

**Weston PTO Board Meeting Minutes**  
April 13, 2010

Present:

Ellen Livingston, Danielle Black, Laura Miller, Kim Costello, Brooke Tiller, Lisa Green, Deb Egan, Sanjay Saini, Suzanne Lenox, Robin Ewald, Lisa Williams, Jane Fong, Carolann Augustine, Deb Sullivan, Lee McCanne, Rebecca Stevenson, Kelly Renner, Joanne Melikian-Cate, Tina Chartrand

The meeting was called to order at 7:37

**Opening Business:**

**Approval of March 10, 2010 PTO meeting minutes.**  
The Minutes were approved.

**Treasurer's Report: Tina Chartrand**

When submitting receipts, please turn in real receipts not handwritten ones. Also please state the department and/or use for the expense.

Keep the receipts coming.

Note from Ellen: As we head into budgeting for next year, please review your expenses so we can come up with accurate numbers.

**Superintendent's Report: Cheryl Maloney (Presented by Ellen)**

The annual report is available on the website for review. Contact the school committee with questions or comments.

Upcoming meetings on "Trends in Education" are scheduled for April 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm at the High School and May 1<sup>st</sup> at 10:00am in the library with the League of Women Voters.

Field School Update: Don't forget to sign up for the listserve created specifically for updates on this project. This is also a specific listserve for the High School Science Labs

project. The school administration is continuing to go through a series of document exchanges with the state. In the meantime the school administration is working on a request for services for a project manager.

High School Update: An architect has been selected and the timetable will be fast. Please look out for opportunities for parent input. The administration has received some feedback from parents interested in making the addition as 'green' as possible.

Career Day: Career Day was a great success. There was one issue with the comedian but be assured he will not be returning to a school event.

Teacher Contract Negotiations: Negotiations are still ongoing.

Kindergarten Registration: Kindergarten registration is in process. Please encourage people to register if they have not done so already as registrations seems to be slow coming in.

Global Education Committee: The administration has a strong interest in Global Education and needs a committee to replace the committee formerly known as WIA. This committee collapsed after 9/11. Its purpose was to assist students involved in the exchange programs – both Weston students going abroad and visiting students in our district. We are in need of a committee to come up with fundraising ideas, finding host families, and hosting International Night at the High School. Danielle Capablo, who has been facilitating the logistics of visiting students will no longer be in that role.

### **School Committee's Report: Sanjay Saini**

Sanjay reported that Court Chilton, a member of the School Committee, has spent quite some time on the document for the "Trends in Education" report. It is an opportunity for the parents to understand what is going on and to ask questions. He encourage everyone to take a look at the information.

The budget process is ongoing but is a little different than in the recent past because there is no union contract in place yet. Additionally, the state funding continues to be in question. The three areas of state funding that are unknown are: c.70 (general funding to communities), METCO, and Special Education (cost sharing). The school committee is going forward with the budget process but is doing it based on assumptions.

### **Legal Council: Aviva Jeruchim**

The new PTO Student Directory Exception Form was reviewed and looks good as it meets all of the legal requirements.

### **New Business: Ellen Livingston**

The Slate for the 2010-2011 school year was distributed. We will vote at our next meeting and the new members will join us for our June meeting. We do not have nominees for Weston PAC, WCCA, WEEFC, etc., as we don't vote on those positions. They are provided by their organizations own nomination process.

We will need a change in Membership Dues, primarily because of changes to the calendar/directory. Since we are looking to integrate the school calendar with the school website, the download will be free. Hopefully this will be complete this summer. Suzanne Lenox and the administration have been working on it and addressing all sorts of issues but it is complex. Due to the changes, however, we will lose revenue – approximately \$1,500 from the downloads. Additionally, we haven't raised dues in years and there is a trend towards declining enrollment in the younger grades, which means fewer families. The proposal was to raise dues by \$5 to \$45 but after discussion among the board, it was decided to raise the dues to \$50 and keep the fee for additional books at \$10. We will maintain the option to make a donation at the time of registration. There was a motion made and it was approved.

A suggestion was made by Robin that the PTO may need to do a better job marketing all that it does and does it without fundraising.

There will be a honorarium dinner for Rob Evans (part of HRS). He has 25 years of service with HRS and PTO, WEEFC and the school administration put an ad in the program booklet (\$150 each) to congratulate him.

Please be aware, the PTO has tablecloths – lots of tablecloths. We have black, white, teal and now maroon. Apparently some schools have rented tablecloths/linens for the staff appreciation luncheons. Please don't rent. Just let us know when and how many you will need. You can pick them up where from where they are stored. The only requirement is that they are returned laundered and ready to be used again.

### **Old Business: Ellen Livingston**

We are entering the next phase of our calendar/directory updates. Over the next few weeks, PTO and the school administration will work together to collect correct email addresses from families. There will be a listserve going out informing parents of the process. If there is a problem with an email address, PTO will be assisting the administration in collecting the correct information. We will be using school chairs and room parents, where appropriate, to help confirm email addresses not in the school database. Sanjay suggested that some high school students may be available to assist with the compiling of information. Lee McCanne and the administration appreciates all the

assistance we can provide in moving this project to completion. Eventually, they are looking to include other school based forms, such as the Health Form, in this process.

Other changes to the calendar/directory include the deletion of the sports and summer pages and the increase in the use of the sidebars. We will not be including any Woodland or Country distinctions this year.

The completion of job descriptions would be appreciated. The job descriptions help us in recruiting new volunteers so please get them in. In order to help you with the format, copies of the Community Outreach's job description were distributed.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **CALENDAR PRODUCTION: Kim Costello, Robin Ewald**

#### *Completed Tasks*

I received three quotes from printers and all three were lower than last year

Allegra quoted \$1646

Stapes quoted \$1951

Weston Printing quoted \$2814

Ben Franklin (Last year) cost us \$3917(typesetting was \$1038)

Carrie and I went to the Field school art show and picked out some possible pieces for the front and back covers

I verified the faculty contact list with Lisa Hollis

Lee McCanne is verifying email addresses

At the end of April and/or beginning of May, templates for next year's calendar will be going out. We are in the process of preparing the templates and cleaning them up for distribution.

#### *Ongoing Tasks*

A new attorney is reviewing the Student Directory Form which needs to be coordinated with the schools and mailed out ASAP

Ellen has made contact with a new typesetter and we're waiting to set up a meeting with her. We need to see how much more real estate we need for the Email addresses

I need to go over the macro with the web master

I have to send the excel template to staff members who need to make submissions

Post announcements on Westword and List Serve regarding the student directory form

**MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL: Jane Fong, Lisa Williams**

With the membership drive on May 1<sup>st</sup> coming up in a few weeks, we have started preparation for it. Announcement for the upcoming drive will be in Westword beginning this week. We will be working on getting other email reminders out, and sandwich boards set up to be distributed around town. There has been a delay on the printing of the registration forms due to the possibility of a change to the PTO membership fee. The registration forms will be ready once the decision on the fee is made.

We will need 3 sandwich boards during the membership drive (May 1<sup>st</sup> – June 30<sup>th</sup>), are there any organizations in town that has some we can borrow?

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH: Carolann Augustine, Deb Sullivan**

**Reach out and Read** - Our virtual book drive raised \$1,150, which will provide 300 new books to the children, mainly in poverty, who ROR supports.

**Community Day** - The PTO's first annual Community Day seemed to be enjoyed by all. 72 students participated and over 50 volunteers helped support the range of activities scheduled - Bingo, Food Art, Creating Emotionally Intelligent Signs, Spring Cleaning and Land's Sake. The day concluded with a celebration at the Field School Cafeteria and included live music, face painting, tattoos and lots of treats. We're consolidating feedback from the day (ie what worked/what didn't) to consider for the future.

A video from Community Day was shown at the meeting. It was a great video that captured so many moments from the day. A high school student put the video together.

**WESTWORD: Laura Dubin, Greg Augustine**

**NO REPORT SUBMITTED FOR PRESENTATION**

**HIGH SCHOOL: Jean O'Connor, Marion Packs**

At the high school...

A very successful career day was held last Wednesday with 150 speakers and over 700 students. PTO recruited over 40 volunteers to greet, escort and thank speakers. It was an extraordinary day.

We have three parent advisors for next year's incoming 9th grade due to the large size of that class. They are Rachel Cesar, Mary McCurdy, and Peg Golden

There is some confusion regarding the "Grade discussion groups" that occur in private homes. A listserv will be sent out shortly to clarify that these are neither school nor PTO meetings

We are co-sponsoring Weston Health and Wellness Meeting on Weds April 28th at 7PM at the Community Center regarding social host laws.

A Principal's coffee with Anthony Parker will be held at the media center at 8am on Thursday April 29th

Spring Fling is on Saturday May 8 from 10-2 on the Town Green, our Parent Advisors are working with their class officers to recruit volunteers and to determine their activities...come and enjoy the fun!

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL: Joan Heilbronner, Deb Egan**

**Middle School Art Show:** The Middle School Art Show was a great success. The jazz band performed, and hundreds of people attended. Our hospitality staff provided decorations and coordinated refreshments. Deb Egan was the event chair and did a wonderful job. We also want to thank the art teachers, Dawn Nelson and Margaret Burns for their dedication and help in making this event such a success.

**School Improvement Plan:** John Gibbons will present the MS School Improvement Plan to the School Committee on April 29

**Principal's Coffee:** John Gibbons will hold the final principal's coffee for this year on April 30 in the morning.

### **Future Events Planning Underway:**

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Year End events:** We have met with the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Head Parents to discuss plans for year-end events for the class. A letter to parents will go out this week which shares information about the D.C. trip, chaperone thank you baskets, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade semiformal, and moving on day.

**Faculty/Staff Appreciation Luncheon:** The MS appreciation luncheon is scheduled for June 2 after dismissal. We met with the event chairs and hospitality to discuss the theme other preliminary details.

**FIELD SCHOOL: Linda Angelucci, Adrian Proll**

March

Jr. Broadway - Willi Wonka (week-end of 3/12); not really a PTO or Field School event but almost 100 kids participated in the production; despite widespread difficulties with practices, performances went well

String Fling, BandFest, SprinSing - again, not a PTO-related event but so many kids participated it should be mentioned; wonderful events

5th Grade Wax Museum (3/16) - great event where 5th graders select a Revolutionary-era person of interest and prepare short speech to deliver to "museum visitors"; must dress in period costume. Great event!

Staff Appreciation Lunch (3/26); a small slice of France visited Field School on March 26th as over 75 parent volunteers prepared food, helped decorate and/or served lunch to the Field School staff; a very pretty and touching event

- School Council: working on 2010/11 School Improvement Plan: have had 3 extra sessions and are currently awaiting teacher feedback on some of the projected initiatives as well as some feedback from parents on what they believe to be issues of significance for Field School
- Narrowed theme to a couple for the 5th Grade Celebration Day; did some initial work on laying out games & video presentation at Rivers; wrapping up fundraising in early April

**Upcoming Events:**

- **Field School Art Show**
- **5th Grade Spring Dance**
- **Principal's Coffee**
- **Preparation for 5th Grade Parent Discussion Group in early May**

There were some congratulatory comments made on the success of the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Dance. Over 170 students attended the fundraiser. The response was so overwhelming that the venue was changed to Regis.

**COUNTRY SCHOOL: Laura Miller, Brooke Tiller**

Country School had our annual Teacher Appreciation Luncheon on March 17th and it was a great success. Over 100 families contributed in some form - everything from making food to decorating the library to creating the children's crafts to washing dishes.

The teachers were overwhelmed with our efforts and felt extremely fortunate to have

such a generous and caring parent community. The children even participated by creating grade-specific crafts, which helped with our decorating efforts as well as made the children proud to be a part of the luncheon.

Our next event is Art Day, which will be held on Friday, April 16th.

There will be a picnic on June 3<sup>rd</sup> to thank and honor Steve Shaw for his years of service to the children at Country School. It will be informal and low key. Families are invited to bring their own picnic dinners and it will provide an opportunity for families to talk to Steve. We are working on a memory book and a parting gift.

### **WOODLAND SCHOOL: Joanne Melikian-Cate, Rebecca Stevenson**

We had a fantastic Asian themed staff appreciation luncheon last month on March 11<sup>th</sup>. The staff really loved it, and it was a bright spot in an otherwise dreary month with beautiful cherry blossom centerpieces and Asian goodies in delightful bags as the takeaway all provided by Alison Barlow. We also had a Woodland family contribute chocolate dipped fortune cookies with a personalized Woodland message in each. It was a great success!

The first graders just completed their field trip to the Japan House at the Children's Museum as a part of their Japan studies. On Wednesday April 14<sup>th</sup> parents will have an opportunity to see all the children have been doing and learning in the classrooms when the first grade classes celebrate Children's Day or Kodoma-no-i.

The School Council is beginning their work on the School Improvement Plan in anticipation of presenting it to the School Committee in May. Also, we very excited at the prospect of getting our life-sized, outdoor nest in the front of Woodland School. This is an item that has been on Dr. Dunn's wish list for sometime now, and it appears that it will become a reality with WEEFC's help. It's a metal structure shaped like a bird's nest, and the children will weave real plant matter into it just as birds do with their nests. We'll keep you posted on its expected arrival date!

### **CREATIVE ARTS: Lisa Green, Mandie Jordan-Smith**

March was a quieter month for performers at Weston schools but still busy with authors. Wordfest had the author Debbie Miller present to 3rd grade at Country and Woodland. Author Jarret Krosoczka was at Country and Woodland presenting to Kindergarten which was a huge success. Also Suzy Kline was at Woodland presenting to 2nd grade. Last week at Field School author Alan Kurzweil presented to 4th grade and at the end of the month Jeff Kelly will be starting his residency. Finally on April 29th Kate Klise will be at Field School for Ben Sandall's day. A lunch is being prepared by the Creative Arts committee for all Field School faculty.

There were no performers this month, so we have been busy previewing and booking for the next school year. We are meeting with the Principals and faculty to finalize plans and

to try and get as many WEEFC grants processed for budgeting purposes.

**MATH AND SCIENCE COUNCIL: Betsy Romeri, Denise McGeough**

April brings a busy month for the Math & Science Council with six events being held in the Middle and High School to include Cryogenic, Earth Day and Domino Physics. In addition the council has started to schedule our fall programming for 2010. After great success this year using the Museum of Science enrichment programs we plan to use more of their programs next year. These programs are competitive and more difficult to schedule, but higher quality and in many instances more affordable. Scheduling in advance for next fall will allow us to coordinate with other PTO committees and even include many of our events in the school calendar.

**WEBMASTERS: Beth Keene, Alicia Abad, Suzanne Lenox**

Membership drive starts on May 1<sup>st</sup> and when the website is reset, it will wipe out all volunteer contact information listed on the site. Please take the time now to print or otherwise capture any information you may need. This includes the volunteer listings per school.

In looking at the Gift Book Program, it appears that the form is out of date. We need to get the new and updated contact names for each school.

We've changed some of the format of the PTO website. Instead of including a President's message, we will be listing announcements and upcoming events. This will help keep the PTO's webpage fresh and timely.

There was a discussion about the Request for Exclusion Form that is part of the preparations for printing the Calendar/Directory. The thought is to backpack the form in the elementary schools, mail it at the middle schools and email it at the high school. We will include it with the packets mailed to incoming Kindergarteners.

**WESTONPAC: Kim Costello**

Weston PAC continues to prepare for the 2010-2011 school year! Goals achieved since our last meeting include...

**Goals being worked on...**

The PAC has been busy in the past few months on a few initiatives we set out to accomplish at the beginning of the year.

### **School Transition Packets**

Working with Student Services and the Principals of each school we are creating a transition packet for each grade for children on an IEP to carry with them during the special education transition tour. The special ed. tour is given to students prior to the general grade tours. The goal is to help ease the anxiety for children and parents and it will be something for them to refer to all summer.

Packets will be available for download for anyone who would like one for their child.

The packets will be available in May

### **School wide district survey**

The PAC is also working on a comprehensive survey that will be sent out in October to all parents who have a child on an IEP. The survey will encompass everything from the IEP process, communication with faculty and programs being offered in the district. We will present our results to Student Services and the School Committee in the middle of next year.

### **Upcoming Events**

**Spring Coffee – Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup>**

**Spring Workshop – Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 9:15**

We are hosting a **spring workshop** being presented by Student Services on Parent's Basic Rights and Responsibilities, the IEP document and a brief overview of new and existing programs being offered to our kids.

### **WEEFC: Kelly Renner**

The Spring Sprint is May 23<sup>rd</sup>, it is a fun community event and we hope you have a chance to participate.

We are actively budgeting and planning for the 2010-2011 school year.

Please consider volunteering for WEEFC.

### **PARENT EDUCATION: Barbara Burgess**

**NO REPORT SUBMITTED**

### **METCO: Jerina Harris**

**NO REPORT SUBMITTED**

**WCCA: Barbie Cobb**

**NO REPORT SUBMITTED**

The meeting adjourned at