

May 7, 2008

Dear Northgate Families,

As I write this, my last President's letter, I am filled with an overwhelming feeling of relief and sadness mixed together. For the last thirteen years I have volunteered in our children's schools. I have been blessed to be able to work with so many dedicated and committed people. I have learned a great deal from them. Together we have made a difference in the education of the children of our community. I consider myself lucky to have had this opportunity. I thank you all for your support, differing opinions, laughter and hard work. You have made these years easy for me.

Budget and New Board Update

On Thursday, May 15th, 2008, at 7PM, there will be a General PFC Board meeting in the school library. We will be voting on both the proposed PFC Board for 2008-2009 and the Budget for 2008-2009. Please attend and make your voice heard on our proposed budget. Since my last letter on the budget I have gotten the following feedback from the community:

Keep My Grade Book in the budget

In email with Mrs. Maddern, I have found out that two teachers are currently testing the new ABI system that comes with the new student information system purchased last year by the District. The school is using this system to take attendance each day now. The new system would be up and running for the parents to access January 2009. For the first six months of school, the teachers would be getting used to it and making sure all the "bugs" are out of it. The need for My Grade Book may be obsolete. Mrs. Maddern will get back to me regarding the procedures the teachers will follow to communicate with parents about grades during the six month training period.

Raise the Education Fund donation-

We wouldn't have to do this if we could get 100% participation in the current education fund donation of \$180.00, or \$1.00/day. I will certainly bring this up at next weeks meeting, but, personally I **don't think this is the answer. Getting everyone to participate is the solution.** Families can certainly feel free to increase their donation in support of the PFC's goals.

Take our Teacher Appreciation/Hospitality-

These were two separate line items that we were able to combine. This may seem like a disposable item, but being able to provide appreciation to our hard working staff and faculty is indispensable. These funds will pay for three different lunches as well as all of Teacher Appreciation Week. It's a small way that we can show our Teachers that we care.

We are proposing a very conservative budget. In it; thanks to a recent donation commitment, we are able to provide funding for six class periods instead of five. These class periods, or class sections as they were previously called, enable some flexibility in our Master Schedule of Classes. The budget cuts that are coming down from the State still a mystery. It is unclear if these six class periods will enable us to maintain the current level of curriculum at current class sizes, or will they make possible smaller classes and more curriculum development. The State allocates funds for class period funding. The rumor is that this number will be cut and classes will be larger; if so our six class periods may help us through some tough times ahead. If you would

like to see the money budgeted for this item increased, we need a firm commitment of \$18,000 for each extra class period.

AP classes

For the last seven years we have been asking for more Advanced Placement (AP) classes. The District did not stop us from having them. Now, under the new Administrative leadership at our school, I can say that more AP Classes are coming to Northgate. At last week's staff meeting, Mr. Tolliver made it clear that the parents of our community want them and that our school needs them. In the proposed PFC budget we have allocated \$800.00 towards the AP Certification for our teachers. The total cost of each certification is \$1500.00. Mr. Tolliver would like to see at least three new AP classes here next year.

The anticipated budget cuts make hard for the school to commit any school funding to these costs. Mr. Tolliver has been in touch with the District which has indicated that these costs are the District's responsibility and that they will cover them.

Of course, if the State comes back with even more cuts, we have to be prepared to fund this expense. Your commitment now to the PFC Education Fund will enable us to do so.

Once again, I have to say what a difference there is at Northgate now with a change in Administrative leadership.

Walk Thru Registration

Walk Thru days are August 19th and 20th. School starts August 26th. Please plan your vacation time accordingly. Parents are required to accompany their children to Walk Thru. You may ask, "Why?" I'll tell you: You will be asked many many times, to make a donation to:

- Northgate PFC Education Fund
- Parent Action Team
- Class room Donations
- Music and Athletic Boosters
- Northgate Pride
- Year Book purchases
- School spirit wear
- Technology funds
- Parking Permits
- ETC.

We need you there to make out the checks. We also want you to feel you are an important part of the school. We want you to walk the halls and see where your money is going. High School is a time of letting go. There won't be many times that your high school student will want to walk with you at school--don't miss this chance.

This year Walk Thru will be held in the main building--the forum and walkways in front of the library.

Here is the **complete schedule of Walk thru and Ninth Grade Orientation**

Thursday August 14th	7pm to 8:30pm	9th Grade Parent orientation
Friday August 15th	9am to 1pm	9th Grade Student Orientation w/lunch

Tuesday August 19th	8am to 11am	9th Grade Walk Thru registration
	1pm to 4pm	11th grade Walk Thru registration
Wednesday August 20th	8am to 11am	10th Grade Walk Thru registration and Eye & Vision testing
	1pm to 4pm	12th Grade Walk Thru Registration
	5pm to 7pm	All Grades Walk Thru registration

If you have any questions regarding Walk Thru Registration please contact Patty Proctor at Patricia_proctor@yahoo.com

As you can imagine, it takes a large number of volunteers to make Walk Thru run smoothly. If you would like to volunteer to help at Walk Thru, please contact Donna Warnkin-Brill at Rhinobjwb@astound.net.

This is our major fundraising event. I can't stress strongly enough how important your donation is to the education your child is receiving. Each week, there are articles about Districts asking each family to contribute an additional sum of money to offset the District wide cuts. These are Districts that already have Parcel Taxes. State funding, even in a good year, just doesn't provide the funds we need to make Public Schools what they deserve to be. The States may guarantee a free public school education, but that does not guarantee the quality to ensure that we stay a strong and competitive country. We are the only ones who can make sure that our children get what they need from our schools.

In the next few weeks, more information will be coming to you explaining how and why you should donate. You will also receive a working copy of the Walk Thru Registration Form so you can budget your funds over the summer months.

Principal Selection

As you know the District is once again advertising for new applicants for our Principal opening. I know that we would all love to see Mr. Tolliver stay, but unfortunately he can't. It's a pleasure to see what the school can be like under the right type of leadership. In my conversation, on May 5th, with Gail Isserman, Assistant Superintendent of Personnel, I was assured that it is the goal of the District to find us a highly qualified High School Principal. Our community, the faculty, administrative and support staff have provided the District with a great deal of information about what we need. It is the District's intention to meet those needs. We will be kept informed as the process continues. It is time for us to put trust first and doubt second.

In closing, I leave the PFC in very competent hands. The incoming Board, under Monica Fitzgerald will be strong and committed to continuing to improve the education and programs we give to the school. I am sure that you will give them the same encouragement and support you have given me. Thanks for the memories.

Thea Ann Sorscher

Northgate PFC President