

**Dunwoody High School
Governing School Council
MINUTES**

August 19, 2014

Approval of Agenda

Attendance: Pam Melton, Lisa Victory, Ashley Doolittle, Adrienne Bashuk, Kelly Clinch, Allison Wagner, Tom McFerrin, Nancy Jester, Peggy Stecker (PTSO)

Approval of May Minutes – approved as posted online.

Welcome and Housekeeping Issues – Election of new Co-Chair, Ashley Doolittle and Council Secretary, Kelly Clinch (approved). Approval of future meeting dates for the 2014-2015 school year (Sept. 9, Oct. 14, Nov. 11, Jan. 13, Feb. 10, Mar. 10, Ap. 14, and May 12).

Guest Speaker: Nancy Jester – Discussed possible further involvement of Rotary Club at DHS, including the possibility of grant money. Nancy also encouraged us to promote the Rotary fundraiser, Run Dunwoody on Oct. 19 as funds raised could be beneficial to DHS (and other schools in the area). Many schools organize teams to run and she would like to see a stronger DHS presence at the event. She left the grant application forms with the council and offered to help us navigate the process. She wants us to know and use the Rotary Club as a resource. We discussed the possibility of writing grants for such initiatives as Project SAVE and the “Not in Our House” anti-drug campaign. Nancy reminded us that Deb Cameron is also a resource at Rotary and invited us to attend their Rotary meetings on Friday mornings at the Westin if possible.

Principal’s Report:

Attendance – The school has enrolled 1578 students as of today, with possibly 1600 estimated by the October FTE count. We have 130 students participating in GPC English. We have 501 students in the freshman class this year.

School Safety – Considering an anti-drug campaign this year with the possibility of Tom Morgan coming to speak to students and sharing his book. Ashley D. recommended a police presentation to educate students about specific drug dangers. Need to decide on the best timing for this program and organize a possible subcommittee to organize and execute the plan.

Schedules/Instructional Needs – Some classes have been balanced this past weekend with some students receiving schedule changes. We had an additional 120 students register the first week of school. After the first seven days of school, no-shows are dropped from the teachers’ rosters. DHS had a great first week and registration went very smoothly, thanks especially to the PTSO.

Teachers and Staff Issues/Needs – McFerrin still looking for an ESOL/Soc. Studies teacher to hire and this is the only hire left on faculty. He is completing his last interview for a new AP position soon and hoping to fill the vacancy by the end of the week. This is a key position because this AP will take over testing, an urgent need with new state testing format coming (EOCT now becoming Georgia Milestones). Students will take the STAR Reading and Math tests several times this year (Aug, Dec, Jan, May) to help track student growth and provide data. School also has a new grading format as the county as dictated a system for weighting grades across all schools. Teachers have been trained on this new format at a recent in-service and syllabi should reflect the change. Infinite Campus will be up and running soon and will provide a good resource for parents. Teachers are being encouraged to grade assignments and post results in a timely manner to allow for better tracking of student progress and more time for intervention and

feedback. In an effort to give teachers more time to grade, communicate with parents, and interact with students, McFerrin is taking some of the time usually reserved for weekly faculty meetings and making that time available for tutoring, parent communication and school event attendance. Teachers seem very receptive to this change. Ashley D. asked about the Bio-Tech program since Ms. Greenwood has left. Ms. Ingram is taking over and is working to get the website up and running ASAP. We discussed the need to raise awareness for this program. DHS is also working to improve the school website and teachers (especially those new to the school) are working to get their websites up ASAP.

Construction – The new doors are almost completed. This was a major project and funding was provided by SPLOST money. The marquis improvements have been approved by the School Board and the money is in place. We have one bid on the work, waiting on two more to move forward with the project. We plan to use the Chamblee HS marquis design as a model. McFerrin says the Dunwoody HOA gave their approval for the electronic sign. The School Board has also approved the work on the concession stand by the gym. This work will be at least partially funded with money left over from the marquis.

Budget and Expenditures – Teachers are in the process of submitting their requests and needs for the school year.

Current Issues -- McFerrin is also working with a parent who wants to fund a tutorial program at DHS. Tutors would come in once a week to work with students after school. We could possibly have four tutors working in four different classrooms. The 10th graders are participating in the Rotary Essay Contest “Laws of Life” this year through the Writer’s Workshop classes. McFerrin and faculty are also working with student athletes to get them more involved as leaders in the school. He plans to meet with each group of class leaders and sponsors as well. He met with each grade level last week and meetings went well. The locker shortage remains a problem. The shortage is due to increased enrollment and many damaged/broken lockers. Administration has asked for lockers to be fixed, but no action by the county yet on this. As of now, 40-50 seniors are sharing lockers. Students have been accommodating. This is considered a safety/security issue and county is making it a priority. Next year, we are hoping to get a new bank of lockers possibly placed on the 3rd floor.

Teacher Report – No teacher present today. We discussed the need for the faculty to elect a representative within 30 days to serve on council to replace Mr. Wise. We reviewed the election process as stated in the bylaws of the council.

Unfinished Business:

Adding to Council – Last year council considered expanding to include another business partner (possibly Microsoft?). This would also mean adding two additional parents to serve on the council, specifically looking/asking for those parent to run who could help with public relations and Foundation development. Pam M. asked us to review the bylaws, consider the issue and take a vote at the next meeting.

Retention Pond -- The pond remains an issue. McFerrin has called, but the county has not responded to concerns of safety and health issues in that area of the school. Concerns include mosquitos, over-run vegetation, appearance, etc. This is not just a school issue, but a community issue. There is possibility that the head of the Dunwoody Preservation might be able to help. Ashley D. was asked to call the Georgia Department of Health to follow up and perhaps get the county to make this a priority.

New Business:

Project SAVE – Pam asked if this is a program we want to bring to DHS. It provides training to students and faculty in CPR/AED. Pam will bring in a speaker to provide more information.

C.A.T.S. – (Council Advisory Team of Students) We considered the benefits of instituting a student advisory team to work with School Council. This could consist of faculty-nominated students from each grade level. CATS would meet separately from council, but attend part of our meetings to report on student concerns and issues. It could provide an important perspective on the school. We will do some research into how other schools have incorporated this into their advisory councils, both locally and outside of Georgia.

Foundation – We discussed the possibility of creating a Foundation much like those at the elementary and middle schools to provide financial support for academic and teaching. We reviewed the need to tap into funds provided by businesses in the area (Dunwoody Chamber, Rotary, State Farm, etc). We engaged in some debate about how best to use funds collected by a Foundation and how it would be structured (academic, building improvements, athletic, etc). Adrienne B. offered more information about a possible fundraising project for a future Foundation involving sponsored/decorated Wildcats around Dunwoody (much like the Sandy Springs turtles). She is doing more research into this.

Anti-Drug Campaign – “Not in Our House” is a possible approach to raising drug/alcohol awareness at school. Pam M. asked about the council’s interest in pursuing this and possibly working with Rotary to obtain some grant money. Council unanimously agreed to consider this and move forward.

Public Comment:

PTSO President, Peggy Stecker offered to work with the council to see what teachers need this year. Teachers are applying for PTSO grants and this would provide some information about instructional needs. Lisa V. suggested using some of the council meeting dates as collaboration meetings with PTSO Board. Peggy also said the Deb Palgon has been working on organizing the booster clubs to provide PR information/positive press for the school. We then opened the meeting up for parent (Ann O’Connor and Derek Jones) comment and questions about open house and curriculum night.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Dunwoody High School
5035 Vermack Road
Dunwoody, Georgia 30338
<http://www.dunwoodyhs.dekalb.k12.ga.us/>
Main Office: 678-874-8502
Tom McFerrin, Principal