Rosemary Hills Primary School
PTA Board Meeting, November 23, 2009

In attendance: Holly Gross, Emily Mazzella, Lisa Hermes, Kerry Gray, Leslie Zimmerman, Jennifer Emmett, Hunter Hogewood, Shoshana Lombardi, Ralph Viggiano, Sonia Suter, Karen Jacob, AB Carneal, Cheryl Rosenblum and Mary Griffin.

Meeting commenced at 6:30.

1. Update from RHPS: Ralph Viggiano reported that the food drive and book fair were both successful. The school is using the Connect Ed phone and e-mail system to alert parents to early dismissals. The school is developing a multi-part "health room referral" form to improve communication between the teacher, the health technician and the parent in situations where students need to go to the health room.

2. Treasurer: Cheryl Rosemblum will e-mail updated budget figures to the board, including results of the book fair and the membership drive.

3. New Business: "Operation Cookie" (PTA membership drive aimed at increasing teacher participation) is off to a good start. Teachers are offered a 50% reduced rate for membership.

A proposal was made to invite a teacher representative to attend the monthly board meetings. This position would rotate among teachers.

4. Fundraising: The community night at Potomac Pizza raised over $560 for the PTA and was quite successful. The AquaNails fundraiser has also been successful, and the PTA is interested in other ideas for community fundraising events; one possibility is a dinner & movie evening, perhaps in downtown Silver Spring.

5. Study Circles: Holly Gross and Ralph Viggiano reported on the Study Circles program. This is an ongoing program at RHPS that involves representatives from the PTA, staff, and parents, looking at underperforming groups and recommending and developing ways to improve communication between staff and families. An action plan has been developed, with three focuses: (1) establishing mentoring connections between current and new RHPS families, (2) expanding staff professional development to improve understanding of different cultures and parent expectations, and (3) improving parental understanding of assessments and testing, and of the school system in general, especially among minorities. The Washington Post has been closing following the Study Circle program at RHPS and a feature article is anticipated.

6. International Night: International Night will be held on Saturday, January 30, 2010 (snow date Feb. 6). The event will be held for two hours this year, a change from past years. Events leading up to International Night include an assembly or classroom presentations by Meridian International. The philanthropy will be Heifer, International, a charity that promotes sustainability in rural communities. Students will contribute pocket change and the money raised will go to support Heifer's programs. A parade of nations is also under discussion.

7. General Items: The Thanksgiving food drive collected enough food for 34 boxes for RHPS families and over 770 pounds of food for Manna.

Book fair Scholastic Dollars from last year and this year will be used to purchase two of the listening centers that the media center requested.

The Toys for Tots toy collection will run from November 30 to December 11.

8. PTA Updates: This year grade VP's have been updating room parents on discussion items from the board meetings. In turn, some classroom room parents have been forwarding information along to parents. This is a great way to keep parents informed. Grade VP's will rotate this responsibility.

9. Next meeting: Will be a brainstorming session with a focus on membership and mentoring.

10. Other items: The Directory is still in process. The "check your data" e-mail should be going out soon. This is the last step in the process.

Mary Griffin, MCCPTA delegate reported that parent participation, both in attendance and in writing, is very important concerning Board of Education hearings on priorities and the budget.

Meeting adjoured at 7:05. PTA general meeting on specials held from 7:00 to 8:00.