

## **Weston PTO Board Meeting Minutes**

Present: Ellen Livingston, Danielle Black, Karyn Taylor, Tina Chartrand, Cheryl Maloney, Deb Sullivan, Robin Ewald, Greg Augustine, Carolann Augustine, Laura Dubin, JoAnne Melikian-Cate, Brooke Tiller, Lisa Green, Joan Heilbronner, Betsy Romeri, Laura Miller, Deb Egan, Linda Angelucci, Adrian Proll, Kelly Renner, Lee McCanne, Cindy Mahr

The meeting was called to order at 7:35pm.

### **Opening Business:**

#### **Approval of January 12, 2010 PTO meeting minutes.**

The Minutes were approved.

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

Tina reported that things were fairly quiet. We are half way through the year and there are still a lot of receipts that have not been turned in for reimbursement. This could affect the budget amounts for those departments that have not turned in receipts because if it looks like the money is not being used then it may not be allocated for next year when the budgets are decided.

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

There will be early dismissal for Weston Public Schools tomorrow, February 10<sup>th</sup> due to a reported snow storm. Woodland, Country and Field Schools will dismiss at 11am and the Middle School and High School will dismiss at 12:15pm.

The Country School Principal search continues. There are three finalists, all sitting Principals in their current school districts. Each finalist will spend a day at Country School. Public forums will be held, which are open to members of the community, to have a chance to ask questions and learn more about the candidates. Meeting dates to be announced.

A recent meeting with the MSBA focused on Field School's projected enrollment in the future. MSBA uses a formula, including enrollment, to determine the maximum size the school should be. The school proposal from Weston is one classroom larger than what the MSBA initially calculated from their data. Cheryl and the administration went and presented information to show that historically Weston's projected enrollment jumps as the children get closer to school age. So while our demographics may be low for the current toddler age, the administration does not expect it to remain as such when that group gets to Kindergarten. Overall, enrollments are on the decline. State Representative Alice Peisch attended the meetings to show support for the project.

Cindy Mahr, Director of Finance and Operations, attended the meeting. She brought a Finance and Operations Summary Handout and went over it along with talking about proper protocol with regards to contracts obtained for PTO purposes.

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

Not present.

**Legal Council: Aviva Jeruchim**

Aviva will report at the next PTO Board Meeting.

**New Business: Ellen Livingston**

Ellen spoke about Volunteer Training. She asked that all "job descriptions" for each PTO position be updated and/or completed. She will distribute a job description template so that everyone is working from the same format. Ellen stressed the importance of job descriptions and asked that they be done prior to the PTO Board Meeting in May.

The Nominating Committee had its first meeting. An announcement will go into Westward and be distributed by listserv. The review process for vacant position entails gathering names of interested parties, finding out about applicants interest in position and obtaining approval from that schools Principal. Ellen would love feedback.

Staff Development day was January 19<sup>th</sup> and was a great day. Thanks for all the help.

Volunteers are needed to host exchange students in their homes.

March 22<sup>nd</sup> is Staff Development Day. Volunteers are needed to help serve at the luncheon. Contact Ellen if you can help.

Thank you to Lee McCanne for all his help with the PTO Calendar Survey feedback.

**DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY: Lee McCanne**

Lee attended the PTO Board Meeting to go over results from the Weston PTO Survey. 1200 Surveys went out and 341 responses were received. The results were definitive and very helpful. Some of the key responses are listed as follows:

Parents love the paper PTO Calendar  
Majority have children in older grades and joined PTO  
Student Directory and Calendar of Events used most often  
Parents like having easy access to information in one place  
Calendar meets majority of needs but a few suggestions for improvement  
Inclusion of Email address most requested improvement

Lee thanked Carolann Augustine for all her hard work in compiling all the information and turning it around within 24 hours.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

Kim reported that Calendar has already started planning. The student directory from is being worked on and will be out in March.

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

Membership has been very quiet. Even the half price calendar sale on February 5<sup>th</sup> was quiet. We only sold 3 copies.

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

Cradles to Crayons – We are holding a pants drive for Cradles to Crayons at the elementary schools this week, February 8<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>.

Reach out and Read – The ROR Drive is targeted to begin on February 27<sup>th</sup> and run through March 7<sup>th</sup>. ROR is in the process of developing the ROR website. Next steps will be to test out the website link to ensure ease of use/functionality for all participants.

Community Day – Scheduled for April 7<sup>th</sup>, early release day. While several volunteers have signed on to help, we could use a few more from approximately noon to 3PM that day to set up and oversee students at various activities. We are also looking for bakers/buyers of goodies to serve at the after party in the Field School Cafeteria. Please let Deb Sullivan know if you are interested in helping out on this day.

**WESTWORD: Laura Dubin, Greg Augustine**

Greg and Laura reported that Westword would not be distributed during the February vacation week and said that they would honor late requests to get information in this weeks report.

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

We are recruiting Parent Advisors for the Class of 2014 and the third advisor for the class of 2012.

Planning is underway for our Faculty Appreciation Luncheon which will take place on March 3. Michele Avery and Julie Greenberg are chairing the event with the help of Jan Feldman and Pam Remis.

We are also recruiting volunteers for Career Day, which happens every other year and features more than 125 professionals who come and share information.

Our latest PTO Parent Ed Meeting took place last Thursday when we welcomed Michael Haines, a well known researcher in the Social Norms Approach which has been a successful instrument in reducing alcohol use on college campuses. Mitch Finnegan's Weston Health and Wellness Project brought this speaker in and the presentation was followed by a focus group. Mr. Haines also trained faculty and will be retained and will be working with Health and Wellness to implement this strategy.

Our next PTO meeting will be on March 18<sup>th</sup> which will feature a panel discussion comprising parents and health professionals discussing the book "From Binge to Blackout". We are co-sponsoring this with Health and Wellness also. This is part of a town-wide book read which will also feature a book talk at the WPL and an author presentation on 3/25 in Wayland.

We highly  
'recommend participating in one of these events and supporting the efforts of Mitch's  
group..

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

**Transition Nights:** Transition nights for parents of current 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students were held. Topics discussed included language selection, math placement, and arts rotation elective choices. The proposal for an 8 day rotation similar to the high school schedule will not be implemented for the upcoming school year.

**Dr. Elizabeth Englander:** Elizabeth Englander from the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC) presented to the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in separate assemblies and to parents at night about internet safety, privacy and cyberbullying. The student assemblies were very well-received, and her message was a very positive one. She covered a number of topics, spending a good deal of time on privacy, or the lack thereof, on the internet and on how communicating online can affect relationships. She asked the students to take care of their friends and also tried to impress upon them that they are the generation that will determine the future of the internet and that it is up to them to decide whether to treat it responsibly and what kind of people they want to become. Approximately 100 parents attended the evening talk, and the feedback has been phenomenal. Many who were not able to attend have been coming to the office for handouts. We are discussing establishing an ongoing relationship between Dr. Englander and the school. Thanks again to WEEFC and the PTO for their financial support for this program.

**Principal's Coffee:** John Gibbons hosted the year's second principal's coffee. He held an open forum for parents and covered a lot of topics. Parent's enjoyed being able to discuss a number of topics of their choosing.

**The Wiz:** The Middle School production of the Wiz was a great success. There were four shows plus a dress rehearsal for the 5<sup>th</sup> graders on Wed. Over 100 students participated in the play.

**Costa Rica Trip:** Middle School Spanish students leave on Thursday for a trip to Costa Rica. 24 students will be taking the trip.

**Guidance Forum:** After winter break we will hold a forum for parents of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students led by the HS and MS guidance departments to assist them in filling out class selection forms for 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

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

Principal's Coffee 1/13: Lively talk on "Difficult Discussions" with Rob Evans, et al as well as preview of the development movie shown to 5th graders in late January. Well attended, lots of great information.

Kasiisi Book Fair: Held Friday, 1/30 and hugely successful. Raised over \$1200, all of which will be used to purchase books for the Kasiisi school library in Uganda. Surplus books were donated to Cradles to Crayons, Horizons for Homeless, Bristol Lodge, Field School as well as Weston Public Library. Committee chair Karin Ott did a fabulous job,

while chairs-in-training Marcella Boelhouwer and Mariana Hersum were a huge help. Due to the size of the event, it's been determined that future book fairs should be organized and managed by two people.

School Council Meeting: discussion of superintendent's long term goals; also covered the communication committee - scope & purpose - currently being discussed.

Upcoming Events:

School Council Meeting (2/1)

5th Grade Wax Musuem (2/23)

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

We had two events in the month of January, the PTO Family Bingo Night and the Third Grade Math Forum. The PTO Family Bingo Night was extremely well attended with approximately 100 people in attendance. The MC's were Country School Principal Steve Shaw and P.E. teacher Jason McCarthy. Everyone seemed to have a great time. Since the setup is simple and the expense so small, it is an easy event to repeat each year.

The Third Grade Math Forum was also fairly well attended. The forum was run by Heather Lambo and Debbie Shein-Gerson. This year the presentation was much more focused on examples of what the third graders are actually doing in school, including work on the active board. Parents found this extremely helpful in shedding light on how the math curriculum is presented to the children and how they are spending their time in the classroom.

The Kindergarten and First Grade Math Forum as well as the rescheduled Second Grade Math Forum will be held in February. The Kindergarten & 1st Grade Forum will be held on Tuesday, 2/9 at 10 AM in the library - after the Principal Finalist forum. The Second Grade Forum will be held on Thursday, 2/25 at 9 AM in the library.

The finalists for the Country School principal search will be visiting the Country School on Tuesday (2/9), Wednesday (2/10), and Thursday (2/11). There will be parent forums held with each finalist at 9 AM in the Country School library on each of these days.

February is a big planning month for our Teacher Appreciation Luncheon, which is scheduled for Wednesday, March 17th. The theme this year is "**These are a few of our favorite things...**" This theme is playing off of the success of the "Favorite Things" verses performed by the students during the Winter Concert and the likelihood that Mrs. Nagle will be including it again in the Spring Concert. We are planning a picnic menu to play off of the scene in the Sound of Music where they had a picnic in the countryside overlooking the mountains.

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

January has been a quiet month at Woodland. The Kindergarten Readers' Parent Forum was held on Thursday, January 21st. Always a popular forum, it was very well attended.

We've started planning for the upcoming Staff Appreciation Luncheon, which will be held on March 11th. We are putting on our thinking caps to do something different this year, stay tuned for next month to hear all about it!

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

January was a busy month for Creative Arts at Weston schools.

Wordfest programming continued with Jack Gantos at Middle School for 6th grade which was a huge success. Also Lyn Littlefield Hoopes started her residency at Country school for the 3rd grade.

At Field School the 5th graders thoroughly enjoyed the workshops with Origination, an African hip-hop dance troupe and would like to book them for next year. Last week Boston Ballet performed at Country and Woodland school to all grades. The program was excellent and introduced ballet as an art form with demonstrations of contemporary, modern and classical ballet. This week Middle School has Living Voices performing "Through the Eyes of a friend" (Anne Frank) on Thursday to 7th grade.

We are in the process of finalizing the Spring performance for Country and Woodland as well as exploring possible bookings for the Fall at all schools.

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

We wrapped up the month of January with two outstanding presentations by Galileo in the Country and Woodland School. Our biggest event, Family Science Night, will take place this month on Friday, Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> at the Field School. The event will be orchestrated by the High School Science Team with 11 different science demonstrations for children ages K-5 to touch, feel and experience. Kids will receive their own lab coat and science goggles as they explore the fun side of science. Galileo is returning to Weston for the night to give tours of the star lab the Field School cafeteria. We are still looking for a few parent volunteers to assist High School students at the experiment tables. If you have an extra body in your home and want to participate, please email Betsy Romeri. We hope to see you there.

Looking ahead to March we have Star Lab tours for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes at Country and Woodland. We have second demonstration of Rocks & Minerals for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade glasses given by the Discovery Museum. The Math & Science Counsel meets the first Thursday of every month and open to all members of the community.

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

Beth reported that anyone that have updates for their postings please get them in. Also, the calendar download may be available for free after February vacation to let people use it that have not done so previously. Hopefully this would spark interest in purchasing the download for the next school year.

**WSEPAC: Marcy Dorna**

WSEPAC has changed its acronym to WestonPAC. They will be moving onto Facebook and launching a new website.

The next meeting is on February 25<sup>th</sup> at 7-9pm where Robin Lurie-Meyerkopf Med, will be speaking on “What You Need to Know for Your Growing Child to Adolescence” and “Asperger Syndrome – Characteristics and Learning Styles”.

**WEEFC: Kelly Renner**

Kelly reported that \$168,000 has been granted this year. All grants are encouraged.

WEEFC is completing its list of open positions for the upcoming year. There has been interest from younger parents and parents new to the system.

**PARENT EDUCATION: Barbara Burgess**

Not present. Ellen reminded everyone of “The Dinner Table” event coming up on Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 5pm at the Weston Community Center. The event is targeted at High School Families and should be a fantastic evening.

**METCO: Jerina Harris**

Not present.

**WCCA: Barbie Cobb**

Not present.

**LWV: Diana Chaplin, Rochelle Nemrow**

Beth Keane reported that there will be a presentation by local experts about the complexities of Lyme Disease. The meeting will take place on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7:30-9pm at the Amy Potter Center, Middle School.

The meeting adjourned at 8:52pm