MINUTES OF V.A.S.E. MEETING
November 5, 2008

Board Members Present:  Rania Lavranos, Christina Fasciana, Becka Baldwin and Terry Allan

Others Members Present:  Ed Fava, Julie Bangs, Kathy Messina, Kimberly Owens, Lynne Parks Kuhl, Amy Read, Jane McCarthy, Sheri Lovegrove, Kerry Saltonstall

Rania opened the Meeting at 9.10 a.m.

Secretary’s Report – Terry reviewed the minutes from our October meeting. The minutes were approved as submitted.

Treasurer’s Report – Christina reported that currently the CD account has a balance of $3,474.87, the Money Market Account $33,275.40 and the Operating Account $1,590.94. $4,000 was transferred from the Money Market to the Operating account. We have received two personal donations – one in the amount of $1,250 and the other from the Braitmeyers for $3,500. Money has also come in from Bingo, Great Source Books, and Spiritwear. The School store has a balance of $1,124.24. The report was accepted as submitted.

Teacher Liaison – Julie Bangs said she has spoken with teachers about getting money and permission slips back for field trips. She also informed teachers about the proposed field day and will email them with the suggested date of June 1st with June 2nd as rain date.

In-service day was firstly spent reviewing the new report cards and in the computer lab. The new report cards will allow more specific information to be included and for teachers to complete them online. Lynne Kuhl asked whether there will be an information session for parents before the December conferences to help them understand the new system. Her concern was that conference time will be taken up with questions. The second half of the In-service day was spent with an Autism Specialist learning more about autism spectrum disorder, more specifically PDD and Aspergers.

The issue of using the VASE email list for specialists to communicate with parents was brought up by Rania. After some thought, it was decided that we need to be careful about how we use our email list. We don’t want parents feeling overwhelmed by emails from VASE. It was suggested that the specialists send home a letter asking if parents want to be part of an email list for that teacher, then all emails will come directly from them.

Finally, Julie mentioned that we have two half days coming up for teacher conferences, December 4 and 5. She emphasized that conferences need not only be held on these days.

Principal’s Report – Ed Fava said that he together with members of the school council have been working for the past 2 months on a mission statement for Sippican School. It will be a sentence about what guides the school. When it is complete it will be presented to the faculty, then the School Committee before VASE.
Since becoming Principal of Sippican, Mr. Fava has become aware of our lack of a dismissal policy for children at end of the school day. He would like to bring our school in line with the other elementary schools in the district and foremost wants to address safety and liability issues. At the moment walkers from Grades 1 – 6 are dismissed and not released to a parent or guardian. He would like to have a sign-out policy for students in K-2 with parents having an option to sign a release form if they want their children to walk home.

We have been having lockdown drills and there will be another one this Friday. Lynne Kuhl asked whether the lockdown procedure will be made available to parents, volunteers and substitutes who may be in the building at the time of a real lockdown. Mr. Fava said he will work on this. Kerry Saltonstall asked how much information is being given to students about the reasons a lockdown may take place. Ed replied that only limited details are shared with students stating it is for safety reasons, like with fire drills.

Ed Fava is also working on the school budget for next year. Unfortunately, he needs to cut $120,000 to $130,000 from his budget which means reducing spending. Cuts need to come from either the contractual side or supplies and materials. This may mean a cut to staff which could lead to an increase in class size. He needs to prepare a report for the Superintendent by December 8th.

Other Business - Principal Fava approached VASE asking if would be willing to fund an in-school presentation of the “Snow Queen” offered by the New Bedford Ballet in March. The cost is $275.00. The consensus was yes, however Kathy Messina offered to find out more about the New Bedford Ballet and their productions then liaise with Mr. Fava about a suitable date.

VASE Committee Updates –

Bingo night – was a lot of fun with 150 people in attendance. Rania proposed that we offer another bingo night sometime during the winter and maybe each person can bring in a canned item for charity in lieu of paying.

Wine Tasting and Silent Auction – Rania reported that everything is coming together. Kittanset is the venue, Spirits will organize the wine tasting and Harriets Outback will prepare the food. Invitations and reservation forms have been sent out and are also available on the school website. No tickets will be issued and flyers are being put up around town. Andrew Simpson has been handling the publicity and word it getting out about the event, which is open to the public. Class baskets are being bundled tomorrow and after that we will know what extra items we need and how to spend any donation money sent in.

Great Source Book Orders - have been sent out.

Box Tops – Amy Read needs to talk with the teachers about the incentive program so they are on board. Serendipity has donated a webkins and an iPod amplifier as incentive gifts. The class that collects the most box tops will get a popcorn party in the Hardwork Café. The teacher will get an incentive gift of a $25 gift card to be used for classroom supplies and a manicure donated by Salon D’Italia. One child’s name will be drawn and awarded the webkins or iPod amplifier. This will be repeated in the second half of the school year. Class
parents will receive information about the program and need to ask for volunteers from parents to help with collecting and logging the box tops for each class.

**Shaws Receipts** – Linda Rush is doing a great job with Shaws receipts. Amy Read has placed collection boxes in Shaws and VASE will let parents know about this convenience. A box top and Shaws receipt box has also been placed in the Elizabeth Tabor Library.

**Ink Cartridges** – Rania asked if anyone wants to take this on. It appears that it is only bringing in a small amount of money due to continuing changes with the companies and we are not sure if it is worth the effort.

**Drama Club** – We have not had any luck finding a parent willing to take on the Drama Club. We need someone to chair this committee and contact Chris Silva and see if she is willing to work with us on a production.

**Meeting Adjourned 10.40 a.m.**