

OSWEGATCHIE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

MEETING MINUTES

September 11, 2007

In attendance: Jamie Craig, Susan Tillinghast, Laura Brackett, Teresa Wilensky, Alan Wilensky, Julie Anderson, Claudia Bouchard, Tara Pamatian, Stacey Wielachowski, Tammy Perry, Dawn Estey, Terry Abate, Chris Abate, Claudette Gilmore, Tracy Cavalieri, Kim Brandt, Mr. & Mrs. Blenn, Nancy Macione, Sharon Burdsall, Susan Smith, Denise Pitasi, Mike Brandt

1. Welcome and Introductions

Sharon Burdsall opened the meeting by welcoming Nancy Macione and all OSO members and stated that future meetings should last approximately one hour. All OSO members introduced themselves.

2. Principal's Report – Nancy Macione

a. First Day of School - Nancy Macione announced that “it was a good first day”. The Partnership Committee met on September 11, 2007 to discuss the first day of school program and feedback received from parents was positive. The Committee discussed a new format for the first day of school in 2008, with a one-half hour open house for grades 1-3 beginning at 1:30 p.m. and grades 4-5 beginning at 2:00 p.m. and for open house for Kindergarten to be scheduled for the third day of school, rather than the first day of school. Photographs of the first day of school activities are posted in the main lobby.

b. Back to School Barbeque – Nancy Macione thanked Mike Brandt for all of his help and coordination of a very successful Back to School Barbeque; a good time was had by all with good food and entertainment for the students. Mike Brandt still reviewing attendance, with 330 people originally signed up to attend. A huge note of thanks to the grades 6-8 and high school students who helped set up, the 3 cooks and the 3 grills that were borrowed for the event.

c. Parent Liaison – a Parent Liaison is needed (and a substitute Parent Liaison) to represent Oswegatchie School for monthly meetings with Superintendent Collins on the 4th Tuesday of each month at the Central Office, with meetings beginning at 6:15 p.m.

d. School Lunch Aide – Mrs. Macione announced that the school is currently seeking to employ a lunch aide or a lunch aide substitute. This position would be responsible for helping out in the multi-purpose room each school day from 12:00 noon to 1:30 p.m.

e. Waterford School Redistricting – Mrs. Macione reviewed with the OSO the proposed redistricting plan for the Waterford School District, with five school zones being phased into 3 zones, with an anticipated completion date for year 2010. This year, Oswegatchie School received 25 students as a result of Phase 1 (the district is currently at the end of phase 1.)

The Board of Education is expected to meet on 9/20/07 (recently changed to 9/24/07) to vote on the final phase of the redistricting plan.

f. New School Construction – Mrs. Macione reported that construction is scheduled to begin December, 2008, with a safety fence planned to be installed in the Fall, 2007. Due to the redistricting plan and completion of the new school, it is anticipated that 90 students will be transferred to Oswegatchie School, with a total student enrollment of approximately 400 students. During the school construction phase, some of the playground area will be lost and the tennis courts will be removed.

g. Librarian - Mrs. Macione read aloud a letter received from Oswegatchie's librarian, Mrs. N, hired mid-year last year. Mrs. N stated that she is excited to be with the students at Oswegatchie, and welcomes parental comments and suggestions, and she is looking forward to a wonderful 2007-2008 academic year. Volunteers are needed to help set up and man the booth for the Scholastic Book Fair scheduled for November 30, 2007-December 7, 2007.

h. No Food Policy – Mrs. Macione reviewed with OSO members the new policy recently developed and implemented by the Waterford elementary school principals. She distributed copies of an article, “Alternatives to Food as Reward”; copies of this article are available at the central office and will be posted to the website. The legal liability aspect of distributing food in the classroom still needs to be clarified by Superintendent Collins. It was discussed that food will not be served during Field Day, except during the regular lunch hour, as scheduled in the multi-purpose room.

i. School Building Committee – Alan Wilensky announced to the OSO that he is a member of the School Building Committee and is available for any questions. A test hole has been dug at Oswegatchie School for the geothermal tests to be performed. Alan will find out a definite date for the construction fence to be installed and will report back to the OSO.

President's Report – Sharon Burdsall

a. New Student T-Shirts- Sharon Burdsall reported that Jami Petchark is in the process of placing a t-shirt order for new students at Oswegatchie School; t-shirts were provided to all Oswegatchie Students last year, with a color coding system by grade (teachers provided with collared shirts.) T-shirts are worn by the students on field trips and during Field Day. Should a new t-shirt need to be purchased (for those students who currently have one), the price is \$5.00. Contact Jami Petchark for details.

b. BJ's Adoption Program – Sharon Burdsall announced that BJ's has adopted Oswegatchie School to participate in their Adoption Program. Already a \$30 gift card issued by BJ's has been used towards the Back to School Barbeque. Sharon's meeting with the BJ's representative is scheduled for September 12, 2007; Sharon will provide BJ's with a list of upcoming events.

Treasurer's Report – Mike Brandt

Mike Brandt reported that he is in the process of finalizing the school budget and announced that if there are any receipts left over from last school year, please submit them to him for reimbursement as soon as possible.

Committee and Event Reports:

a. School Pictures – school pictures will be taken on September 19, 2007; a packet from the photography company to be distributed in the Friday folders. Tracy Cavalieri volunteered to help out on picture day; Mrs. Macione stated that parent volunteers are welcome; a notice regarding this will be printed in the newsletter. It was stated that there is a “retake day” and refunds are generally provided expeditiously by the photography studio. Mrs. Macione will check with the photography company to inquire as to why proofs are not offered to parents to view prior to purchasing the photo packages.

b. Basketball Program – Mrs. Macione announced the basketball program is in full swing, with Peter Dougherty organizing. There are currently 43 students participating in the program. Tracy Cavalieri will coordinate the Basketball Program for the 2008-2009 school year. The banquet is scheduled for October 16, 2007.

c. Movie Nights – Sharon Burdsall announced that Oswegatchie School has purchased movie rights to show movies at the school for a period of one year. Flyers announcing Movie Night will be sent home with the students. Snacks and refreshments can be purchased during Movie Night for a small fee; there is not an admission fee to participate in Movie Night. Parent supervision will be required. Sharon announced that she is seeking to purchase or rent a popcorn machine; Tracy Cavalieri suggested that Prudential Realty may have a machine to borrow. While meeting with the BJ’s representative, Sharon will inquire as to if BJ’s sells popcorn machines. Movie Night Committee members are needed from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. to help set up, clean up and coordinate movie nights. A movie suggestion box will be set up in the multi-purpose room so students can suggest movies to view.

d. School Directory – Kim O’Connor will coordinate the Directory this year. A flyer regarding voluntary participation will be sent home in the Friday folder. Kim Brandt suggested that the School Directory be considered as a fundraiser for the 2008-2009 school year, with purchasing the school directory for a nominal fee; the Directory is currently provided to all students free of charge.

e. Clothing Drive – Sharon Burdsall is continuing to search for a local organization to participate in the clothing drive. Dawn Estey suggested that Sharon inquire with the Homeless Shelter in New London, Catholic Charities and the First Congregational Church regarding their needs.

f. Halloween Howl – Kristine Gigliotti will chair the committee to coordinate the Halloween Howl scheduled for October 26, 2007. A lot of help is needed to coordinate the Halloween Howl, from set up, during and clean up. OSO members discussed the option of music (i.e., DJ) participation. Mike Brandt announced the “spooky room” may be located on the

tennis courts this year. A flyer has been sent to the high school seeking volunteers; a flyer to the middle school to be circulated. Sharon Burdsall will meet with BJ's to seek donations. Mike Brandt will contact an Emcee for the event.

g. Holiday Craft Show – the Holiday Craft Show will be held on November 17, 2007 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Sharon Burdsall reported that all 20 craft tables have been rented. There will be a children's' craft room; for a nominal fee, children will be able to make holiday crafts. Volunteers are needed to help out in the craft room and at the concession stand (food and refreshments will be for sale).

Fundraising – Terry Abate

a. Reader's Digest - Terry thanked Stacy Wielachowski for her help with coordinating and distributing the Reader's Digest fundraising packets which will be distributed to the students. The deadline for submitting fundraising selected items and payment (checks only) is September 24, 2007. \$400 was issued to Oswegatchie School by Reader's Digest because our fundraiser is not utilizing the prize incentives program.

b. "That's My Pan" – a motion was made by Terry Abate and seconded by Kim Brandt to conduct the "That's My Pan" fundraiser in early November, 2007. Motion passed. Sharon Burdsall reported that 40% of the money generated by orders will go to Oswegatchie School; turnaround time to fill orders is approximately ten days.

Waterford Parent Liaison Group

a. A Parent Liaison is needed (and a substitute Parent Liaison) to represent Oswegatchie School for monthly meetings with Superintendent Collins on the 4th Tuesday of each month at the Central Office, with meetings beginning at 6:15 p.m. The liaison's responsibility is to report back to the OSO on what happened at the meeting. Laura Brackett volunteered to be the Liaison, with Tracy Cavalieri volunteering to be the Liaison alternate.

New Business/Old Business:

a. Lunch Ticket Process – Mrs. Macione will discuss and confirm with Foodservice the issues of (1) who to make checks payable to; (2) monthly prebuy amounts; (3) carryover unused tickets from the previous school year and previous school month; (4) one free lunch ticket per month with the prebuy option; Mrs. Macione will print responses in the newsletter.

b. Field Day Wrap-Up – Laura Brackett reported that last year there was a lot of fruit leftover. The OSO discussed the Oswegatchie fire truck spraying the students with water. In preparation for this year's Field Day fire truck spray event, a flyer will be sent home with students advising parents if they do not want their child/ren to participate in this event, a note from home will be required.

c. Bike for Bread - \$10,000 was raised last June and distributed to the New London Food Pantry and Connecticut Food Bank. The OSO discussed changing the time for the adult

ride to either earlier or later in the morning than previously held adult rides. Mike Brandt commented that next year, the grill previously supplied by Flanders Fish Market should not be used, rather volunteers should bring grills to the event.

d. 5th Grade Promotion Wrap-Up – it was reported that a great time was had by all; parents set up a “carnival” theme and different prizes were distributed. Allison Mosher created a video of the event. The yearbook planning is underway for this year’s 5th grade class. Currently seeking a hard cover vendor; Laura Brackett will confirm that Foxwood’s will (again) print the yearbook. Kim Brandt suggested that, as an alternative, Pfizer be contacted to inquire about printing this year’s book; Claudette Gilmore to check with Pfizer. Mike Brandt will check with Copy Cats as well to inquire about their printing costs; Laura Brackett will provide Mike with the anticipated yearbook format, quantity, etc.

e. Scholarships – the winners of the \$100 (each) scholarships were awarded to four former Oswegatchie students who currently attend Waterford High School.

f. Thank You Notes – Mike Brandt will forward to Sharon Burdsall a list of people/organizations that need Thank You Notes. Claudia Bouchard volunteered to handwrite all thank you notes.

g. OSO Meeting Minutes – all future OSO meeting minutes will be available via e:mail (and posted on the website); Mrs. Macione will print in the next newsletter to contact Denise Pitasi for distribution participation.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Next Meeting: October 9, 2007