

**Weston PTO Board Meeting Minutes**  
November 10, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m.

**Opening Business:**

**Approval of October 14, 2009 PTO meeting minutes.**  
The Minutes were approved.

**Treasurer's Report: Tina Chartrand**  
Financial Actuals are attached.

**Superintendent's Report: Cheryl Maloney**

On Thursday, November 12, Cheryl's office will be conducting the annual test of the Emergency Communication System. This test is part of the crisis management protocol.

Regarding Field School, the MSBA will partner with us to share the cost. The documents have all been submitted. The next step should take place in 3-4 weeks which is the Feasibility Study, but we do not yet know whether it will be full scale or a modified version. Next, will be hiring an Owner's Project Manager. Hopefully in May we will ask for money for full design for a year 2013 target date. There are still decisions to be made for instance, build vs. renovate.

The schools have had a wonderful Fall. The sports have gone well. The Middle School Play was last weekend and the High School Play is coming up.

**METCO: David Fuller**

The METCO program in Weston is going well. There are still some unanswered questions regarding funding and economic position of State though.

METCO started to get a data base of alumni a few years ago. This is important to the success of METCO, keeping the alumni involved with the program. Facebook had been helpful in finding the alumni.

Weston has given so much to the METCO graduates. They graduate, go on to college, get jobs, buy homes and become taxpayers which all comes back to being good for the commonwealth.

Sheila Burkus has stepped down from her METCO position. Christy Brackett has filled the position.

**Legal Council: Aviva Jeruchim**

There was an inquiry regarding whether a gift of \$10,000 could be accepted by Country School for bookcases. The tax ramifications and circumstances regarding this issue needed to be taken into consideration. The gift had to be declined. For the future, they will be looking into the proper system, paperwork, etc. if this situation arises again.

**New Business: Ellen Livingston**

Ellen thanked the Boston and Weston families for taking time out of their busy lives to attend this meeting.

She spoke about the upcoming Special Town Meeting that was to take place on November 30th at the High School. The School Committee would be making several presentations over the next few weeks to educate parents and residents of the town about the two warrants coming up for a vote. The first one was the High School Science Facilities renovation project, which would make 9 new science labs and a project room for the high school. If approved, it would be ready by the fall of 2012. Second was the Technology warrant which was the final phase of the networking project.

Ellen also spoke about some initiatives that we (Weston PTO and BWMPO) felt were important to bring to the Boston parents. Most importantly, we encouraged parents to get involved in the schools. She noted that it was never too late to start and told them to contact their room parents or school chairs to inquire about volunteer opportunities. In addition, she spoke briefly about the spring fundraiser for METCO alumni.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

The calendar team continues to prepare for the 2010-2011 PTO Calendar/Directory!  
Goals achieved since our last meeting include...

We had a good meeting with Cheryl and Lee about the schools database on 11/5.

#### **Action Items**

Send Lee the final database we have for the school to reconcile with their information  
As part of next year's calendar process we will meet with all school admins to go over the calendar/directory process, the importance of delivering clean, completed data and the importance of the directory timeline.

An updated org chart was sent to Beth, that will now include hyperlinks to everyone's emails.

A message has been submitted to Westword about the incorrect emails on the org chart.

Areas for Improvement:

#### **Student Directory Form**

Still a work in progress

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

It has been relatively quiet. Lisa attended the preschool back to school nights at Country and Woodland Schools in mid October, and signed up 6 new families. Since our last board meeting, we have confirmed 11 new members.

The membership site will shut down on December 1<sup>st</sup>, so anyone who wishes to sign up will need to contact either Lisa or me.

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

· UNICEF Presentations – On Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, we led the Field School Student Council Representatives to Country and Woodland Schools to speak about UNICEF. The presentations were well done and well received. At this time, the Girl Scouts are

counting all UNICEF donations. We will announce the total amount collected/thank all who donated via Listserv and Westword in the coming weeks.

- Treats for Troops – We helped coordinate the Treats for Troops Program, which is run by Ann Marie Kreft, in the elementary schools. All elementary schools were interested in continuing this Drive (Matt Lucey has actually incorporated the Drive into his Principal's Corps Activities so their Program is pretty self-sufficient). Several volunteers were willing/able to help with the packing/labeling process.
- Bristol Lodge Thanksgiving Food Drive – Our Annual Thanksgiving Food Drive to benefit the Bristol Lodge in Waltham is running from November 9<sup>th</sup> through November 25<sup>th</sup> at the Field, Country and Woodland Schools. Children will receive flyers in their back packs explaining the Food Drive, the week of November 9<sup>th</sup>; parents will also learn about the Drive through Listserv and Westword announcements. Dick Rogers from the Bristol Lodge Food Pantry will come to Field, Woodland and Country all school assemblies on Wednesday, November 25<sup>th</sup> to discuss the importance of food donations.
- Future Events – Working on details for Cradles to Crayons Drive in February, Reach out and Read Drive in March and Community Day in April.

**WESTWORD: Laura Dubin, Greg Augustine**

Not present.

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

At the High School: First successful principal's coffee was held and Mr. Parker would like to repeat this again before the end of the year. The order of graduation procession has changed starting this year and the PTO co-chairs and Parent Advisor and Faculty Advisors were part of the discussions on this issue. Working with Lee McCanne to streamline some communication issues specific to the needs of the high school PTO volunteers.

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

Magazine Drive: This is an annual fundraiser to help the students defray the cost of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade Washington D.C. trip. Elizabeth Nagarajah led the charge again this year. We want to thank her for all of her hard work.

Principal's Coffee: John Gibbons spoke to a standing-room only crowd about the RALI theme in the Middle School and also about proposed schedule changes under consideration currently by the school committee.

Homework and Study Skills Forum: We had to postpone the Homework and Study Skills Forum originally scheduled for October 26 due to illness. The new date for this meeting is November 13. John Gibbons and Dave Poras will speak to parents about navigating

homework challenges that their kids face in middle school. In addition, they plan to discuss new pieces of the curriculum stressing different study skills that are designed to help students learn more effectively and efficiently.

Faculty and Staff Appreciation Coffee: On November 5 the PTO with help from our hospitality staff, Leslye Fligor and Victoria Whalen, we provided breakfast treats and coffee to thank the faculty and staff for all they do for our kids.

Head Injury Testing: Thank you to WEEFC for providing funding for this new program. We will begin baseline testing of athletes playing in winter contact sports after Thanksgiving. This program is an extension of the baseline testing currently done at the High School and we hope will be an ongoing program. Andrew Rizza has agreed to administer the tests to the MS athletes.

Katie LeClerc: Thank you to WEEFC again for funding this program on social networking that will be presented to the middle school students tentatively in February. We are also planning an evening presentation with her for parents. Parent Education Committee has generously agreed to fund the parent portion of the talk.

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

Oct - Nov

Principal's Coffee 10/16: ActiveBoard presentation; about 20 parents; discussion on merits of boards and saw them "in action" in music class & 5th grade class (math)

Field Parent Forum - Social & Emotional Development: about 40 parents; great overview of issues that may face 4th & 5th graders this year. Conversation focused quickly and almost exclusively on bullying, overt & covert. Great suggestions on books, websites to be published on Field's web page. Also discussed disseminating tips for parents when the next anti-bullying presentation is done.

Treats/Troops: Huge success! From Field about 30 boxes of candy readied and shipped WEEFC: Basket generously filled with donations. If repeating concept next year would be great to have more time to execute and a better understanding of what Chair is responsible for.

School Council:

Met with alternate photographer for presentation on their offering for class/school pictures

Most of meeting spent discussing feedback from Parent Forum, i.e. bullying issue.

Questions were raised about hierarchy of "punishment"; appropriate protocols for handling incidents (calling school vs. parent calling parent); importance of parents keeping school in loop; potential programs to support Open Circle but in 4th/5th grade language

Discussed possibility of erecting a "Wall of Fame" - students anonymously submit another students name and small paragraph on how that person helped out somehow in a bad/bullying type situation. Felt that it would be a powerful tool not only for kid-kid relations but also for principal-kid relations. Further work needs to be done; will discuss at subsequent council meetings

4th Grade Social: invites out; reminders this week (Nov 15th; Chris & Jenn Lemley's house)

5th Grade Fundraising: Uno's (Thursday) & sweatpants fliers out

Staff Appreciation Gift: emails out, donations already starting to come in

Upcoming Events:

Meeting with Matt Lucey (Tues, 11/10) to discuss:

status update on projects (celebration, video, fundraising

potential topics for upcoming Principal's Coffees

Cradles to Crayons

Offloading of action items from "just Matt" to "Matt & company"

Principal's Coffee - Thursday evening @ 7:30 in Field School Library

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

With Grade Level Forums, Picture Day, and Family Planting Day behind us, Country School is beginning to catch its breath from such a busy fall.

In November, Country will host the Kindergarten Writers Forum on November 19th.

This forum is always well-received by the parents because it helps them truly understand and visualize what "writing" in Kindergarten looks like. Additionally, the author and paper illustrator Giles Laroche will be visiting Grade 2 at the end of the month.

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

October was a busy month at Woodland School. We completed our grade level forums. Each took place on a Tuesday morning, and was well attended. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teams also sponsored a math forum. This event typically is just for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, but this year they decided to merge with second. There will be a k/1<sup>st</sup> grade math forum a little bit later this year. We have had another School Council meeting, and all is running smoothly.

Hopefully there will be a clean up day in the not too distant future, however, the teaching garden out front is providing lots of visual interest.

Our next big thing on the docket is preparing for the annual holiday cookie exchange for the teachers in December.

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

Creative Arts brought numerous authors to the schools in October as part of the Wordfest program, and also sponsored several school wide performances.

Country, Woodland, Field and the Middle schools were active with Wordfest authors.

Country School hosted author Suzy Kilne and Lyn Littlefield Hoopes started her residency at

Woodland School. Field School had Trenton Lee Stewart who

was a tremendous hit and Middle School had Margaret McMullan who was also a bit hit.

At Field School Bamidele, an African dance and drumming group performed to all grades and was a huge success with the children and teachers. Last week Bash the Trash performed at

Country and Woodland school. The children were totally enthralled by their educational performance

on recycling and reusing. At the Middle School, the mural is nearly finished by Thomas Burns and

will hopefully be ready to unveil by the middle of November. At the end of this week, Odds Bodkin the famous

storyteller will be at the High School performing to 9th grade with a program specially written

for them of the Odyssey.

The committee is finalizing programs for the end of this year at all the schools, while continuing to preview and book performances for next year.

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

For the month of November we have two programs being performed by the Museum of Science Traveling Program on the 25th: (1) Electromagnetism at Woodland for 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and (2) Force and Motion at Field for 5<sup>th</sup> Grade. Representatives of the council continue to work with the high school science team to design experiments for the PTO Family Science Night scheduled for the end of February. Participants of the Summer Science Internship Program presented their experiences to the community in October and did an excellent job under the direction of Larry Murphy. Due to the success of last years program we are just starting to get organized to receive applications for a second Summer Science Internship Program for 2010.

The Math and Science Council sponsored a community forum on Tuesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> to educate parents on the current condition of the Science Labs in the Weston high school. The labs were designed and constructed in the early sixties and have not been renovated or improved since original construction. As a result, the infrastructure, space and circuitry of these labs are grossly inadequate and have created enormous challenges on the faculty in their ability to deliver science curriculum and perform science labs. The school committee will ask at Town Meeting on Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> for \$730,000 in design fees to start the process of working on a design for a renovation of the science labs. It is very important that parents and voting members of our community appreciate the importance of this request to the science program and to our students. We ask the PTO to spread the word and show up to vote on November 30<sup>th</sup> in support of this needed renovation. Based upon the timeline currently being suggested by the School Committee the new labs would not be available to students until 2012 which would benefit children that are currently in grades 5 and younger. In order to ensure that parents of elementary school children are aware of this issue a second community presentation will be held on November 18<sup>th</sup> in one of the elementary schools. The exact time and location of the forum will follow. If you have any questions regarding the project, please contact Betsy Romeri, Cheryl Maloney, or Amber Bock for additional information.

**WEBMASTERS:** Beth Keene, Alicia Abad, Suzanne Lenox  
Not Present.

**WSEPAC: Marcy Dorna**

WSEPAC has a Holiday Parent Coffee schedule for Thursday, Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> at the home of Rebecca Stevenson.

The topic for this coffee will about holiday gift ideas for kids in Pre-K thru High School. We'll discuss adaptive toys, board games, applications for your computer, iPhone, iTouch and Blackberry, PC and games for the Wii.

Our next board meeting is scheduled for the week of Dec 14<sup>th</sup>.

**WEEFC:** Kelly Renner

We are seeing the WEEFC grants coming to fruition. How WEEFC works is that they start in the Fall with a Phone-a-thon to each household and letters sent to ask for support. Then the WEEFC Auction takes place in November. This years theme was a derby and they tried to layer a lot of things in the auction to give a larger number of people a chance to participate. Danielle Black was this years Auction Chair.

WEEFC is done fundraising until the Spring Sprint. Thanks for all the support!

**PARENT EDUCATION:** Barbara Burgess

Not present.

**METCO:** Jerina Harris

There was a METCO meeting in October, the focus was transportation. Parents attended as well as the Director of Transportation, Bob Wells. The Bus drivers, Staff, Parents and Children will continue the open circle talks.

Jerina talked about METCO fundraising...bake sale, Thanksgiving raffles, give-a-ways and the fruit basket sale.

**WCCA:** Barbie Cobb

Not present.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm.

