

GLENBROOK NORTH PARENTS' ASSOCIATION  
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
February 3, 2010

Mary Bleeker brought the meeting to order at 7:32pm in the Spartan Conference Room welcoming all. Ryan Bretag, Coordinator of Instructional Technology for GBN was introduced and the program began.

**Program - Ryan Bretag, Coordinator of Instructional Technology**

Mr. Bretag discussed briefly his background, which includes six years of teaching secondary English at Hinkley-Big Rock High School. His professional role as a specialist is specifically focused on the use of technology from an instructional standpoint. His responsibilities include supporting teachers and students, helping to develop and enhance technological skills for the entire school population. Mr. Bretag addresses the need for us to embrace the social phenomenon related to our dependence on technology and fit it to the educational environment, asking "What does it mean well educated in the 21st century?"

Moving forward with a vision is necessary to develop an effective use of technology in the school environment. Mr. Bretag's vision includes short term and long term goals. In place today we have a multidimensional learning space for both teachers and students, using software that allows for collaboration, academic networking and research. The extended high school community is also a consideration. Development is underway for a "Parent Portal" which will permit parent access to records and information of various types regarding their child, and could allow for efficient transfer of information between parties as well. Informal learning spaces have risen as a result of netbooks being used by students on a day to day basis. Mobile and wireless learning can be utilized in a way that maximizes efficiency, eliminates duplication and allows for sharing of ideas.

Along with developing an educational environment made up of hardware and software, comes the responsibility of developing policies with the district that make sense. Cell phone use is a part of today's educational "operative" and is permitted in many local high schools. At the same time, the challenge is to maintain an atmosphere operating at an appropriate level for learning. Other policies that have to be addressed are fiscal. Using free software, open sources and netbooks/mobile technology can allow for growth and improvement along with equity in access without increasing costs dramatically.

Additionally, Mr. Bretag addressed critical shifts in learning, assuring access to media by all, new media literacies, shared departmental Moodles, global partnerships and upcoming development of learning space for professional development by teachers along with continued input of students. In finishing, Mr. Bretag offers the following, that he works with our students, teachers and his staff with a passion not based in technology, but in developing a "community of dedicated students who are committed to quality of thought, word and deed".

*More insight to Mr. Bretag's current philosophies regarding technology can be found on his Metanoia blog site: [http://www.ryanbretag.com/blog/?page\\_id=4](http://www.ryanbretag.com/blog/?page_id=4) .*

## **Reports**

**Chairperson:** Mary Bleeker extended an invitation to interested parties to be a part of the Nominating Committee for next year's Executive Board. Positions that are opening are 1st Vice-Chairs for Membership, Carolyn Cram and Janet McDonald, the Secretary position, being vacated by Dawn Spiewak, and the Treasurer position, being vacated by Anne Tulig. All have served two year terms. Mary asked Mr. Pryma to consider the school needs as we will begin to prepare options for the annual school gift. A letter was developed to send to parents regarding the upcoming Turnabout Dance scheduled for February 20, Daran will report under Communications.

**Membership:** No report.

**Communications:** To ease social and financial pressures related to school dances, a parent communication was generated by Daran Mayer. The letter provides suggestions to families for reducing emphases on overspending and dating pressures. The letter will be included in a mailing which will be sent from the administration regarding the upcoming Turnabout Dance.

**Secretary:** Attendance sheet circulated. Dawn Spiewak requested a motion to approve the January minutes as prepared. A motion was made by Karen Hanley and seconded by Carolyn Cram. All parties in favor and so moved.

**Treasurer:** Anne Tulig provided two handouts on our financial status and a review of recent activity. An billing statement was received for The Torch deliveries (\$3785.60) and an annual contribution of \$1000 was sent to the Grad Night Committee for this year's event. *Parent Night in the Classroom* will include hospitality for the teachers tomorrow night. Other upcoming expenses will include the Distinguished Teacher Award, the Spartan Spirit Award, and the annual school gift.

## **PA Committees:**

**Distinguished Teacher Award:** Letters have been sent to students requesting nominations.

**School Board Report:** Marsha Henry reported that at the recent meeting there was some discussion regarding the possibility of maintaining contacts with our students following graduation, into their college years.

**Staff Appreciation:** Dori Schneider and Lori reported that hospitality arrangements are in order for *Parent Night in the Classroom*. A meal including Lou Malnati's Pizzas, salads, drinks and home baked desserts will be provided for the staff.

## **Standing Committees:**

**Curriculum:** Anne reported on the recent meeting. A number of new courses have been approved for next year. Also discussed and opened for discussion here, was determining whether changes should be considered for the eighth grade evening visits to the high school. In the spring, parents are invited to a curriculum review and separately, they attend another evening with their students which focuses on the school's fine arts programs and extracurricular activities.

**Dean's Advisory:** Mary Bleeker reported there was discussion regarding the review of disciplinary policies and verifying that they are appropriately balanced to related incidents.

**All School Workshops:** Karen Hanley reported on the upcoming All School Workshop plans. Help Works Theater will be providing trained performers to work with the students to produce skits on 10 topics relevant to adolescent issues. Classrooms will be used for the program development and the CPA will be used for the performances. A sampling of issues that may be covered include: alcohol abuse, taunting, isolation and eating disorders.

Dawn Spiewak was contacted recently by a state judge and GBN parent, offering a program on "Seven Reasons to Leave the Party". The program is put together by a panel of Illinois State officials (judges) and presents to students at venues state wide. References to be forwarded to Karen Hanley.

**Staff Development:** Karen Hanley reported that the staff will participate in a development program on March 1, an Institute Day. Staff needs will be addressed and will include physical activity and break-out sessions covering curricular work within departments and documentation for the RTI program.

### **Principal's Report**

Mr. Pryma thanked Ryan Bretag for presenting this evening, noting several talents and skills that make him an ideal individual for working with kids. The school is fortunate to have him among our staff.

Teachers and staff have witnessed a successful first semester with growth among the students. The RTI program is developing and the school will look for ways to adjust the program details as necessary to respond to students' needs and operate efficiently.

Students will have permission to use cell phones in public areas beginning Monday. Guidelines will be introduced on Friday and a smooth transition is expected.

Approximately 375 students are participating in the annual variety show production. "Glenbrook's Got Talent" is scheduled for February 11, 12 and 13 in the CPA. Tickets are \$12. One of our district's recent graduates, John Parks, has made it to the Hollywood round of "American Idol". Watch to see how John performs as the competition continues.

Students have been very responsive to the devastation in Haiti. The high school will host a charity pancake breakfast on Saturday, February 13, from 9AM to noon. Tickets are \$5, all are welcome.

*Parent Night in the Classroom* is scheduled for tomorrow, February 4. Incoming freshmen will be hosted on the evening of February 10 for curriculum review and February 18 for introduction to fine arts and extra-curricular activities.

Mr. Pryma noted that there are some suburban districts that will experience some financial challenges and thanks the community for success of our district referendum two years ago. Our school, district office and the school board continue their disciplined approach to school

funding. Associate Principal John Finan will be meeting with departments in the coming months to plan for the \$2.4 million operating budget. The preliminary budget meeting will be held on Monday, February 8.

A motion to adjourn was made at 9:33PM by Lori AhTou and seconded by Anne Tulig. All in favor and so moved.

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 3, 2010, at 7:30PM in the Spartan Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Spiewak  
Secretary