

Campus School of Carlow University

PTA Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 AM by Dana Casale, PTA President.

1. Dana reminded parents to check the PTA website for PTA meeting minutes and other valuable information.

Dana introduced Dr. Anne Marie Balzano. Dr. Balzano delivered the State of the School Speech for 2008.

2. Dr. Balzano began by explaining the changes to the campus facilities. The new Primary Science Lab opened in the beginning of the school year. Ms. Cooper is very excited about the lab. The first, second, and third graders attend the lab once a week. It is a true collaboration between the teachers in the lower school and intermediate level. Trinity created another classroom because each classroom is full. Montessori has 18 children in each room. Some of the three year olds stay for the whole day. This additional classroom allows these children to rest and provides downtime. Music room was redone and is now grade level appropriate throughout the room. Summer renovations include re-doing the flooring in some of the classrooms. The hardwood floors will be refinished where they can, if not, then new carpet will be installed. Windows will also be repaired.

Dr. Balzano reviewed with the parents and staff in attendance the technologies available at the Campus School. PCR is up and running. Many parents and teachers are accessing it and using it. Everyone is still learning the system and information will continually be added into the database. A report card system is being worked on at this time. Net Nanny was purchased for all computers. Dr. Balzano remains concerned about Cyberbullying. She and Ms. Hassett are going to pull the upper school together to educate students and parents on safe internet use. Dr. Balzano is actively looking for a speaker to talk about Cyber predators and bullying.

Two more computers are needed for yearbook/creative writing and robotics.

Dr. Balzano explained the connection with the University and the excellent opportunities available to the Campus School staff and students. In the Fall, 18 Field observation students worked with students in 3rd and 4th grade. The Campus School teachers are collaborating with professors at the University. Five Campus School teachers are taking classes at the University; one student teacher will be at the Campus School from the University this semester and Dr. Balzano is teaching Foundations for Education class this semester. She is very excited about teaching at the University. She will not only be able to place students at the Campus school for field observation but she will set high expectations for working with our students.

The service and learning projects at the school are abounding. The Philippines Project raised over \$2,000 for food and scholarships. In addition, Marlee explained two 8th grade students were chosen to tape a radio show on KQV about

the project. Gavin Sandidge and Chareeni Kurukulasuriya taped a broadcast which will be heard some time in February. The dates and times of the broadcast will be the banner on the Carlow Campus School Website. The canned food drive at Thanksgiving was also successful this year, as well as, the Angel Tree. The second semester will bring an internal project being discussed with the upper school student council, Random Acts of Kindness.

Dr. Balzano discussed the curricular activities taking place at the Campus School. PJAS is coming up on January 29th at the Campus School. If anyone is interested in judging or knows anyone who may be interested, please let Dr. Balzano know. Fifteen 7th and 8th grade students will represent Carlow at the regional PJAS competition on Feb. 2, 2008 at Upper St. Clair High School. Carlow will compete for the first time in the Math Counts Competition at Robert Morris University on February 2, 2008. Eight students from grades 6 through 8 will compete. There will be a special French morning program for Mardi Gras on Feb. 5 in Kresge Theater. Students in grades 4 through 8 will be performing and an eating extravaganza will take place in the upper school classrooms during the afternoon. Festivities will begin at 9am. All parents are invited to attend the show. Any parent who would like to volunteer, please see Mme Patterson. Eighteen of our students will participate in the Shakespeare competition at the O'Reilly Theater on February 11. The upper school musical was announced. This year they will perform *Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* on May 2, 2008 at 7:00 PM in Antonian Theater. Parent volunteers for lighting, sound, set, etc are being asked to contact Mrs. Lazar.

Dr. Balzano explained at this time the Campus school has 261 students enrolled. Two families moved out of the area. The Kindergarten Assessments are being held the weekend of January 12 and later this month. Acceptance letters will go out in Feb. and a reception will take place for new families on Feb. 21 in the school library.

Marlee has done a great job with PR for the Campus School. She has been updating the website on a regular basis. She was instrumental in getting Carlow as the host school for the Diocesan Chess Tournament that brought 12 other schools to the Campus School. The billboards were up in the fall right before admissions season began. Dr. Balzano and Marlee are working with the PR department to update our viewbook and brochures.

Dr. Balzano thanked the PTA for all of their hard work during the busy Fall and Christmas season. The Christmas Bazaar, gifts for teachers, basket raffle were all very successful. She displayed the check from Box Tops for Education that was presented to her by Ms. Hairston, Box Top PTA Representative.

Dr. Balzano reminded everyone to mark their calendars for May 17, the Founders Legacy Event. The Event this year will focus on celebrating teachers and raising monies for teacher development and excellence. It will be a family event this year held in St. Joseph Gymnasium. The Gym will be transformed to represent the theme, which is yet to be decided. Any parent with an idea for a theme, please contact Beth Friel, Chairperson of the Founder's Legacy. Volunteers are also needed to help with this event.

Looking toward the future, Dr. Balzano set goals. They include hiring and retaining the best teachers. Some teachers are talking about retirement and Dr.

Balzano is looking to reassess the current faculty to see what they would like to do as far as filling positions and also recruit to find dedicated teachers. She continues to work with the University on increasing salary and benefits for teachers. She is going to hire a part-time aid in Kindergarten for the Fall and make all of the aides full time. She is preparing for the Middle States review that will take place in a year and a half. She is also going to look at the Campus School Mission Statement. The University just did this and it was a useful exercise.

The long term goals Dr. Balzano set are to continue to provide state of the art technology to aid our students' academic growth, to foster an atmosphere of acceptance and helpfulness, to seek out and create staff development opportunities for our teachers, to make certain our students continue to receive the best education possible and together, parents, student and the staff of the Campus School will ensure that our Children of Spirit have a nurturing environment which focuses on the uniqueness of each child and encourages a spirit of true community and service to others.

Dr. Balzano reiterated her door is always open. If any parent or student has an issue or question she is always available to help. Either stop in to the office, call or email.

Dr. Balzano would like to continue to place information in the PTA newsletter. This will help her to communicate her goals to all parents. The Newsletter has been sent by email to all families.

3. The Meager Meal will kick off the Lenten Season. This year's charity will be the Catholic Charities Free Health Care Center that opened in November. The Center serves the working poor in the Pittsburgh Area. Individuals and families who fit the criteria can receive free health and dental care. Linda Ambrose and Anne Ward will assist with the event this year. More information will be forthcoming.
4. Discussion ensued regarding the Founder's Legacy funds. Please see the October Meeting minutes for information about how the funds are allocated. This year a goal of 300 tickets has been set. The weekend will be kicked off by a Grandparents Day the Friday before the Saturday event. Parents are encouraged to attend this wonderful evening that benefits our children. This year the goal is to raise money towards teacher's professional excellence.
5. The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 AM. The next meeting will be the week of February 12. The date and time will be announced. Karen Kelly will be the featured speaker. She will discuss the financials of the school, present and future.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Ward
Treasurer