

WISITALIA

June 20, 2009

Summary Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order at 10:10 a.m.

Members Present: F. Alfano, T. Bruno, D. Cicero, P. Pingitore, R. Pignone, R. Prigioni, V. Ruffolo, S. Torcaso, J. Stenson

Board Member Reports:

Don Cicero reported that the Racine Unified School District surveyed two middle schools to find out if students were interested in taking Italian. 177 students responded to the survey. Out of the 177 students, 63 are currently not enrolled in a world language class. Of those 63, 15 showed an interest in taking Italian. Based on these results, Racine has said offering Italian right now is unfavorable. A committee will meet in the near future to discuss these results and decide on a course of action.

Peter Pingitore and Vincent Ruffolo reported that the Mt. Carmel/St. Therese school is still looking for an Italian teacher. Vincent Ruffolo suggested putting together a presentation to help promote WisItalia. He will work on this project along with Rina Pignone, Joanna Stenson, and Ralph Annina.

Giovanna Miceli Jefferies is working on the 2010 budget and will contact teachers to have them submit their budget requests and projected data. Andy Mueller might be leaving his position as the Italian teacher at Spring Harbor and Wright Middle Schools in Madison. Both schools are funded through Italidea-Chicago, which has re-committed to continue the funding for the 2009-2010 school year.

2010 Teacher of the Year Banquet: Next year's banquet will be held at the Italian American Club in Kenosha on May 22, 2010 (note date change from previous summary). Peter Pingitore will take care of the arrangements. Tony Bruno and Frank Alfano will be in charge of the voting process.

Other Business: Rita Prigioni read a report from Giovanna Miceli Jefferies, who attended the Conference on the Promotion of the Italian Language in U.S. Schools K-16 Sponsored by the Embassy of Italy, NIAF and the American Association of Teachers of Italian on June 13, 2009. Italian teachers from all over the country attended, as well as several representatives from the Italian government. The conference focused on several important issues. The entire report is posted on the WisItalia website, however, highlights include:

- **Advocacy/Promotion/Initiatives**
 - Italian should be promoted as a world language and more dual language programs such as the Victory Immersion School in Milwaukee should be implemented.

- **Teacher Certification/Professional Development/Recruiting**
 - Many U.S. universities presented their current collaborative programs with Italian universities for dual or joined language and teaching degrees granted by Italian universities.

- **AP Italian**
 - The AP exam was a polarizing topic. Many members at the conference want to continue pushing for the AP exam to be reinstated. Other members of the group want to find alternative programs, such as those that would recognize high school work and give college credit for it. No decision was reached on this topic.

- **Funding of Italian programs**
 - The Italian government has cut funding by 40% due to economic difficulties.

 - Italian groups in the U.S. need to be more fiscally responsible with the funding the Italian government does provide. These groups should also try to become self sufficient.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held on September 19, 2009, at the Italian Community Center (ICC) in Milwaukee.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Minutes by J. Stenson