MIDDLEBROOK PTA MINUTES 10/19/17

(unapproved)

1. Call to Order - 9:06 a.m. in Media Center. In attendance were: Hillary Morrissy, Gretchen Jeanes, Chandra Ring, Lauren Feltz, Jackie Shaw, Laura Rowley, Jen Acerra-Markey, Ginna Yerrall, Vanessa Elias, Nicola Davies, Sharon Kress, Lauren Yoon, Yim Lai, Jacqueline Jackson, Tara Peterson, Lisa Finn, Carolyn Lyon, Elizabeth McKay
2. Approval of 9/20/17 minutes - a motion to approve was made Ginna Yerrall and seconded by Sharon Kress. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Teacher Representative – Tara Peterson (7G):
   1. 6th Grade: things are off to a great start. A couple of weeks ago, all three teams celebrated a “team day” where students and teachers participated in a variety of team-building activities designed to lay the foundation for the collaborative year ahead. They’re embarking on their first field trip to the Bronx Zoo. Historically, this trip has been one of the highlights of the year for students, as they get a chance to apply social studies and science concepts in an exciting new setting. Thanks to so many volunteer parent chaperones, the groups are small enough that the students can really take charge of the day and build lasting relationships with their classmates.
   2. 7Y: Students developed their own rubrics for evaluation for the Socratic seminar this week. Borrowing an idea from a staff development exercise, students created paper plate drawings with summer activities and a book read on the top and on the bottom are goals and interests for the coming year. We will hang four plates a week in the pod area as students try to guess who the plates belong to – visual hints will be added during the week. Students have also been submitting proposals for flex period ideas so that we will have a student run session in December.
   3. 7G: Connect 4 Board provides information on teachers so students can see them as people. Every few weeks a students will be represented on the board.
   4. 7R: Writing Workshop students are knee deep in writing their realistic fiction pieces. They’ve incorporated various methods of setting and characterization to make their stories come alive. Reading Workshop students are starting a nonfiction and historical fiction unit based on literature about the civil rights movement. Social Studies students are studying World Religions and are getting ready for their first Socratic Seminar where they’ll have informed discussions based on evidence while respecting others. In Science students are working on a Pendulum Lab, a culminating activity in the Nature of Science unit. They’ll figure out how to sync a pendulum to the beat of a pop music song. Earlier, they had fun with Water Marbles, investigating whether or not they really expand by a factor of 300 when placed in water. Math students continue to apply math skills to novel situations. In World Language Spanish students have been looking at families throughout the Hispanic world and in French they are looking at differences/similarities between French and American meals.
   5. 8G: We are getting ready for our field trip to Philly on Tuesday, October 24. We’ll also be kicking off our yearly collection of gently used coats and blankets for the Bridgeport Rescue Mission Shelter. The collection will run between Thanksgiving and the Holiday break.
   6. 8Y: Students will be going to NYC (Ellis Island, Trinity Church, and Federal Hall) on October 23. In preparation for the trip, students will be engaging in an Ellis Island simulation activity on October 20.
   7. 8R: Students just finished their Odyssey Project team building activity with a Museum Day where a myriad of inventive student-created exhibits worked to define how our upcoming year would be a long and adventurous journey we take together. Speaking of journeys, we are gearing up for our journey to historic Philadelphia in early November.
4. Principal’s Report – Toby Kawulicz
   1. Fall testing has been completed. MAP Testing is given 3 times during the academic year for 6th and 7th graders. Glitches this fall in the Wilton and NWEA systems mean that not all students were able to complete the math test. Those students for whom a concern exists, other data points will be looked at. Of the roughly 700 6th and 7th grade students, nearly all finished reading. For anyone that was unable to complete the test, no result will be shown. MAP allows teachers to see growth and intervene as needed (in small classroom groups, individual interventions for students as needed or to push higher level students). OLSAT is a test of problem solving and higher level thinking. This test provides a data point to look at gifted identification and for 8th grade placement. It is used for Humanities Placement in High School, with other data points. The PSAT taken by 8th graders is a universal screener similar to the MAP Test. There are reading, writing and 2 math sections. It will be taken again in March. AIM is an opportunity for students invited to participate to get extra classroom instruction. It was introduced this year. Students must give up some strides to participate. This is different than Math Intervention.
   2. First steps taken in addressing the swastikas found on bathroom walls was to immediately talk to students. Students pushed their desire to be part of positive change and send a message of kindness. All students have counselors available to meet with if they want to on a 1-1 basis. A few students have done this. Many students also spoke in advisory or flex situations.
   3. A Hurricane Relief fundraiser garnered nearly $9,000 (including matching funds)
   4. Clubs and Activities have started and have excellent enrollment. There are 60+ students in the Debate Club and 50+ in Math Counts
   5. Staff loved the PTA Appreciation Luncheon on October 17. Thank you for all the fabulous options.
5. President’s Report – Hillary Morrissy
   1. The Annual Appeal is closing soon. This money funds the operating budget. Giving is currently lower than previous years.
   2. Reflections is a National PTA competition to celebrate the Arts. At present, we don’t have a chairperson to oversee this. Without someone filling this role, Middlebrook will be unable to participate. Typically submissions are collected from December 1-January 8. They are then judged and presented to the community at a Library Event. Most of the work can be done before Thanksgiving and after New Years.
   3. The PTA does not get involved in politics. Local elections are coming and there are 4 candidates for 3 Board of Education spots. Alphabetically, they are:

Glenn Hemmerlee

Gretchen Jeanes

Deb Low

Andrea Preston

There is a candidate forum tonight at 6:50pm at the Wilton Library.

1. Officer Reports
2. Vice President – Laura Rowley:
   1. Membership: we have 307 members as of 10/17 (299 online and 8 offline – 7 of whom are teachers). Previously we’ve had 40-60 teachers join. Toby will put out a PTA Membership plug to teachers. As of 10/17 last year, we had 344 members.
   2. 191 people are registered for the Stop & Shop rewards program.
3. Treasurer – Jackie Shaw
   1. As of Sunday, October 15 we had $24,000 total income (Slightly above half). At this point this would fund programs but would not allow for Gifts and Grants money.
   2. Push is still on for the Annual Appeal and for memberships.
   3. We don’t have Picture money or a donation from the Turnover Shop as yet.
   4. We received a 1-time $3,000 donation this year.
4. Parent At Large – Lauren Yoon:
   1. Board of Education had a change in officers at the last meeting.
   2. All school principals gave reports
   3. Testing results showed Wilton as top within the state but not within the DIRG
5. Committee Reports
6. Spirit Wear – Made $6,300. The newsletter and Facebook helped significantly with sales.
7. Fundraising –
   1. We’ve collected via PayPal dollars and $450 in checks thus far. TV Club made another video to be shown to students today and tomorrow. It’s a 1-minute ad of students telling their peers to have their parents make donations. There’s also an added incentive for students – the first team to 50% donations will have a Halloween Pizza Party. Thus far $9,000 has been collected for the Annual Appeal from 189 families. Last year we received $16,000 in donations. Another ad will be coming on Facebook.
8. Photo Day – Retake day will be November 14. An email blast will go out. Must return your package of pictures to do retakes.
9. Box Tops – November 1 submission deadline. There will be a school contest after the Holiday Break.
10. Hospitality – The Veterans Day Luncheon is coming up. Mrs. Priest has students making cookies again this year. Bus driver and teacher appreciation events have taken place since the start of the school year. The Kindness Club made goody bags for the bus drivers as well, which were very popular.
11. Activity Night:
    1. 6th grade: All set and ready for a great night tomorrow.
    2. 7th grade: More volunteers are needed, otherwise ready for the event. Coincides with Youth-to-Youth Lake Compounce Trip.
12. Special Education – Tonight the PAB Parent-Night Out is at WEPCO 6:30-8:30PM. There’s a sensory screening of Inside Out on November 6 at 1pm at the Prospector Theater. More information can be found on the PAB website.
13. Wilton Youth Council:
    1. Recently hosted a great Narcan training. WPD has already used Narcan 4 times this year.
    2. Alicia Farrell presented October 17 on Civility and how over-parenting hurts us and our kids. The information from her presenting will be available online.
    3. Michael Fowlin will talk to HS Freshman and have 2 Middlebrook assemblies on November 1, during Red Ribbon Week. He’ll also present November 1 from 7-8:30pm for parents. The presentation will be adapted to fit the needs of students. School will provide parents with information on what he will speak to students about.
    4. Alan Schwarz will speak November 10 at the Wilton Library from 10-11:30am on his book ADHD Nation.
    5. There’s an upcoming conversation on the Importance of Free Play. Registration required and invites have been sent for this event.
    6. Tomorrow a 3-day training on DBT skills in schools begins. This will involve education on how to regulate emotions, schools helping tolerate stress effectively and interpersonal skills. Teachers and administrators are being trained to help students. DBT will be incorporated into the grades 9-12 Health Curriculum. It may also be woven into life classes taught by school counselors. This training is possible because of the Women’s Club donation to WYC to fight substance abuse. It may also be woven into life classes taught by school counselors.
    7. Wilton Social Workers have been trained on How to Talk so Kids Will Listen, How to Listen so Kids Will Talk. They can now offer parents this training.
    8. Red Ribbon Week is begins October 30. There are daily themes for the week, related to substance abuse.
14. New Business: Thanks expressed for reopening the upper lot for pickups.
15. Meeting Adjourned at 10:31am.