

Weston PTO Board Meeting Minutes

Present: Ellen Livingstone, Danielle Black, Karyn Taylor, Marcy Dorna, Tina Chartrand, Adrian Proll, Cheryl Maloney, Jane Fong, Carolann Augustine, Deb Sullivan, Joan Heilbronner, Lisa Green, Jarina Harris, Danielle Black, Barb Burgess, Linda Angelucci, Laura Miller, Deb Egan, Mandie Jordan-Smith

The meeting was called to order at 7:36pm

Opening Business:

Approval of December 8, 2009 PTO meeting minutes.

The Minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Tina Chartrand

Financial actuals through 12-31-09 are attached to this report. Tina reported that December was a slow month but things have picked up in January. Tina once again asked that people send in receipts, so that you can be reimbursed and the books can be accurate. To date, Field and Woodland Schools have not turned in any receipts for beautification. Tina asked that these be submitted as soon as possible.

Superintendent's Report: Cheryl Maloney

The budget was presented at the school committee meeting. It provides adequate funding for all the school board initiatives. There are some staffing cuts but they are due to reduced enrollment rather than budget restrictions. A section of full day kindergarten may need to be dropped due to an estimated decrease in kindergarten enrollment for next fall. This would be an estimated loss of \$9,000 to the budget. The Budget Subcommittee of the School Committee will review the FY11 school budget at meetings scheduled for January 25 and January 28. Both meetings will take place at Case House at 8:00am. These are open to the public. The proposed budget will be reviewed by the full School Committee at

meeting scheduled for February 8, March 1, and March 15.

Regarding the Weston High School Science renovation, a project manager will be selected. New regulations from the Fire Captain are in place stating that if a new section is added within a working building, then sprinklers need to be added not only to the new addition but to the entire building. This will cost the project an additional \$750,000 which could slow the project down. It would be ideal if most of the work could be done over the summer months. The project is still on target for construction funds. This process takes time, a project manager must be selected before an architect can be chosen.

Melissa Fitzgerald, an actor, and activist, was in Weston for one week speaking to the schools about Uganda. She is particularly involved in Northern Uganda (Kasisi is in Southern Uganda). Melissa was talking about the war between ethnic groups in Northern Uganda. She is helping in the camps, raising money and bringing awareness to their plight. She wants to make the students aware and to not be afraid to choose a cause and get involved. Thank you to WEEFC for making it possible for Melissa to be with our students for the week

The search for a new Country School Principal is in progress. There is a wonderful pool of applicants. They will be pared down to 10 applicants that will be interviewed for the position.

Cheryl thanked the PTO for helping out with the January 19th Professional Day.

School Committee's Report: Ed Heller, Maryanne Rogers

Not present.

Legal Council: Aviva Jeruchim

The only law inquiry and response was the following: Carolann Augustine and Deb Sullivan requested input on a letter of intent regarding a proposal from Reach Out and Read for the development of a new PTO Community Outreach Program website where families can order books. I reviewed the letter of intent, approved it and recommended that language be included to assure credit card security and the prohibition of sale and/or distribution of purchaser lists. I did not receive any additional follow up or questions on

this matter.

New Business: Ellen Livingston

The Nominating Committee will meet either January 25 or February 8. Ellen would like to have more people from WMS and WHS participate on the nominating committee. Please contact her if you would like to join.

The PTO Calendar Subcommittee had its first meeting last week. The PTO Calendar is being re-evaluated. The PTO will always own the calendar and will keep it in its paper form but is open to ideas on how to connect technology with the calendar. Alicia Abad is working on a survey that can be sent out to everyone concerning the wants and needs of the calendar.

Staff Development Day is January 19th at the High School. Volunteers are needed to help with set up, lunch and clean up. Please contact Ellen if you would like to help.

The Weston/METCO Gospel Jubilee is Saturday, January 30th from 4-6pm in the High School auditorium. The PTO will provide food and drinks. A sign up sheet was sent around the meeting for volunteers as well as tickets to purchase for the event.

The PTO closet at Woodland School will be cleaned out on January 22nd. Please visit it prior to that to reclaim your things.

Old Business: Ellen Livingston

Ellen and Danielle hosted the PTO sponsored luncheon at the Council on Aging on December 14th. The event was wonderful. Ellen encouraged everyone to get involved with their kids at the Council on Aging. Making this a yearly event would be nice.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CALENDAR PRODUCTION: Kim Costello, Robin Ewald

Not present.

MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL: Jane Fong, Lisa Williams

Lisa and I will be holding a ½ price sale on the remaining calendars at Case House on Friday, February 5th, from 10am-12pm.

Membership has been very quiet.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH: Carolann Augustine, Deb Sullivan

- UNICEF – The Girl Scouts and Cambridge Trust completed counting our schools' UNICEF donations – a total of \$3,973.64 was raised to help children around the globe.
- Cradles to Crayons – We will be holding a pants drive for Cradles to Crayons at the elementary schools, the week of February 8th. We've been thrilled to see such broad support for Cradles to Crayons through our schools/other community groups this year; as such, we may look to redirect our focus with other organizations in the future.
- Reach out and Read – We are finalizing the contract for our virtual book drive with Reach out and Read. The Drive will begin on Feb 27th and run through March 7th. Next steps will be to test out the ROR website link to ensure ease of use/functionality for all participants.
- Community Day – Scheduled for April 7th, early release day. We will need volunteers from approximately 12:15PM to 2:30PM that day to oversee students at various activities (ranging from crafts at Council on Aging to collecting rocks at Land's Sake). We are also looking for bakers (or purchasers!) of goodies to serve at the after party in Field School. Please let Deb Sullivan know if you are interested in helping out on this day.

WESTWORD: Laura Dubin, Greg Augustine

Not present.

HIGH SCHOOL: Jean O'Connor, Marion Packs

Activity buzzing at the high school. Our "return of the graduates" meeting before Christmas showed us that our children in fact will go to college and be happy! The hypnotist performance drew record crowds on Friday night. Starting our search for parent advisors for incoming freshman class. Our monthly meeting schedule now includes a book panel on "Binge to Blackout" and a speaker on Social Norms.

MIDDLE SCHOOL: Joan Heilbronner, Deb Egan

Winter Concerts: Band, Orchestra and Chorus concerts were enjoyed by all last month. ImPACT Testing: The concussion testing for the basketball and hockey teams is complete. Thank you to Andrew Rizza for his help in administering the tests and also for the cooperation from the coaches. Tests were administered to 7th and 8th graders in each of the winter sports. Testing will resume in the Spring for any participants in Spring sports who have not yet been tested. On an ongoing basis, tests will be administered at the beginning of the spring and winter seasons and in the preceding June for any athletes competing in fall sports. Internet Safety Speaker: We are finalizing plans to bring a speaker in to talk to students and parents about online safety issues in early February. Transition Meetings: Are scheduled for January 21 but may be postponed depending on whether the 8 day rotation plan is adopted by the School Committee. Guidance Seminar for 8th Grade Parents: The HS and MS guidance departments have agreed to hold a forum for parents of 8th graders on Feb. 23 in the morning to help parents navigate the completion of HS forms due on the 25th. We hope that this will alleviate much of the anxiety for parents and facilitate the High School enrollment process.

FIELD SCHOOL: Linda Angelucci, Adrian Proll

December

Principal's Coffee 12/05 in Boston: Updated parents on Field School project and other

housekeeping matters; also spoke at length about rowdy and borderline dangerous behavior aboard after-school bus; an incident at the Family Friends outing at a local bowling alley. Boston parents are well aware of issues and are in favor of re-instituting 3-Strikes/Bus Contract. Very concerned about facing potential budget cuts. Will look into possibly holding METCO- specific coffee after or before a student event to make it easier for parents to attend.

5th Grade Fundraising: Field School sweatpants all successfully delivered before Curl Up & Read Day.

5th Grade Celebration & Video: Secured Rivers School (no charge!) for Celebration Day. Event will take place there rain or shine, with video & games in the morning and (weather permitting) pool activities at Memorial Pool in afternoon. Need to work out transportation for the day.

Staff Appreciation Gift Baskets - all delivered on 12/9 (despite the snow!)

Kindness Hall of Fame - up, running, and a huge hit!

Winter Concert on 12/15 and Curl Up/Read Day all went beautifully. Generous donations of new pajamas, new socks and new or gently used books were gathered for Cradles to Crayons (will be delivered in January)

Upcoming Events:

School Council Meeting (1/4)

Principal's Coffee (1/13): Difficult Discussion & viewing of "THE MOVIE"

Kasiisi Book Fair: donation begin 1/20; fair is 1/29

COUNTRY SCHOOL: Laura Miller, Brooke Tiller

Country School finished out the month of December with two successful events: the Teacher Appreciation Cookie Exchange and the Winter Concert. We also successfully delivered holiday gift baskets to each classroom teacher. Feedback from both teachers and parents has been very positive regarding this initiative, so it will likely be repeated next year.

In January, we will hold the Third Grade Math Forum on Tuesday, January 26th as well as the Second Grade Math Forum on Thursday, January 28th. The Second Grade Math Forum is a new offering resulting from feedback from the parent survey conducted in the spring of 2008. Both forums will begin at 9 AM in the Country School Library and all parents of that particular grade level are welcome to attend. Country School will also be hosting the PTO Family Bingo Night on Friday, January 29th from 7-8:30 PM.

WOODLAND SCHOOL: Joanne Melikian-Cate, Rebecca Stevenson

We held our seventh annual Woodland School Cookie Exchange on Tuesday, December 15th. The array of cookies/bars was incredible! More importantly, the Woodland staff was so appreciative, several expressed that it was “The best day of the year!” We had decorative boxes and tissue for the staff to pack up the treats. They looked great.

Our Winter Concert was held on Friday, December 18th. At the end we said a fond farewell to Kathy Kiely who was retiring from second grade, and had been a sub for the first part of this year in 3rd grade.

Coming up next Thursday, January 21st, we have the “Kindergarten Readers” Parent Forum in the Woodland Library.

CREATIVE ARTS: Lisa Green, Mandie Jordan-Smith

December was a fairly quiet month for programming at Weston schools. Middle School unveiled their beautiful mural with our resident artist Thomas Burns in attendance. The students and staff that helped paint the mural all said a few words on how much they enjoyed painting the mural and working with Thomas.

Wordfest programming continued with Woodland and Country schools. The 1st graders had author Grace Lin and the 3rd graders enjoyed author Lucinda Landon.

After the successful Revels immigration program to 4th grade at Field school at the beginning of December. The 5th graders are looking forward to workshops with Origination an African hip-hop dance troupe this week, finishing with a performance on Thursday.

The committee are busy previewing programs for next year so they can start booking in March.

SCIENCE COUNCIL: Betsy Romeri, Denise McGeough

In **December**, the Science and Math Council sponsored 3 events. Electromagnetism for 3rd grade at Country School, Rocks and Minerals for 4th grade and a talk about biodiversity for the 7th grade. In **January**, Mike Francis will visit all the 3rd grade classes as Galileo to enrich the astronomy curriculum. All of these programs were funded through WEEFC grants. PTO Family Science Night will be **February 26th** at the Field School. The Council would like to ask the PTO community to consider volunteering to help out on that night. We will need adults to supervise, help with crowd control, hand out lab coats and goggles etc... Students from the HS Science Team will design and conduct experiments for the K-5 students. Students from the National Honors Society will help during the evening as well.

The Science and Math Council is currently working with Larry Murphy to line up high school students with **summer science internships**. This will be the second summer of our Summer Science Internship Program. Applications for the internships are due at the end of January. We have at least 3 new mentor laboratories to add to our list this year including an engineering lab at Tufts working in robotics. We hope to increase the number of Weston students doing science internships to 10 for the summer of 2010.

Larry Murphy and Betsy Romeri plan to offer a spring **Parent DNA class**. This is usually a one or two day class (1/2 day each) focusing on some specific area of molecular biology usually with a forensic angle. It will be advertised in Westword well in advance for sign up. This is an opportunity to learn what your kids are (or will) learn in high school biotechnology/biology classes. The class consists of 15-20 parents- most with no science background. It is a lot of fun for everyone.

WEBMASTERS: Beth Keene, Alicia Abad, Suzanne Lenox

Not present.

WSEPAC: Marcy Dorna

At the December winter coffee toys with technology was discussed. WSEPAC is working on getting a speaker for the spring meeting.

WEEFC: Kelly Renner

Not present.

PARENT EDUCATION: Barbara Burgess

“The DinnerTable” an event taking place on February 28th at 5pm at the Weston Community Center will feature Jose Duarte with Taranta Restaurant in the North End and Heather Tausig from the New England Aquarium. This event targets High School Families, discussing lifestyle and smarter food choices along with tasting wonderful, fresh food. There is already a lot of interest in this event, it will hold 130 people. Anyone that would like to help on this event, please contact Barb Burgess at bburgessfamily@comcast.net.

METCO: Jerina Harris

Jerina spoke about the upcoming Weston/METCO Gospel Jubilee on Saturday, January 30th from 4-6pm at the High School Auditorium.

Cheryl Antoine is planning on taking two groups down to the State House to speak to State Representatives for METCO support in the end of January. Date to be announced.

WCCA: Barbie Cobb

Not present.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40pm.