

## **Weston PTO Board Meeting Minutes**

Present: Ellen Livingston, Danielle Black, Karyn Taylor, Tina Chrtrand, Cheryl Maloney, Adrian Proll, Rebecca Stevenson, Brooke Tiller, Deb Sullivan, Joan Heilbronner, Barbara Burgess, Ed Heller, Denise McGeough, Robin Ewald, Lisa Green, Jerina Harris, Jane Fong, Laura Miller, Deb Egan, Joanne Melikian-Cate, Kelly Renner, Kim Costello, Lisa Williams, Linda Angelucci

The meeting was called to order at 7:34pm

### **Opening Business:**

#### **Approval of November 10, 2009 PTO meeting minutes.**

The Minutes were approved.

#### **Treasurer's Report: Tina Chartrand**

Tina passed out the financial report thru 11-30-09. The report was also attached to the email agenda prior to the meeting. Tina asked that everyone keep sending in their expense receipts. She would like for all the receipts thus far be handed in by year end so that she can be up to date on the expenses to go into the New Year.

#### **Superintendent's Report: Cheryl Maloney**

The schools are in the midst of their December concerts. They sound very good.

Country School is in the beginning stages of going through the process of finding a replacement for Mr. Stephen Shaw, the principal of Country School who will retire in June 2010. There will be a focus group assembled on Friday, December 11<sup>th</sup> to discuss the qualities and characteristics that people would like to see in a new principal.

There was discussion at the school committee meeting regarding the Middle School to move from a 5 day to an 8 day rotation schedule. The duration of the class will stay the same but will allow for some classes to be presented more often. This move would

require additional funding. The Program of Studies for the High School was approved by the School Committee and is going to be printed. As soon as the School Committee votes on the proposed change in the Middle School schedule, their Program of Studies will be available online.

There are 2 exchange students in Weston. One is from France and the other Brazil. The student from Brazil still needs a host family for the holidays.

On December 18<sup>th</sup>, Cheryl and High School Principal, Anthony Parker will make a presentation on their recent trip to Uganda at the BWMPO Meeting in Boston.

Sophia Wirth, is the High School Student Representative on School Committee. She has been regularly attending the school committee meetings and reporting on them in the Town Crier. Great job, Sophia.

**School Committee's Report: Ed Heller, Maryanne Rogers**

In the recent town meetings, the schools were successful. The funding passed for the pre-construction Weston High School Science Facility renovation. The Technology portion passed as well which benefits the schools as well as the town.

The tri-annual union negotiations are coming up in January. It is also time to prepare the budgets.

**Legal Council: Aviva Jeruchim**

Not present.

**New Business: Ellen Livingston**

Ellen thanked everyone for distributing information about the town meeting and getting the word out there. It really made a difference!

Ellen sent out an email this week looking for people that would like to join a Calendar subcommittee. They will talk about the future of the calendar, for instance, posting the calendar portion online for easier access. Please join, the input is welcome.

Ellen and Danielle sit on the board of The Council on Aging where they will be hosting a luncheon this Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup> from 11-1pm. All are welcome to attend, contact Ellen or Danielle for any questions.

It is that time of year already to start assembling a Nominating Committee. Please email Ellen if you would be interested in serving on this committee. This will start in mid to late January and Ellen would like to have a representative from each school.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

Nothing to report.

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

All is quiet on the Membership front. The website is officially shut down. We plan to hold a ½ price sale once again to sell off the remaining calendars, some time in late January or early February.

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

**UNICEF Collection** – The Girl Scouts collected all UNICEF donations at the elementary schools after Halloween and are finalizing their count at this time. We will report on the total collection amount/thank all who participated, once the final figure is confirmed.

**Bristol Lodge Thanksgiving Food Drive** – Our Annual Thanksgiving Food Drive to benefit the Bristol Lodge in Waltham ran from November 9<sup>th</sup> through November 25<sup>th</sup> at the Field, Country and Woodland Schools. We're pleased to report the Weston Elementary Schools provided the Bristol Lodge Food Pantry with approximately 3,500 canned/dry goods for the holiday season.

**Future Events** – Working on details for Cradles to Crayons Drive in February, Reach out and Read Drive in March and Community Day in April. If anyone is interested in hearing more about these drives, we'd be happy to review.

**WESTWORD: Laura Dubin, Greg Augustine**

Laura stated that everything was good with Westword.

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

So much happening at the high school....Seniors had a very successful Pancake Breakfast despite the away game. All classes have community service happening including Bristol Lodge, Special Olympics, the High School Courtyard. The sophomore class is having a fundraiser, selling "snuggies" with the Weston Wildcat logo for \$25 each, contact Kathy Cramer or Carrie Dagues for all your shopping needs!

Prom and the graduation overnight are well into the planning process..

Our next PTO parent ed meeting at the high school is on 12/22 at 9am featuring recent Weston High School graduates sharing their college adjustment experiences. All are welcomed.

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

Homework and Study Skills Forum: On November 13 John Gibbons and Dave Poras conducted a homework and study skills forum for parents. The meeting was very well attended and productive. Portions of the presentation have been made available online.

ImPACT Testing: Concussion testing will begin this week for MS athletes participating in contact winter sports (basketball and hockey). Andrew Rizza is leading the charge, and the MS coaches have all coached teams at the High School and are familiar with the program there. Thank you again to WEEFC for their support.

Katie LeClerc: We are close to finalizing plans with Katie LeClerc, a speaker on social networking and technology safety, to come to speak with Middle School students and parents in February. We intend to open the parent portion of the talk to all parents.

Faculty/Staff Appreciation: The week of Dec. 14-18 is appreciation week at the MS. Head Grade Parents and Hospitality will deliver goodies to faculty and staff on two days of that week to thank them for all they do for our children. Thanks to them for coordinating the festivities.

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

**Principal's Coffee 11/12:** Discussed need for new science facilities in WHS, issues with transportation, tactics for pushing a stronger anti-bullying message & ways in which other communities have taken steps to help curb bullying (student-based "monitoring" program)

**4th Grade Social:** held Nov 15th at Chris & Jenn Lemley's house; about 65 parents attended; lots of fun! Hospitality did a great job putting this together; all went smoothly

**5th Grade Fundraising:** Uno's Dough-Raiser held 11/12; over \$400 raised; Field School sweatpants sale brought in approximately \$1200 (204 orders; 6 sponsored pair)

**5th Grade Celebration & Video:** Beginning preliminary edit work on video to gauge status on individual pictures; Looking into possibility of holding celebration event at Rivers; would allow us to hold event either rain or shine

**Beautification:** Great job on winter-themed pots! Staff photo boards will be ready by end of month

**Upcoming Events:**

**School Council Meeting** (12/7); Kindness Hall of Fame almost ready to go

**Staff Appreciation Gift:** contributions completed, boxes wrapped up; presentation on Wednesday 12/9. Difficult year for donations.

**Principal's Coffee/Boston:** held 12/5

**Winter Concerts:** Wednesday, December 15th

**Curl Up & Read Day:** Wednesday, December 23rd

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

In November, the Country School hosted the Kindergarten Writers Forum which was well attended. Country also had a visit from the very talented author/illustrator Giles Laroche. Giles led the second grade classrooms in making paper illustrations for a wall mural in the front hallway of the school. The wall mural shows a city with homes and buildings made by the kids. It is truly amazing so please swing by for a visit to see it!

In December, the PTO will host the Annual Teachers Cookie Swap on Wednesday, December 9th and the Country School Winter Concert will take place on Tuesday,

December 22nd. In a new initiative at the Country School, we are creating a holiday gift basket full of school supplies for each classroom teacher. We realize teachers often use their own personal resources on supplies for the classroom and we'd like to alleviate some of that burden for them. We have received a "wish list" from the teachers in each grade with items that they truly need and use in the classroom. It is our hope that the gift baskets will help to minimize the confusion that many parents experience about what constitutes an appropriate gift for a teacher while also wishing teachers happy holidays and thanking them for their hard work in the classroom.

The Woodland, Field and Country School PTO Chairs have decided to hold Family Bingo night once again this year. It will be held on Friday, January 29th from 7-8:30 PM. This event is not currently in the PTO calendar, so spread the word. Formal communication to families of Grades K-5 will be organized by the PTO Chairs.

Lastly, it has been announced that Country School's principal Stephen Shaw will retire in June 2010. The search for his replacement will be led by Assistant Superintendent Amber Bock. There will be a focus group held on Friday, December 11th at 9 AM in the Country School Library to gather parents' input. Parents interested in joining the search committee need to indicate their interest by December 15th. Participation in the search committee will require a substantial time commitment in January and February.

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

November was uneventful and smooth at Woodland. We had our second school council meeting, and look forward to more in the coming months. The 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> grade hosted a math forum that was informative and fun with teachers talking and then games set up at tables for parents to play. Today we had our first kindergarten & 1<sup>st</sup> grade math forum, which also went well.

We are looking forward to our annual cookie exchange next week, and the winter break!

Joanne stated that they are planning on cleaning out the PTO closet some time after the holidays and will give everyone a window of opportunity to retrieve items before the discarded items go to art, recycle or trash. Ellen made a comment that the PTO may want to use part of the closet to hold items for the entire PTO, not just Woodland. It was also mentioned that some of the boxes in the closet may belong to Riola.

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

November was another extremely busy month for Creative Arts and Wordfest at Weston schools.

Wordfest programming remained in full force, with Lyn Littlefield Hoopes continuing her residency for Woodland's 3rd grade, Michael Tougais coming to Field School's 5th grade, and Giles Laroche working his cut paper magic for both Woodland and Country School's 2nd graders.

The High School had the amazing storyteller Odds Bodkins perform the Odyssey to 9th grade, and Field School's 4th grade enjoyed the immigration program by musical theatre group the Revels. The Middle School students put the finishing touches on their mural with artist Thomas Burns and is now planning the unveiling.

Previewing also continued, as we search for programs to round out the Spring at Field School, High School, Country and Woodland.

#### **SCIENCE COUNCIL: Betsy Romeri, Denise McGeough**

The Council sampled two traveling Museum of Science programs in November. On November 25<sup>th</sup>, Electromagnetism was performed to the Woodland 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class and Force and Motion was presented to the Fifth Grade at Field. MOS comes back for a second debut of Electromagnetism on December 21<sup>st</sup> at Country. These programs have turned out to be an efficiently priced, highly educational and dynamic means of teaching science to the elementary grades. We plan to include them in our regular programming as an enhancement to the curriculum. The Discovery Museum's Rocks and Minerals program will visit each 4<sup>th</sup> grade class, with the first part of the program presenting on December 18<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you to all members of the PTO community that demonstrated overwhelming support for Article 2 at the Town meetings. Design fees in the amount of \$730,000 were approved to start work on the renovation of the high school science labs. Members of the council met with town officials last Thursday to get an education on the process and help keep things on track. This is the first of many steps towards improved lab space our children. We will continue to need support and input from the parent community.

We are aggressively seeking mentors for the second year of the Weston Summer Science Internship Program. Last year we had nine students in six different labs in Massachusetts. The head of our science department would prefer more wet lab bench experience for our kids and would love to tap into the Weston community for mentors. We will have brochures available shortly to educate parents and mentors. If you know of

anyone in our community that we should contact please let Betsy or I know so we can follow up.

Our next science team meeting for the Family Science Night Planning will be held on December 22 from 3-4pm in the high school. Our first dress rehearsal will occur on Tuesday January 12<sup>th</sup>. All parents and PTO volunteers are welcome to come and we encourage your involvement. The big night will be held on Friday, Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> and will be a blast for the kids. Lab coats and goggles have already been ordered and the science team is scheming for fun ideas to educate the younger generations through demonstrations.

The Math & Science Council meets on the first Thursday of each month and all are welcome to attend. Our next meeting to be held on Thursday, January 7<sup>th</sup> at the high school.

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

We have closed the purchasing functions on the website for the season (new memberships and paper calendar/directory purchases). All membership inquiries will be directed from a link on the site to the membership chair (Jane Fong).

All volunteer information for this year will remain available to school chairs until the spring. We have also updated our Test Site with all the current data from the Live Site, as an additional back-up source.

Although this year the PTO was able to use the Weston School's Survey Monkey account, we were wondering if it might make sense for the PTO to have its own Survey Monkey account (paid for out of the Website budget). This would allow subcommittees (Creative Arts Council, Math & Science Council, WSEPAC, etc.) and parent discussion groups to be able to create their own surveys on an as-needed basis. What does the board think about that?

**WSEPAC: Marcy Dorna**

Not present. Kim reported that there was a holiday coffee which 27 people attended. They talked about gift ideas for special needs children ages K – 12. A lot of good ideas were presented.

**WEEFC: Kelly Renner**

The major fundraisers for the fall – Phone-a-thon, Kids’ Kreations, Sally Foster gift wrap and the Autumn Auction – are complete. Net proceeds topped \$300,000. While this number is slightly down from last year, overall it is strong given the poor economic environment. And it is right in line with what WEEFC budgeted for the year, so we will continue funding creative and innovative grants. So far this year 53 grants have been approved, on par with last year’s activity. This week we will mail another 960 letters in our final year-end appeal and then we will go into a quiet period as it relates to fundraising until next spring’s Spring Sprint. Once again, thanks to all of you who worked so hard on these fall fundraisers. WEEFC couldn’t do it without you! Lastly, Kelly would like to have photos sent to her of the children using and enjoying the grants given by WEEFC.

**PARENT EDUCATION: Barbara Burgess**

On February 2, 2010 grades 6, 7 and 8 will listen to Katie McClerc talk about internet safety, such as Facebook, etc. This will take place in the Amy Potter Center. There will be a chance for Parents only to hear the presentation plus a few additions to the subject that same evening. Time will be announced.

**METCO: Jerina Harris**

Jerina talked about METCO fundraising ideas. This is important to the program.

Also, the citrus fruit is still available for purchase from Mr. Fuller online until December 14<sup>th</sup>/ with deliveries happening that same week.

**WCCA: Barbie Cobb**

Not present

The meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.

