

**Middlebrook PTA Meeting
November 19, 2015 – Minutes**

I. Call to Order – 9:00 a.m. in Media Center

Attendance: Jacqueline Jackson, Margarita Blessing, Laura Schwemm, Kim Lynn, Maria Wilcox, Pam Hickey, Jessica Garcia, Kim Rogg, Laura Rowley, Vanessa Elias, Maria Coleman, Lauren Yoon, Kim Hall, Janine Kelly, Sujata Vemuri, Laurie Maggio, Jeanette Calabrese, Lisa Huff

II. Approvals

- October 15, 2015 Minutes approved – motion by Maria Wilcox, second by Kim Lynn. All in favor.
- Money approved for Reflections and FAPA expenses – details in New Business report.

III. Principal’s Report – Maria Coleman

- a. Pleased to announce Constitution Day organization named MB student as third place winner.
- b. MB hosted Veteran’s Day ceremony for which 20 vets came. The two student led assemblies featuring the MB flute choir and the choral students performed in a very moving, well-attended tribute. The students already received a thank you from one vet.
- c. No Idle Week kicked off this week. Parents may see kids wearing green tee shirts in the parking lot, had parents sign pledges and gave speeches.
- d. New student government leaders were voted in and announced yesterday.
- e. Celebration of the George Washington statute has been ongoing this month and tied into various subjects like the eighth grade unit on democracy and government. Students visit to discover GW’s myth vs. reality, art students have been sketching him etc. Music class playing period tunes.

IV. Teacher Representative – Jessica Garcia

6th Grade Updates

- In Reading Workshop, students are completing READO, an opportunity for them to read several books from different genres. It is a challenge, but students are very enthusiastic and proud of their reading accomplishments.
- Students are finishing up their fiction unit by writing stories; after Thanksgiving, they will begin a nonfiction unit, researching and writing about issues related to teen activism.
- All 6th grades will be making holiday cards for children and the elderly in area hospitals. This is called “Hearts and Crafts” and will take place on Thursday, 12/10.

6 Yellow

- For a Social Studies archaeology project, students have been hard at work researching famous sites around the world and will soon be presenting them in their classes.
- In Reader’s Workshop, students are beginning their nonfiction unit which will culminate in an authentic presentation on a topic of their choice.
- They would like to thank all of the families who donated books during Teen Read Week, candy for DCF and supplies for the veterans at the Nick Madaras House.

6 Red

- Hosting their 1st quarter team awards this week. About 20 students will be invited to the teacher-hosted “All A’s Breakfast” - a delicious meal cooked by their teachers.

7th Grade Updates

- All 7th Grade teams will be participating in a fundraiser for Heifer International.

- In addition to donating books for Teen Read Week, members of the ARK Club across the 7th grade took the time to make bookmarks to accompany the books!

7 Yellow

- Students are writing a Water Drop story in science, while in Spanish, students are discussing, comparing and contrasting dining etiquette in different countries.
- English and RWW are intentionally overlapping research work on the Victorian Era/Industrial Revolution in order to enhance the reading of A Christmas Carol and an excerpt from Oliver Twist.
- Several opportunities for performance based assessments in the month of December

7 Red

- Currently presenting their NOW (Nations of the World) projects. The students have been working on different countries of the world and determining what it is that differentiates them as developed and/or developing.
- Finishing the reading of “Cheaper by the Dozen” in English and will soon begin “A Christmas Carol” in RWW.
- World Language students created an “Ofrenda” for the Day of the Dead in Spanish class. Students in both French and Spanish have had fun exploring Siri on their devices in French or Spanish while researching for their NOW projects. They are continuing to work on sharpening their writing skills this second term.

7 Green

- The team’s Ark Club is kicking off an “I will Pledges for Hope” as part of their continuing efforts to raise funds for Heifer International. The kick-off will be today and will continue over Thanksgiving Break.
- Students on team have been busy participating in the annual Halloween Parade at Cider Mill, dressing in various forms of red clothing to support Red Ribbon Week, writing poems and sharing them at the Veteran’s Day Assembly and staying after school for a wide variety of clubs.
- Team is about to commence their annual Shark Tank Competition for creating the best product or experience in Latin America. The Team Champ will be crowned before Thanksgiving.

8th Grade

English/ RWW updates:

- 8 G: In English, students are studying the Russian Revolution to enhance their reading of “Animal Farm”
- 8 Y: In English, students are working on their poetry unit which will culminate in the creation of personal poetry books and in RWW, students are focusing on the ideas of morality and justice as they continue reading “To Kill a Mockingbird”
- 8 R: Getting to know Francie Nolan and her family in “A Tree Grows in Brooklyn” in English and in RWW, students presented story books created as lit circle adaptations in live readings to Miller-Driscoll classes

Social Studies

- All teams beginning an exploration of the Constitution and Constitutional rights in preparation for the upcoming Great Debates this December

Science

- All teams busy planning experiments to lead for the “Feel the Beat” lab experience. Students will have a chance to analyze data collected to labs that they designed and carried out with the help of their classmates!

School-wide

- Red Ribbon Week (signing pledges to stay drug-free, wearing red, and hearing inspirational stories)

- Teen Read Week (story time in the Library Media Commons, daily reading tips, donating books, making bookmarks)
- The Halloween Parades at Cider Mill (musicians travelled there to enhance CM's Halloween celebration)
- A drive to collect supplies for veterans at the Nick Madaras House
- The Veteran's Day Assembly (delivered by student musicians, student readers, poets, student council members, MAVEn club members)
- The kick off for the annual Science and Engineering Fair.

V. President's Report – Laura Rowley

- Thank you to Lauren & Ritu from Hospitality for making Veteran's Day great.
- Reminder that No Idle campaign is important for school and environment.
- Created a Fundraising Task Force to build out plan for next three years. We're hoping to pull students and parents in for involvement. If more students are involved we will be more successful.

VI. Officer Reports:

Vice President – Pam Hickey

- Membership is at 435 versus budget of 460.
- Donations from membership drive were \$1100 compared to \$545 last year.
- PTA funds approved for playground equipment were used to purchase 12 soccer balls, 72 tennis balls and 12 kick balls for kids to play with at recess.

Treasurer – Maria Wilcox

- Fundraising – 340 participants and \$17,685 gross – net \$16,830
- Processing 3 corporate matches – takes time, will report when they come in
- Pam Hickey and Kim Lynn Looked at MB PTA's fiscal year 2015 books. Specifically they performed the following:
 - Looked at all checks written in the fiscal year. Nothing out of the ordinary noted.
 - Looked at all deposit receipts for fiscal year. Nothing out of the ordinary noted.
 - Looked at bank reconciliations completed throughout the fiscal year. Nothing out of the ordinary noted. All done in a timely manner.
 - Looked at listing of outstanding checks as of 6/30/15. Nothing out of the ordinary noted.
- Per bank statements, cash balance on hand at 7/1/14 = \$45,408
- Per bank statements, cash balance on hand at 6/30/15 = \$28,359
- This financial report was required by CT State PTA. Letter was sent to CT State PTA.
- These documents were sent to CT State PTA– copy of Form 990; names of current members.

Parent-At-Large – Kim Lynn

- Board of Education meeting take away: BOE issued apology that parents didn't know about MAP testing, but many feel it is a good test because it provides teachers immediate feedback on whether they need to focus on enrichment or extra help, and it aligns with common core standards. These meetings are available online or on channel 78.

VII. Committee Reports:

- Fundraising – We now have 37% participation, which is about average for a normal year.
- Hospitality – Two events coming: breakfast for bus drivers on 12/3 and Winter Solstice. There will be a call out for baked goods and fruit to contribute for the celebrations.
- Science Fair -- Kicked off with assembly last week and holding help sessions this week. The deadline to participate is next week. Things pick up in January as the fair takes place in February, which will all be in morning announcements.

- Reflections -- Contest kicked off again this week. Space in the Wilton library will be utilized for entries. Entries will be accepted 12/1/15 through 1/1/16. The winner goes to state from here.
- Wilton Youth Council -- 11/18/15 evening Parent Connection Series event at the Wilton library had 87 in attendance for the "What You Want to Know About Your Tween/Teen". The Wilton task force survey results on substance use by Wilton Youth gave info on to the question "What's really going on in Grades 7-12"? It is available on WYC website too. Red Ribbon week was a success with a fabulous speaker who also presented to the Youth to Youth club. Some parents were questioning why there were not similar parent presentations, but that would require more money.

VIII. New Business

- Reflections request- Previously PTA Council had a budget for this that was split between the four Wilton schools but Council is dormant this year, so school PTAs are being asked to fund Reflections expenses for the library display (supplies, printing, shipping) and thank you gifts to the state office at \$200 per school. Motion made by Maria Wilcox, seconded by Pam Hickey. All in favor.
- FAPA (Fine arts and Performing Arts) Show request- Students can submit music or fine arts to be displayed at the Zellner Gallery in the Clune Center. The request is that each school contributes up to \$150 to help with the cost of the cookies and supplies which includes mounting art work. Motion was made by Maria Wilcox, and seconded by Vanessa Elias. All in favor.

IX. Dr. Chuck Smith facilitated the Back to the Future protocol – a round table discussion on the vision of our schools in the year 2022.

X. Adjournment 11:00 a.m.