

**EAST HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PTA /PTO/ PTC ADVISORY
SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
EAST HAVEN HIGH SCHOOL BOARDROOM
35 WHEELBARROW LANE
EAST HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06513**

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2010
6:30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Mrs. Vineyard, Mr. Hennessey and Mr. Palladino

ABSENT: Mr. DeNuzzo, Mrs. Kluth, Mrs. Maisano,
Mr. Pompano and Mr. Scalesse

ARRIVED LATE: Mrs. DePalma (6:45 p.m.)

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Serio, Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Forti, Assist. Supt. of Curriculum & Instruction
Mrs. Schmidt, Administrator

1. OPEN MEETING

Mrs. Vineyard called the PTA/PTO/PTC Subcommittee meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Boardroom at East Haven High School. She thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and then handed the meeting over to the principals.

2. Discussion Regarding Orientations, Welcome Back Nights, Etc.

Mrs. Schmidt spoke about the changes in the schools and in the climate and culture. On September 3, 2010 from 1 – 3 p.m. each of the schools would have an open house for parents and students to have a meet and greet. There would be no formal presentations. On September 13th, Ferrara, Momauguin and Tuttle, which were Grades 3 – 5 schools, would have a Back to School night; Grades K – 2, which were Deer Run, Overbrook and D.C. Moore, would have their Back to School night on September 15th; and the high school will have theirs on September 16th; the middle school on September 23rd and the EH Academy on September 22nd.

Mr. Grimm spoke about the changes in the schools and the shuffling of students and staff. There were changes in the information system from an older system to a new one. The building secretaries were due back by the beginning of next week and they were planning on sending a letter out to all of the students next week once the class lists were finalized.

Mrs. Bacon spoke about the school times being posted on the website and there was a letter from Mr. Serio there as well. Bus routes would be posted by the end of the week.

Mrs. Vineyard stated she wanted to reiterate that the Board of Ed would never tell a PTA/PTO what they needed to do. They may offer up suggestions, but that's all they were – suggestions. She stated they were free to do whatever they like as long as it was acceptable to the principals. The principals had tossed around the idea of a PTO President's Council for the presidents of each school to perhaps meet once a quarter to share ideas. This may give them time to brainstorm and help each other out. Mr. Serio added that the parents could set their own parameters and meet once a week if they wanted to. This would help with intercommunication between the PTA/PTO's or the President's Council to get messages back to the school and parents. He thought that perhaps now was a good time to think about whether they wanted to coordinate and organize a President's Council. He stated that they do not interfere with the PTA/PTO's and usually they only come to him for support or money.

Mr. Serio spoke about there being perhaps some money available in the grant to support community involvement and to avoid draining their fundraising efforts. He also noted that he knew how important their roles and involvement were in dealing with the schools.

Mr. Palladino spoke about how the rumors in Town were unbelievable. He suggested when they hear things they go straight to the source by calling the Superintendent's office or their building principal.

Mrs. DePalma arrived at 6:45 p.m.

Mrs. Forti spoke about the importance of their organizations and how they were a link between the school, students and teachers that promote that connectedness. Students were more likely to succeed when they were connected to the school and that was incredibly powerful in student

performance and achievement. She was looking forward to a collaborative year together where everyone's focus was in the best interest of the kids.

There was discussion on sending correspondence out in different languages and Mrs. Forti asked them to email her and she could help them get things translated into different languages.

There was discussion on the dates for the back to school nights and also on the meet and greets. The Middle School Meet and Greet for the 6th graders was probably being pushed back from the 23rd of August to the 30th and 31st of August. That information would be forthcoming. This would be for the incoming 6th and 7th graders.

Middle School electives would be offered which included Spanish, band, choir, and a robotics course which would be offered to 8th graders. There would also be general music, PE and technology. Band was still offered to 5th graders and 6th – 8th graders. **There was discussion on whether 6th graders could choose band, choir or Spanish and Mr. Serio thought they were all set. He would get back to them regarding this next Tuesday night.**

Mrs. DePalma had information regarding the Presidents' Council and would make sure they had it if the parents decided to go that route or wanted to discuss it.

All of the dates for these Meet and Greets would be posted on the website. The times for opening and dismissal of schools was already posted on the website.

Parents wondered why there had not been more informational nights for them to ask their questions because Mr. Palladino had promised that there would be. Mr. Palladino explained they had left them up to the principals so they could explain how that particular school was going to run. It would be done school by school instead of having 100 people at one time. Mr. Palladino stated if Mr. Serio would like to have a meeting to discuss how things were progressing he could do it that way if he wanted to.

Mr. Serio wanted to make sure everything was in place for opening day and they could have a meeting shortly after that and once they had their back to school nights. He was not up to a meeting where questions were shotgun. He explained that solar panels had been put on a number of the buildings; they were in the phase of cleaning up the grounds at the schools; there were still a lot of boxes to unpack; cleaning and custodial were doing their best to get

things on track; bus routes were being changed and had not been changed in 10 years and this could be a trying thing. They would be monitoring the buses very closely until they knew they were right. They had been upgrading the cafeterias at certain schools to handle the new populations.

Mr. Serio stated both he and Mrs. Forti would plan with the administrators to schedule a night in late September or early fall.

Mrs. Vineyard asked that parents not start at the Board to bring their questions or complaints but to go through their principals and then Central Office with them first. If they were still not satisfied, then they should bring them to the Board.

There was discussion on the PTA/PTO subcommittee and where it had come from. Mr. Serio stated it should not have come through the Board now or before. They operate independently and go through the building principal. They bring something to the Board in a venue of communication. He stated we have no jurisdiction on how you fundraise or do your things. Items needed to be approved to make sure they were appropriate for the school and the building principal takes care of that with them. The only time it gets to the Board level was if there was a complaint or they were looking for support.

There was discussion on what the grant money could and could not be used for. Mr. Serio explained the monies could be used for literacy nights or for improvement of instruction or for parental support for the students. Things such as planners were not acceptable for the grant. Custodial hours were huge and perhaps they could set a tentative calendar for the year so the costs could be worked out. Currently, they were offered 10 free hours for custodial and perhaps they could up that a bit.

A parent asked if they could bring back the DARE Program with this grant. Mr. Palladino explained he had been meeting with the Chief and they were trying to get another DARE Officer in place. The police get grants for it and put it in their budget. There may be a DARE Officer back in the Middle School.

The principals then introduced themselves as did the parents involved in the PTA/PTO's so they could know each other prior to setting up their meetings.

3. Any other business that might rightfully come before this subcommittee.

There was no other business this evening.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Palladino and seconded by Mr. Hennessey. Motion carries. Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

**MRS. KRISTEN VINEYARD, CHAIRPERSON
PTA/PTO/PTC ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE**