

Minutes for the SSIMS General PTSA Meeting

Location and date: Media Center at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, 2/8/11

Welcome

Stephanie Helsing welcomed the parents and thanked them for coming out. She reminded the meeting attendees that both she and Katie Ryan will be finishing their term as co-Presidents at the end of this school year. She encouraged other parents to step forward to keep our PTSA vibrant and active. She also thanked parents for their volunteer efforts to make the Harlem Wizards a big success on February 4th. Over 400 people attended the event and a good time was had by all.

Principal's Update

Mr. Haas told parents that SSI is now producing a monthly calendar of activities that will be sent home at the beginning of each month. This calendar is designed to provide additional information for parents about school events and activities.

He also mentioned that they are testing out the strategy of making the morning announcements available on-line on the SSI website.

"Teens, Tweens, and Screens"

Linda Keely, from the Parent Encouragement Program (PEP) was our guest speaker for the evening. She briefly reviewed the philosophy of the PEP Program based on positive discipline principles. She started by showing a video clip on the power of technology and how it has become prevalent in our everyday life. Therefore, the goal is not to escape it, but set reasonable limits that fit with your family's values. She emphasized that there are some limits that should be non-negotiable (protect your password, no sexting, know your "friends") and other limits that can be negotiated. This will allow the teen to feel that they have been heard and have participated in the process of setting limits. Limits to propose could include: No computer/TV in bedroom, screen free hours or days, responsibilities before screen time, cell phone free zones, and have a parent be a Facebook friend. She pointed out there is no one "right way" to manage screen time - it is based on your families values and needs. She encouraged asking your teen about screen time issues, rather than telling and that the family should develop a plan together. She ended by providing additional resources for parents who would like to learn more.

PTSA Updates

The PTSA will begin their 2nd annual Plant Sale fundraiser in early March, concluding on May 7th. We are looking for a volunteer who is willing to step up and manage this project.

As the MCPS budget moves forward this Spring, there will be many tough decisions about cuts to school funds. Our March meeting will focus on these challenges and actions that parents can take to help keep SSI a fully funded and successful school.

International Night will be held on March 18th. If you would like to participate in this event by showcasing a country or culture, we would love to have you! Please contact Stephanie Helsing at nizwa328@rcn.com.

The meeting concluded at 9:15.