with the school. If you are interested in helping out with the BITS program, please contact the Carol Jasper at Cvj78@aol.com. You may also visit the Westfield PTSA web site and click on the link to BITS.

## **5. Telephone system for parent calls.**

Mr. Thomas agreed that he will actively use the automated parent calling system to increase the parent participation at our parent coffees. The phone system was used last year, but was not as effective as it should have been. Now that the school is more familiar with using the system, automated calls to parents should have a more significant impact on parent participation.

## **6. New STEP Sponsors.**

It was announced that the STEP team has two new sponsors and will reconvene this year. The focus will be more on student attitude and behavior while understanding the importance of STEP.

## **7. Agenda for the October 25<sup>th</sup> Parent Coffee:**

- a. Snacks will be available with a flair for Hispanic culture in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month. Suzie Pike and Zoe Dillard will coordinate the snacks
- b. Welcome (Mark Richardson)
- c. Principal's Vision (Tim Thomas)
- d. Performance by Latino Dance Group and/or members of the Drama team.
- e. Update on Minority Achievement Handbook
- f. BITS Information
- g. Open Discussion

As a means of increasing attendance at the parent coffees, the committee will seek donations from the school's business partners for door prizes. Tim Thomas will make arrangements for language translators at the coffee. Carol Jasper and Celeste Peterson will coordinate decorations.

#### **8. Fall Newsletter:**

Celeste Peterson has volunteered to stay on as the MAC newsletter editor. Many thanks to Celeste for her continued support to our newsletter. The committee will release its first newsletter on October 17, 2006. Articles for the Newsletter are due no later than close of business, Tuesday October 3, 2006. Final printable version of the newsletter will be ready on Tuesday October 10, 2006. Articles for this newsletter release include:

- a. Chairman's Corner (Mark Richardson)
- b. Principal's Welcome and Vision, a portion in Spanish (Tim Thomas)
- c. Parental Involvement (Celeste Peterson)
- d. BITS (Carol Jasper)
- e. PTSA Welcome (Jennifer Campbell)
- f. STEP Team Sponsorship (Christina Schmitt)
- g. Student Articles (Spain, others)
- h. Minority student participation in School Fall Drama (Zoe Dillard)
- i. Announcement of Fall Parent Coffee

The automated phone system will be used to announce the coffee to parents. Mr. Thomas and Mark Richardson will coordinate the phone message. Messages will be sent out in both English and Spanish. Committee members will follow up with personal phone calls to parents. Please contact m\Mark Richardson if you have time to make calls to parents.

#### **9. Parent and Student Orientation Program:**

As a means of increasing parent outreach, it was recommended that the school look into a parent/student orientation program. This program will focus on establishing a mentoring program for rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders and also a welcoming program for new Westfield parents. The committee will develop this program and submit the process to Principal Thomas for approval and implementation.

#### **10. Open Discussion**

Parents and students can now register to be members of the minority achievement committee online using the link to the committee's web site.

More emphasis will be placed on student participation on the committee this year.

Pat Williams is the new Assistant Principal assigned to the minority achievement committee. Mrs. Williams is replacing Karla Butler who has transferred to Centreville High School.