MIDDLEBROOK PTA MINUTES 2/15/18

(unapproved)

1. Call to Order - 9:05 a.m. in LLC. In attendance were: Hillary Morrissy, Chandra Ring, Sharon Kress, Ritu Malik, Lauren Feltz, Jackie Jackson, Jen Acerra-Markey, Lisa Finn, Jackie Shaw, Mary Jane Reis, Carolyn Lyon, Tara Peterson, Vanessa Elias, Nicola Davies
2. Approval of 1/18/18 minutes - a motion to approve was made Jen Acerra-Markey and seconded by Sharon Kress. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Principal’s Report – Lauren Feltz
   1. Lunch: A concern about boys and girls being treated differently by administrators was raised. Students have concerns about what is happening in the cafeteria. There is a desired degree of freedom from students that isn’t necessarily feasible. For instance, students were creating rings of chairs around tables creating a safety issue as students inside the ring were blocked in. Students are encouraged to sit during lunch. Administrators and staff in the lunchroom must be able to get control of students in case of emergency. Students are expected to clean up after themselves at lunch. All students should be treated equally and with respect. Students have a combined 30 minutes for lunch and recess. They can go outside about halfway through lunch. On warm days, students can eat in the outside courtyard.
   2. There are upcoming combined Board of Education and Board of Finance budget meeting then a Board of Education meeting. The Board of Education asked Dr. Smith to put money back into the budget to restore some items. The Board of Finance asked for a 1% increase. That’s about a loss of 10 certified staff. A more involved and well informed electorate is for the better. Budget season is a huge amount of work for all of these boards. All are urged to be a part of the process. Meetings are viewable on uTube if you missed it live. Communicating your position to the Board of Finance, with specifics, is valuable.
   3. Some end of year dates are currently in flux because of the snow days.
4. Teacher Representative’s Report – Tara Peterson
   1. 6 RED science students are using stations to learn about kinetic and potential energy, and the team is celebrating a fantasy writing celebration day by dressing as their favorite fantasy characters and partaking in fun activities.
   2. 6G students have kicked off a project revolving around the 2018 Winter Olympics.  Students are choosing a sport and a specific event to follow through the Olympic games and will learn how math is used in their sport. In writing workshop, students have been writing essays to analyze characters and themes in challenging pieces of literature. We're thrilled that some students used their Someday Wishes to wish for more reading time! Recently, we had a "Pajama Day" on team so that some students could get their wish to have read-in-your-pajamas time in school. Reading Workshop is kicking off a Social Issues Book Club Unit this week.   During the unit, students will focus on various literary elements like setting, character, conflict, theme and how they impact the overall story.  Clubs will discuss how books are written around social issues and analyze the text to interpret what the author's important message may be. In social studies students have completed their unit of study on Europe.  We began by focusing on members of the European Union while learning about socio-economic factors such as GDP, GDP per-capita, and literacy rate while learning how to find this information in print and online sources.  We finished by practicing reading, research, and note taking skills by selecting a topic from ancient Greece and Rome, such as architecture, politics, agriculture, and language, that had an influence on Europe, while creating presentations of the learning through formats such as videos, slideshows, expert books, or personal correspondence.
   3. 6 Yellow Team is looking forward to April: Wednesday, April 18, 2018 - Yale Art Museum Field Trip; Friday, April 27, 2018 - Walkathon for Charity
   4. Seventh grade reading teachers would like to thank you for your generous funding for the Shakespearience program.
   5. 7 Green ARK students recently hung tags in lockers celebrating peers by saying what they admire about others on our team - some examples include “I love how you smile,” “I appreciate how you always lend a pen when someone needs  it.” We celebrated the “Just Say Hello” initiative by passing on “Hello”cards across Team last week. It was well received by many
   6. 7Y various activities have fueled student curiosity and learning including but not limited to - counting brine shrimp, using Spanish to explain their bedrooms, gasping and laughing at actions in Macbeth, examining issues in the Middle East, exploring poems, applying algebraic principles and, occasionally, even wearing a chicken suit (collecting donations for Heifer International).
   7. 7 Red has just started working to raise money for a UK-based charity called ArmandoAid. They work to build and operate schools in refugee camps to bring education and opportunities to displaced people around the world. In science, we are beginning an earth science unit, beginning with fossils. Students in 7th grade French have just finished a unit on Senegal and francophone African countries. They all were able to speak in French for a minute in front of their peers describing Senegal's culture, including music, geography, traditional food dishes as well as clothing.  Many have observed that it is getting much easier for them to write and speak in complex sentences in French. Their knowledge of the African continent has increased wonderfully.
   8. 7th grade Spanish have just finished a 1-2 minute speaking presentation, describing their sketches of the room in Spanish. They were able to speak with much detail, including adjectives, colors and locations.  Many students shared their post-project reflection, saying that they feel much more comfortable speaking in front of their peers now that we are halfway through the school year. The students' speaking and writing skills are progressing nicely this year.
   9. 8G Math students In pre-algebra we are in the midst of a unit on slope and equations of lines, and in algebra we are wrapping up a unit on solving systems of equations. Social studies students are learning about the Compromise of 1850, Kansas-Nebraska Act, Dred Scott decision, and Abolitionists. In Spanish classes students researched a cultural event in a Spanish speaking country and presented their event to the class. We had an amazing time "celebrating" the events and sampling some if the foods.....examples included Carnaval, San Fermin  (Running of the Bulls), La Tomatina (Tomato Throwing Festival), and a Flower Festival. In Science class students are busy building bridges out of toothpicks. The goal is to make one that is lightweight yet strong. We do have a few budding Civil Engineers on team:)
   10. 8Y French Club students from WHS came to Mr. Bulenzi's classes to celebrate and teach students about Mardi Gras. Science classes are in the midst of bridge building; whose bridge will be the strongest? ELA classes are looking at historical fiction, author's craft, and literary analysis
   11. 8RED continued planning and organizing in our team service groups (Bridge Building with the 5th grade, Handyman for MDBK, Caretakers for Middlebrook's Memorial sites). Began our 3rd Citizenship focus area where we are focusing on behaviors that make 8RED a better functioning academic community (our focus areas so far are: locker use, starting and ending our day, arriving to class with materials)
5. President’s Report – Hillary Morrissy
   1. Zero Waste Funding & Approval: This program was implemented at Cider Mill. This has had a great deal of parent support and kids are doing a much better job with it. It has been taking place at Middlebrook since the start of the school year. The composting cost was underestimated as a result of higher quantity and contamination than anticipated. Dr. Smith has assured this will be fully funded by the district next year. Cider Mill approved $1,000 grant for the overage. Zero Waste Initiative is asking for $500 now. We loaned them money for sandwich bags at the start of the year but it has been fully paid bag through bag sales. Hillary Morrissy made a motion to approve $500 for and it was seconded by Jackie Jackson. Motion unanimously carried. Middlebrook has recently named Student Ambassadors to help share the Zero Waste Initiative to representatives from another district touring.
   2. Turnover Shop: They are in great need of volunteers. They would love present PTA Presidents to present better marketing ideas to them. Some ideas were to use signupgenius.com, have a volunteer table at walk-thru. There is a training commitment before you begin volunteering. You can work a minimum of 1-2 shifts per month. They could use marketing and social media help. Middlebrook TV Studio Club could do an interview about the Turnover Shop and, with parental permission, it could be shared online.
6. Officer Reports
7. Vice President – Laura Rowley:
   1. Membership: we currently have 361 members.
   2. Stop & Shop Rewards: There are 210 people signed up, nearly double the numbers from last year. $1,382 total raised this year.

1. Treasurer – Jackie Shaw
   1. There were some Science Fair expenses slightly overbudget as student participation was much higher than last year. Custodial bills for Fun Nights are outstanding. There will be some money remaining in the budget for Gifts & Grants. Only one team has used their gifts and grants money allocated at the start of each year. There is also still $1,470 for flexible seating that hasn’t been spent. Photo Day earned $6,200 which was more than anticipated.
2. Committee Reports
3. Box Tops: The Fall Submission check came in and roughly $450 was raised from the current Box Top contest.
4. Special Education:
   1. SEPTA: The State PTA President and Vice President came to a meeting to discuss forming a SEPTA (Special Education PTA). This is not as expensive as initially anticipated and can be a 501c. Would involve working much closely with the PTA.
   2. Planning Disabilities Awareness Month: Have done inspirational bookmarks in years prior and are hoping to have a bulletin board at Middlebrook this year. Considering a Mix-It-Up lunch, usually TIMS helps with these luncheons.
5. Science Fair: This was very impressive with excellent work by students and judges. Kids watched a science show during the judging. The level of commitment from the high school teachers was fabulous. There was a huge interest in engineering. Chairs have recommendations for the Science Fair moving ahead. Thanks to all the volunteers and WEF for their contributions.
6. Wilton Youth Council:
   1. Ski Trips were a huge success. Students had a great time and there was a waiting list to go. Warrior Council chaperones went as well.
   2. Youth-to-Youth Parent Night – first one was a great success.
   3. Color Run will be Thursday, May 3. There’s a committee to help with sponsorships.
   4. Peer Connection has a retreat March 10 and then will meet on Thursdays.
   5. How to Raise An Adult: Break Free of the Overparenting Trap and Prepare Your Kids for Success was a successful talk and has a book talk coming up on February 28.
   6. Dr. Suniya Luthar is returning to discuss results of a survey of Wilton High School students conducted this fall. Registration on WYC website on March 5, 2018 from 7-8:30pm.
   7. Susan Bauerfeld and Chris Parrott will do the final Parent Education Event on March 20 from 10-11:30am at the Wilton Library and 7-8:30pm at the Weston Library on Managing the Impact and Influence of Digital Devices and Content: What to do, how to do it and why it’s important.
   8. The Vaping Resource Page on the WYC website from last year is being updated
   9. Free Play Task Force has a group from Free to Grow coming to film the discussion as part of a documentary.
7. Meeting Adjourned at 10:46am.