

Middlebrook PTA meeting  
Nov 21, 2019

Attendance:

Chandra Ring, Kim Hall, Donna Arnold, Kevin Smith, Lauren Feltz, Mike Panoli, Amy Gettler, Christine Genereux, Donna Peterson, Jen Markey, Nicola Davies, Amanda Patania, Carolyn Lyon

1. Meeting was called to order at 9:00am
2. Minutes of October 2019 meeting were approved. Motion by Jen Markey and second by Amanda Patania. Motion approved.
3. Teacher Report – Mike Panoli
  - a. Veterans Day- Veterans Day this year was another wonderful experience. Dr. Priest was able to pull together a small group of students to take an evening in October and interview our veterans from the American Legion Post 86. We had a pizza dinner, heard wonderful stories, and the students got to see the wonderful facility downtown. Those interviews made their way into the Middlebrook video tribute, our movie-slideshow incorporating students, staff, and community friends with pictures of their family veterans. The blend of music, personal writing, patriotic songs, greeting veterans in person... could only have been topped by the musical performance, Saints Brigade, in our field at the end of the day.
  - b. 8th Grade Pancake Breakfast - Warmly received on the Nov 20th. Many thanks to the parents for putting this together and helping to bring a fun and community feeling to the teams. We know a lot of hard work went into planning and preparation and the 8th grade teams warmly thank them.
  - c. Giving Tree Idea Feedback - Overall great feedback, something like the book fair?, Amazon preferred, maybe target
  - d. Stride - Stride teacher will now be attending Parent Conferences.
  - e. 6th Grade in General- The 6th-grade students will spend an afternoon during group creating holiday candy bags for DCF. We have been collecting (and will continue to collect) extra and unwanted Halloween candy. With the help of 7th and 8th-grade mentors, we will be creating individual holiday candy treat bags that will be handed out to the children during the holidays.
  - f. Red Block Party - The 6th, 7th, and 8th grade Red teams will be having a mini block party that will run through some classes and the students will be writing holiday cards for local senior centers. This is the first of hopefully two with the second being in the spring.
  - g. 6R - Team 6 Red was thrilled to hold our "Just Because" Luncheon two weeks ago. Each quarter we invite 1/4 the team to a pizza lunch on us up on our team! Kids can add treats and food to the menu and it is a really nice way to get to know all of our students a little better. By the end of the year each student will have a turn. The team is exploring using FLEX time to have students participate in ancient Greek dramatic performances. While addressing "cultural legacies of Europe" the team is excited about having students work together to learn and perform fun cultural skits and short plays, an invaluable cooperative and cultural experience!
  - h. 6Y - On 6 Yellow, we hold a friendly competition known as the Team Cup throughout the year. Possible thoughts---end-of-year prizes for the advisory groups
  - i. 7G - 7 Green, along with the Upstanders Club and 7 Yellow, recently celebrated World Kindness Day by decorating hot drink sleeves from Starbucks in Wilton. The store then handed out the sleeves on World Kindness Day, November 13th, and other days last week. According to the store manager, it was very well received by customers, including some who asked when the students would be doing it again; Using the half days next to have our first Innovation Days of the year. Innovation Time is designed for students to explore a topic of their interest that they do not normally have a chance to experience. The time includes inquiry, self-teaching, and sharing of learning; Focusing on argumentative writing and debating across the team, introducing students to the various ways to take a stand, supported by evidence.
  - j. 7Y - Nonfiction reading strategies and argumentative strategies from writing are helping students prepare for Socratic seminars in social studies and Yellowstone National Park stakeholders town meetings in

science. In Spanish, students are exploring how living spaces reflect your culture whilst in math equation solving is encouraging stamina.

- k. 8R - has begun their transdisciplinary unit of Independent fairfield. The student will be creating a Constitution for a newly formed country applying what they have learned in Social Studies and Writing culminating with an actionable piece on how the kids can get involved to change local government. The students will also engage in a Congress to openly debate the issues presented by their new Constitution and connect their local lives with larger scaled pictures.
- l. 8G - The 8 Green team is beginning our Coat and Blanket Drive for the Bridgeport Rescue Mission. The students made posters to hang around the school and they are encouraging all to donate gently used coats and clothing to this worthy cause. The boxes will be in the 8G hallway. We encourage the whole school to participate.

#### 4. Principal Report

- a. LLC update – electrical light
- b. Group of teachers studying MB schedule
  - i. prioritizing instructional time
  - ii. Parents will be part of this group and initiative
- c. 8<sup>th</sup> grade leaders – student government leaders will lead meetings
  - i. Cafeteria – working on a chicken sandwich
  - ii. Art installation
- d. New butterfly project installed in the front booth – want to have an opening
- e. Unit overview statements for the units students are studying at school and helpful parents to encourage discussion with families at home
- f. Brown Bag Lunch – Math instruction will be the topic Jan 9<sup>th</sup> with Mrs. Walsh and

#### 5. President Report

- a. Needed representation for the Nutrition Council
- b. Thank you to Turnover Shop for their donation and they need volunteers
- c. Need a secretary for MB PTA
- d. Book Fair – December 4<sup>th</sup> for about a week
- e. Drawstring bags will be on sale \$5 with MB logo
- f. Popup Store in December with MB theme items
- g. Library is looking for volunteers
- h. Thank you to Hospitality with Veterans Day

#### 6. Vice President Report

- a. 335 members (54 are teachers)

#### 7. Treasurer Report

- a. Financials are where
- b. Photo check came in
- c. Fun Nights – break even

#### 8. Parent-at-Large

Note: Covers meeting on 10/24 and 11/14. 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. Once there, you will find attachments within their agenda item. Occasionally, I will link to a presentation.

- a. District Score Cards and Action Plans (Action Plans approved 11/14)
  - i. Proposed Revisions to Scorecard discussion continued, including incorporating more discussion around metrics for high need students and Social Emotional Learning, including SRBI for earlier intervention and assessment of social emotional challenges (10/24). Special Education Scorecard Targets also discussed (11/14)
  - ii. Middlebrook scorecard discussion (10/24) focused on:

1. Carrying forward multiyear effort on Performance Based Assessments. This year looking at how they represent and share PBAs in grading / feedback /etc.
  2. Restorative practices and desire to accelerate staff training. Community circles as one of the tools they are using.
- b. Awards and Personnel News
- i. CABE Communications Award for Zero Waste Webpage and 6 honorable mentions including 2018 proposed calendar, student guide, and budget presentation (10/24)
  - ii. WHS Unified Team recognized in Salute to the Schools - starts in 8th grade. Wilton's program is recognized as a "banner" school, one of 4 in the state. (10/24)
  - iii. CABE Board award (one of 10 recognized in the state) paired with saying goodbye to 3 longtime BOE members: Chris Finkelstein, Laura Schwem and Lory Rothstein (11/14)
  - iv. Personnel Changes - Dr. Mannring retired
- c. Budget & Financial
- i. Costs per Pupil were corrected. Corrections explained 10/24 and covered in GMW article.
  - ii. New financial system closer to coming live. Allows much greater granularity and better tracking. Will be backloaded with prior two years data to enable budget work.
  - iii. WASA Contract (for Administrators) 4 year contract approved. (11/14)
  - iv. WEA (Teachers) 3 year contract approved. Overall costs increase 8.62% over term.
- d. Miscellaneous:
- i. Community Steps and Genesis Update (11/14)
  - ii. Long Range Planning Meeting in Oct looked at Portrait of the graduate (10/24)
  - iii. WHS Graduation Date Set - Good news is change in state law lets it be set earlier now and only requires 180 days of school vs. 185. (11/14)
  - iv. Next Meeting: December 5, 2019 - first with new BOE members.
- e. Policy and Regulations - The policy is the "what", the Regulation is the "how". Copies of the policies can be found on board docs agenda for meeting date.
- i. Approved 11/14
    1. Policy 6141 - New Course Proposals - All presented courses were for WHS
    2. Policy 6128 Use of Certified Therapy Dogs - approved 10/24 Policy 6141.21 Religion in Schools: Reviewed most recently 10/24 (after legal review), approved 11/14. New policy for district.
    3. Policy 1327 Resale of Goods and Services by Students - reviewed 10/24, approved 11/14.
    4. Policy 1312 Public Complaints - Reviewed 10/24, approved 11/24..
    5. Policy 1316.2 Civility and accompanying reg. .
  - ii. 11/14 Review and Discuss
    1. Policy 1360 Student Awards and Scholarships
    2. Policy 6172.4 Title I Parent Involvement - will be coming back. Needs more review
    3. Policy 0200 Educational Goals - Will revisit. Placeholder for now to update as we go through and finalize mission, vision, goals.
    4. NEW Policy 5141.214 Sunscreen Application - New CT requirement around self-applying sunscreen for 6 and over.
- f. Consent agenda approvals (for minor tech word changes only on 10/24): Policy 6111 School Calendar, Policy 1314 Solicitation of Employees, Policy 1115 Requests for Information, Policy 2133 Principals

## 9. Fundraising

- a. Annual appeal is still going
- b. Just over \$10,000+ has been donated as of this date

## 10. Pancake Breakfast

- a. Huge success
- b. Thank you to teachers

- c. Tweaks will be make for next year

11. Surveys

- a. Overall theme parents appreciate coming in to meet teachers and be in the building
- b. Meet the Teacher – 80%
  - i. See new spaces
  - ii. Importance decreases
- c. Open House

12. Gift and Grants

- a. Motivated by decreasing budget
- b. Grants – innovative, first time request
  - i. Starting Dec 1<sup>st</sup>, due Jan 3rd, present on Jan 9th, PTA vote on Jan 16th
- c. Gifts – repeat assemblies, enrichment programming, instruments, etc
  - i. Available Feb 27th, due Noon on March 26th, present on April 2, PTA vote on March 23.

13. Hospitality

- a. Veterans Day event

14. 6<sup>th</sup> grade and 7<sup>th</sup> grade Activity nights

- a. Increased fee to \$10
- b. Water bottles were brought instead of supplying single-use plastic water bottles

15. Science Fair

- a. Co-Sponsorship with WEF
- b. Dates are announced for deadlines

16. WYC

- a. Free Play task force – ideas to incorporate ideas to “recharge” at MB and WHS

17. SEPTA

- a. Three lanes for this year – Social/Emotional, Literacy, Transition
- b. Gifts and Grants – MB projector for a SpEd teacher
- c. Working with Admin and teachers and getting the gap closed between SEPTA
- d. October bake sale, Amazon Smile to help fundraise
- e. Coordinating an emergency plan with police to alert of a special needs child in the home in the case of an emergency

18. Conversation with Kevin Smith

- a. Opportunities for Parents to interact more with teachers to get a better sense of connection with the school
- b. Communication methods from the teacher/team/school to better the relationship between parents and child with what they are learning in the school

Adjourned at 10:28am