

Middlebrook PTA meeting
October 17, 2019

Attendance:

Chandra Ring, Donna Arnold, Kim Hall, Amanda Patania, Michael Panoli, Amy Gettler, Lauren Feltz, Amanda Mitchell, Lisa Gibboney, Jen Lalor, Savet Constantine, Ruth DeLuca, Jen Acerra-Markey, Lara Paschalidis, Cristin Wallace, Lorelee Hamilton, Kris Getty, Donna Peterson, Donna Arnold, Carolyn Lyon

- I. Meeting was called to order at 9:05am
- II. Minutes of September 2019 meeting were approved. Motion by Carolyn Lyon and second by Amanda Mitchell
- III. Teacher Report – Mike Panoli
 - a. 6th grade – community service projects starting, interdisciplinary projects, 6R using team time to teach parents to use PowerSchool
 - b. 7th grade – 7G focusing on the power of 1 and build groups
 - c. 8th grade – preparing for field trips, 8Y: getting ready for Ellis Island, 8R: student council up and running and using FLEX and create rules for hallway, 8G – citizenship focus
 - d. STRIDE – concert, 8th grade chorus performing with HS chorus 10/23
 - e. Veterans day – letter to parents coming soon via email
 - f. Debate – hosting in January
 - g. Questions for parents from teachers – Kim Hall going to be parent to coordinate getting feedback from parents
 - i. Walk through – necessary for 8th grade students
 - ii. Open House – feedback, value for cafeteria part for 7th and 8th grade
 - iii. Parent Conferences – should students participate
 - iv. Closing House – feedback, opinion if needed, maybe moved up in the year
 - v. Grading system – standard based like MD/CM or keep grades (larger discussion is ongoing with MB teachers this year)
- IV. Principal Report
 - a. Probability and Statistics class: Middlebrook - Statistics and Probability Class Background - In an effort to address the limited instructional time for math at Middlebrook School, we identified an opportunity to address some of the statistics and probability standards on a pilot basis. We developed a one quarter statistics and probability course within the existing STRIDE schedule. This pilot course is a stop-gap measure to provide specific math content instruction, while we continue to study potential changes to the Middlebrook schedule. This class will allow 7th and 8th grade students to learn the foundations of statistics and probability which we have been unable to do within the current Middlebrook schedule.
Structure - Statistics and probability is structured into two courses, one for 7th grade and one for 8th grade. Because 7th and 8th grade students historically had only three quarterly classes, students typically had one quarter where they spent that time in a tutorial (similar to study hall). Eliminating the tutorial class created room in the schedule to add a Statistics and Probability course. Sixth grade students already have four quarterly classes which include digital citizenship and therefore do not have room in their schedules to add statistics and probability.

Each course includes approximately 22 lessons. The 7th grade course will address descriptive statistics: exploring data, displaying data, and describing distributions of data. These are sixth grade standards but are prerequisites for 7th and 8th grade statistics and probability. The 8th grade course will provide an introduction to probability, combinatorics and inference. These are 7th grade standards but follow the learning sequence for statistics and probability. Eighth grade Pre Algebra and Algebra classes will continue to cover some of the 8th grade standards, linear regression and conditional probability, as time permits. (Darren Gunn adds, "In eighth grade, we are also reinforcing certain concepts of statistics as well as getting some practice using Google sheets to calculate and present data.)

The Illustrative Math lesson materials will be used in both classes. The courses will embed skill building in real-world applications and project-based learning. As a STRIDE class, there are no letter grades. Student mastery is indicated using a range of unsatisfactory to exemplary. The course will be taught by a teacher who is dual certified in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

Caveat - Adding this statistics and probability course is not a solution to the instructional time constraints. Even without statistics and probability material, teachers struggle to address the full range of grade level content due to the amount of instructional time for math. The current structure is a stop gap measure that provides 7th and 8th grade students with the opportunity to study statistics and probability.

Lauren will send the course syllabus in a Tuesday is Newsday. She will also get information on how the course is going for 8th graders at present.

Middlebrook staff recently had a rich professional learning day with Maria Alcox

A frozen yogurt machine has been added to the cafeteria.

Student Government elections take place in November.

V. Officer Reports:

- a. President Report: We continue to look for a Secretary - please reach out if interested.
- b. Vice President Report: Membership is 324 to date (275 families and 49 staff). This is equitable with membership numbers at this time last year.
- c. Treasurer Report: First payment was recieved from MobileArq. Team grants have been paid as requested thus far (Some partialy, some fully)
- d. Parent-at-Large Report – Report covers 9/26 meeting. Related files can be found on Board Docs (<https://www.boarddocs.com/ct/wilton/Board.nsf/vpublic?open>), within the agenda for the meeting specified. Key updates:
 - Standardized Testing Performance vs. Metrics were reported and updated.
 - Proposed Revisions to Scorecard were discussed, including incorporating more metrics around high need students across the district. For Middlebrook specifically, also looking at incorporating metrics for science, world language, digital literacy and increasing number of school climate metrics.
 - Policy and Regulations - 3 policies approved concerning topics 504s, Migrant Students and administration of medications. 2 others - religion in schools and therapy dogs - are currently in on hold.
 - Enrollment update: Enrollment 59 students less than expected, driven primarily by kindergarten (-39) and first grade (-10)

VI. Committee Reports:

- a. Fundraising: Annual appeal has started. Just over \$2000+ has been donated as of this date
- b. Gifts & Grants: Looking to kick off and make some changes to our process. This involves splitting into two sections: Grants in January and Gifts in May. Gifts would include enrichment programs. The change in timing for Grants allows for an application to be granted and utilized in the current academic year. There was a question about the Visiting Author program not taking place this year. Lauren explained that there is an effort to reduce special schedules and this would mean having a Visiting Author every three years to allow all Middlebrook students this experience, but to bring them into classrooms and further engage the students with the author. In looking at special schedules, there's a strong desire not to reduce any student performances. Red Ribbon Week and World Language assemblies may also move to every three years.
- c. Box Tops: Physical Box Tops are being phased out. Team contest runs through the end of next week. Currently entries are very low. People can now scan box tops using the app. Another fundraiser we use is the A+ rewards and that registration period is now open.
- d. Hospitality: The Bus Driver Breakfast was a success. Staff luncheon had an excellent turnout. Thanks for all who helped. Our next event is for Veterans Day.
- e. Activity nights:
 - 1. 6th Grade: Event is tomorrow night. 183 students have pre-registered. We're asking students to bring their own water bottle. Many local businesses have donated prizes. Entry fees will be collected at the door.
 - 2. 7th Grade: Event will be held October 25 7-9pm. Planning is well underway and students are excited.
- f. Pancake Breakfast: Planning is underway for this new event to be held on teams just prior to the Thanksgiving break.
- g. WYC: November 13 Donna Volpita will be presenting in the Library in the morning and afternoon. Registration required. She will discuss the resilience factor and students (middle school and older) are encouraged to attend the evening session.
- h. SEPTA: SEPTA and Miller Driscoll Carnival planners partnered for a sensory station at the carnival. This was well utilized. Hosting a transition meeting on October 23. Bake sale at Village Market will take place October 27 to benefit all SEPTA Programs. Space with Eli Leibowitz to help with anxiety is upcoming. The idea is to help parents change their behaviors to reduce stress for children and households. This will be November 4 at 7pm in the Middlebrook Auditorium. SEPTA also has a Gifts & Grants program that Special Education teachers can apply for funds from.

VII. Board of Education Candidates: Each candidate was invited to speak for up to 3 minutes

- a. Savet Constantine: Has lived in Wilton for 15 years, with kids going through all four schools. Has extensive volunteer work within the school district. Believes in support programs to develop the whole child is a key. Sees a strong relationship between financial stability of Wilton and the schools.
- b. Ruth DeLuca: Moved to Wilton in 2016 for a small community and excellent schools. Has 2 children at Miller Driscoll and in pre-school. Values public education. Worked in regulatory and health care policy. Wants the very best for our children and believes in local controls and oversight. Believes creativity can flourish and excellent schools can also be found in personalized ways to meet the needs of all students. We need to provide teachers and administrators the tools for success.
- c. Jen Lalor: Jen is speaking for herself and Mandy Schmauch. Mandy intended to be at the meeting but in the storm last night had damage to her home that she needs to attend to. Jen is a speech pathologist with children in 5th and 7th grades who has worked in general and special education for the last 20 years. Believes in enhanced communication and a need to focus on

every child. She has two primary goals of focus: 1. Community forums for the public to share their voice and 2. Focus on each child and look at enrichment and STEM for all of our kids.
Adjourned at 10:13am