Approved at February 4, 2015, 9:15AM PTA Meeting

**NS PTA MEETING**

Date/Time: December 9, 2014 / 9:15 a.m.

Location: NS Cafeteria

Attendance: See sign in sheets.

**AGENDA**

Introduction and Welcome

Pledge of Allegiance/NS Pledge

President’s Message

PTA Updates

Guest Speaker: Joan Pirrung, Christiana Care ThinkFirst

Principal’s Message/Vice Principal’s Message

Parent Volunteer Training: Dr. Karin Jakubowski

Question/Answer

**President’s Message**

Julie Alvarez called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m., thanked everyone for coming and turned the floor over to Joan Pirrung, a North Star Elementary parent and Trauma Specialist / Christiana Care ThinkFirst.

Guest Speaker:

Mrs. Pirrung explained the program in detail and mentioned Think First will be presenting to the 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students of NSE next week. Mrs. Pirrung went on to say that Christiana Hospital is a Level 1 Trauma Center treating approximately 5,000 patients a year largely due to motor vehicle crashes, violence, falls and sports. ThinkFirst believes that almost all of these injuries are preventable so the goal of ThinkFirst is to educate people into thinking about the dangers and being aware of the many actions that can be taken to prevent more injuries. Their motto is – Think Before You Act. It is recommended that if you hit your head, you should not move as some neck/spinal injuries can be made worse by movement without stabilization and permanent injury can occur. The brain controls everything you do, protect it. ThinkFirst tells the children to protect their brain with a helmet when skateboarding, biking and snowboarding (possibly sledding, as well) because their brain helps them decide what they will be when they grow up. The back of the brain controls balance. The brain uses the spinal cord to talk to the body and tell the body what to do. If the spinal cord is injured, the brain can’t tell the body what to do.

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Other topics that ThinkFirst presents on are: Car Safety, Bike Safety, Helmet and Seat Belts, Pedestrian Safety, Sports Safety (Tip: You don’t see Football players play without their gear), Water Safety (diving hands out or going in feet first), Weapon Safety (don’t touch, call adult), Animal Safety, Poisionings, Things That Are Hot, Fire Safety, Who To Call?, 911 Police/Fire/Ambulance and Concussions.

ThinkFirst is happy to come back to speak about anything. Comments and questions are always welcome. More information can be found on the ThinkFirst website at [www.thinkfirst.org](http://www.thinkfirst.org).

At 9:45 a.m. Julie Alvarez welcomed our new chair of Support Staff, Kristen Roebke.

Fall Dance Party and Book Fair were both huge successes. Fundraising totals from the book fair will hopefully be published at the next PTA meeting and the appropriation of the funds will be voted on in May 2015, however, proceeds usually go into Library resources.

The PTA Meeting Minutes from October 27, 2014, were approved in a motion by Jen Wootten, seconded by Julie Alvarez and all were in favor.

 January 15, 2015, is Skate Night at Christiana Skate Rink.

 Post Office, run by the 3rd Grade, is going great. Donna Stack said to encourage children to have their friends and family send notes. Any paper or envelope can be used as long as the proper North Star address is put on the mail. Parents are encouraged to sign up to help when their child's class participates (signup genius is on website), and they're welcome to come even if signup is full.

**Community Service update given by Jen Wooten**

This year community service projects are being coordinated with the teachers to support their projects. Update for the school year so far:

* School supplies for Warner Elementary;
* Halloween costumes for Lewis Elementary;
* Stockings for soldiers;
* Thanksgiving food drive; and
* Currently promoting and collecting for Holiday gifts for families at Warner Elementary, where each grade has a wish list.

A question was raised as to whether the grade lists could be posted via Sign Up Genius to avoid duplication of certain items and other items being over looked. Jen Wooten responded that she had thought about it but due to the short timeline of getting the letters out to North Star families to allow two weekends for shopping it was not practical this year but would be looked into for future years.

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**Approval of the North Star PTA Bylaws, led by Jen Wooten**

Jen gave an over view as to why it is important that as a PTA we have bylaws as a source document. The review of the bylaws serves as an education to the board on how things should be running and also is an opportunity to change practices to match the bylaws and also change anything in the bylaws to reflect current procedures that have changed over time.

As a starting point the PTA uses the State PTA template and these now stipulate that the bylaws must be reviewed and re-approved every five years.

Jen went on to summarize the changes that have been made and noted that the updated bylaws have been posted on the PTA website and flagged in recent eNews mailings too.

The revised bylaws have already been accepted by Delaware State PTA before being presented for local approval.

A motion to accept the updated bylaws was made by Mrs. Jenine Thomas and seconded by Carter Bowersox. All members present were in favor and the approval was made at 9.59am.

**Finance update by Ann Pollock**

Ann presented the latest set of income and expenditure accounts covering the period July 1st, 2014 to December 8th, 2014 and copies were available to see at the meeting.

Points noted:

* The book fair was financially a great success and once the final bill is paid to Scholastic, which is not yet in the accounts, the profit is expected to be approximately $3,500;
* The Spirit Fest fundraiser went very well and at the moment shows a profit of $15,380.75 but the moon bounce reward is still to be paid so this will figure decrease slightly;
* Membership income has trailed off and currently the PTA has 299 members for this year, it is not expected that many more people will join the PTA for this year although it is not too late;
* It was noted that the high cash levels shown are due to the spirit fest fundraiser and book fair income being banked and many costs for the year still to be paid out; and
* Final comment was that the PTA is in the process of changing bank accounts and the old bank accounts will be closed once the final two checks have cleared.

The copy of the latest accounts will be posted on the PTA website.

**Message from Mrs. Thomas**

* Hero Day held on 11/26/14 was a great success. This year the kids identified their own heroes and there was a tie between Sarah Dixon, a North Star Elementary student who helped a friend after an accident, and Pearce Quensenberry a 16 year old who was a Red Clay student and a brain cancer survivor who is an advocate for childhood cancer with her own nonprofit “Pearce Q Foundation”.

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On Hero Day the school welcomed Jonathan Sprout for two grade level assemblies at which the school voted heroes were also acknowledged.

* Last week inclusive schools were celebrated with the theme “I am special ….”. Linked to this theme Meadowood students are coming to North Star every Friday with their job coaches and helping in the cafeteria, library for read arounds, and in the office helping with jobs such as shredding and pencil sharpening.
* Mrs. Thomas touched on the community service projects and how they are linking into the schools SMILE them this year. She said how great it was when the Kindergarten students were able to present the school supply donations to the principal of Warner school, and thanked Mrs. Reichle for leading this project. She also thanked Mrs. Whittaker for heading the Thanksgiving food drive from which the school provided 31 meals for families in need, and thanks Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Westcott for their help in the Stockings for Soldiers collection. In addition those mentioned another project has been collecting a classroom of uniforms to send to Shortlidge Elementary.
* Dates to look out for in the future:
	+ February 19th 2015, for Family Fitness night; and
	+ February 24th 2015, for the Red Clay referendum vote. On that day there will be classroom invitation events and in the evening a school wide “book in” where there will be photo opportunities for parents with their children against various back drops, and the photos will be collated into a book for a gift to the school.

**Message from Dr. Jakubowski**

* Dr. Jakubowski said how excited she was to see and read the first North Star newsletter that was published and sent home with students recently, and she felt it a historic event in the school.
* She mentioned how the fifth grade chorus have been invited back to sing the national anthem at the 76ers basketball game on Friday January 9th, 2015. Flyers on how to buy tickets will be sent home through the school.

**Other matters**

* On the back of Dr. Jakubowski’s messages Carter Bowersox mentioned the success of the North Star TAG team who won an award for their Delaware Day election project. The team went to an award ceremony on Saturday December 6th and were presented the award by Delaware Secretary of State;
* The next staff appreciation lunch is on January 9th and a sign up genius will be sent out soon for donations of food items and supplies, and cash donations are also always welcome;

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* The PTA directory is now live and it was explain by Ann that this has been compiled using details from current year PTA membership forms and it is encouraged that families check their information. If you are not in the directory and want to be added there is a link on the PTA website to send in your details;
* andThe conversation on the directory led to a question on some parents saying why would they join the PTA when they can get “everything for free” and we discussed how it is helping the school and examples of what the PTA provides for students.

**The meeting was adjourned by Julie Alvarez at 10.14am.**