

**Peekskill CSD PTO
Advocacy Committee Annual Report**

4/29/16

**Members: Ken Martin, Suzette Malone, Vernita Mosely, Ann Narcisse,
Jeff Althofer**

Committee goals:

1. To advocate for the interests of the district, students and families and help parents and community members become involved and empowered to strengthen our district.
2. To respond to issues, such as proposed charter schools or private school busing, that may negatively impact the district.
3. To create awareness around budget votes, Board of Education candidates, and ballot referenda that affect the district.

In-person meetings in 2015-2016: 1

Suggestions and goals discussed:

1. Bringing more families into the PTO by using PTO meetings as community events where people can connect with school administrators and faculty, as well as with community services such as health care, English classes, housing programs, voter registration, etc. Possibly opening meetings up as family events, with upper grade students as facilitators for younger children, maybe homework help, etc.
2. Holding events such as music events or bingo nights on the night of the budget vote, so we can draw more supporters out to vote
3. Holding voter registration drives at events and in the high school for seniors.
4. Creating partnerships with local businesses to gain and maintain their support

Actions taken in 2015-16

1. Took steps to connect Dr. Fine with local restaurant owners to begin a partnership with the schools – this is pending and we are expecting it to move forward over the next few months.

2. Communicated State budget issues to community groups to encourage people to pressure legislators to release necessary state aid to our district.
3. Set up BOE candidates' forum
4. Created budget vote signs
5. Communicated potential upper grade busing budget issue to committee members and community groups, attended board meeting to support board members standing against a petition to spend public school funds on private school busing

Going forward:

As committee chair, I am able to leverage contacts and research I've done in past work on charter issues, school budget issues, and local political issues. On the down side, my work schedule this year has been rigorous and I haven't been able to accomplish as much as I might like in the committee. I am happy to continue as I have been, doing what I can and responding in crises, and I am also happy to step aside and be a committee member if someone else with more time and energy would like to head up the committee.