

## **Middlebrook PTA Meeting Minutes 4/21/16**

- I. **Call To Order-** 9:03 am in MB Media Center- attendance: Jacqueline Jackson, Kim Rogg, Laura Rowley, Maria Coleman, Maria Wilcox, Nicola Davies, Laura Schwemm, Jess Garcia, Nadine Wilf, Andrea McElroy, Dina Levi and Mary Jones.
- II. **Approval of March 17, 2016 minutes-** motion made to approve by Maria Wilcox, seconded by Kim Rogg and all were in favor to approve.
- III. **Principal's Report- Maria Coleman**
  - A. Funding needed from PTA
  - B. Music of the Earth presented folklore, music and earth friendly items as part of the celebration of World Languages Week.
  - C. Scott Driscoll presented his Cyber Safety program to each of the three grades, as well as twice to parents only. The students were very engaged by the presentations, and roughly 150 parents turned out to hear Mr. Driscoll. Parent evaluations were extremely positive.
  - D. Several of our students participated in the 2016 Western Region Middle School Music Festival on Saturday, March 19th. Representing our choir were Tess Nobles, Eleanor Winrow, Ciaran Smith, Jubair Huq, and Evan Timney. Representing our band were Isabelle Braten, Zoe Kim, Brian Curley, Miller Rowley, Fiona O'Halloran and James Curto. Special congratulations to Isabelle who was selected to perform a piccolo solo.
  - E. Middlebrook's team of Jeffrey Huang, Larry Huang, Rishabh Raniwala and Alexander Koutsoukos finished 9th place in Math Counts 2016 State Competition at University of Hartford.
  - F. International Art Celebration- 100 works of art were presented in the Zellner Gallery as part of international exchange with partner schools around the world. This is for seventh grade students and the theme was "My Community, My Point of View". A digital book was created to document student learning.
  - G. Some of our students had impressive results at the State Science & Engineering Fair. Congratulations to Anika Bhagavatula, Nina Ferrucci, Megha Gupta and Vignesh Subramanian.
  - H. 6th grade orientation will be held on Monday, 5/9/16 from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
  - I. Dean search- the committee is in the process of careful consideration to find the right candidate using surveys and research
- IV. **Teacher Representative- Jess Garcia**
  - A. **Sixth Grade**
    1. Today, students on 6G will take the stage in their annual Greek Festival. They will perform a variety of comedies and dramas and enjoy a feast of Mediterranean foods.
    2. Trips to the Yale Art Gallery are quickly coming up. After the tour of the Gallery, students will enjoy a lunch at Thali Too, where they will learn about cuisine and culture.
    3. Annual Walk-a-thon coming up on April 29th; 6 Green has chosen the American Cancer Society as the recipient of funds that will be raised; 6Y

has chosen The Musella Foundation for Brain Tumor Research and Information; 6R has chosen the Wounded Warrior Project

4. All 6th grade students will also enjoy the Chariot of Sun Assembly, featuring performances of Greek myths, also on Friday, April 29th- Thank you to the PTA!

#### **B. Seventh Grade**

1. All 7th grade students enjoyed a performance of 'Beyond Me,' a musical depiction of a Holocaust survivor, by Suzanne Tanner- Thank you to the PTA for sponsoring this program
2. Trips to the UN are underway: 7R and 7G have had fantastic visits already; having toured the buildings and the General Assembly and enjoying lunch at a Brazilian Steakhouse in Port Chester, culminating a busy World Language and Culture Season
3. On 7R, the next interdisciplinary project called ADOPT (Acknowledging Differences of People Today)
4. On 7G, they are kicking off SIR (Spring Independent Reading) that will have challenges built into SSR
5. On 7Y, students continue to explore the team theme of 'Bring About Change' with a recent penny drive for the AFSPCA, a current drive for Autism Awareness, and a potential future even with a small basketball tournament fundraiser
6. Friday is the ribbon-cutting ceremony for Phases 1 and 2 of the outdoor classroom space, outside the 7G wing. They would like to thank the PTA for their continued support of the creation of this innovative learning space. Phase 3 is scheduled to begin later this spring.

#### **C. Eighth Grade**

1. All 8th Grade teams making preparations for upcoming trips to Lake Compounce to partake in a lab experience called "Physics in the Park" (8R will go on June 2nd, followed by 8G on June 8th and 8Y on June 9th)
2. All science classes have just completed a STEM unit on bridge building where students were able to showcase their design and building skills
3. WHS students from Poetry Out Loud visited the 8th grade this past Tuesday to perform poetry and showcase the competition that our students will participate in next year when they are at WHS
4. 8G is hosting a social gathering in Social Studies depicting the Roaring 20's on Tuesday the 26th
5. 8Y is having a Shakespearefest on Friday, April 22nd to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death
6. 8R is kicking off their team service project this afternoon which focuses on reconditioning the memorial sites located throughout the Middlebrook campus
7. All three teams continue to build on their research for the final capstone project, which will culminate through an inter-team fair and presentation on June 7th.

## **V. President's Report- Laura Rowley**

- A. New Bylaws Presented for Final Review and Vote - Summary of the main differences between the existing and proposed bylaws:
  - 1. All check requests over \$2,000 must be signed by Treasurer and President - previously, only the Treasurer.
  - 2. Board can approve unbudgeted funds up to \$500/year - previously there was no dollar amount listed.
  - 3. Our quorum for general meetings is now 8 - previously it was a simple majority of members present.
  - 4. Motion made by Maria Wilcox to approve the bylaws, seconded by Jacqueline Jackson and approved by all.
- B. Scott Driscoll presentation was a success for students and parents, thank you to the two PTA's of Miller Driscoll and Cider Mill, as well as Wilton High School for funding support.
- C. Nominations is working to fill spots as we transition here at the end of the school year. MB PTA is reaching out through 5th grade parent communications. Next month is our last PTA meeting of the year! We still need help with the following committees:
  - 1. Vice President/Directory
  - 2. Nominations
  - 3. Hospitality
  - 4. Reflections
  - 5. Science & Engineering Fair
  - 6. Weekly Messenger
  - 7. Fundraising
  - 8. 6th Grade Activity Night
- D. Gifts and Grants- there will be a meeting 5/9/16 after school for requests from teachers who will come to request support for programs and assemblies and students will make their pitches to make their needs known. It will be scheduled after school and parents are welcome.

## **VI. Officer Reports**

- A. **Vice President- Pam Hickey**, absent, nothing to report
- B. **Treasurer- Maria Wilcox**
  - 1. AIM – our insurance company has transitioned to a new insurance carrier and policyholders are being placed with our new carrier at our annual renewal date. The prior carrier, OneBeacon, sent notification to us that they will not be renewing our policy in October. AIM assures us that the transition to the new carrier will be seamless. We will receive a renewal notice from AIM in the fall as in past years. Coverage Premium will remain the same.
  - 2. We received \$500 from CM PTA for Scott Driscoll presentation. Waiting for \$500 from MD PTA. Karen Lamentia is helping us get the \$1,000 from the WHS.

3. Kinding club has balance of \$232.69. After this year they are disbanding. Their last project is the outdoor classroom. Spoke to those involved (Beckmoore, Leonard, Schlitz) that they had this money to spend on the improvements.
4. Other Outdoor classroom Gift and grant money that remains is \$410.23. Spoke to those involved (Beckmoore, Leonard, Schlitz) that they had this money to spend on improvements for Outdoor Classroom.
5. Received 1 more team grant from 8Y Rubin. Grant was used to create something for Shakespeare Unit. Still have 7 outstanding. Each have team has \$200.
6. Gym equipment was paid \$180.
7. We will work with Maria Coleman and Lori Ellis to give any retiring teacher a book that best suits that teacher.

**C. Parent-At-Large- Kim Lynn**

1. BOE Budget- 5/28/16 had a good turnout with more town people for the budget than against it. There are cuts in the amount of at least \$400k.
  - a) The annual town meeting will take place 5/3/16 at 7:30 p.m. in the Clune Center. This is where the town budget is presented/ discussed, and potentially cut further. Voting will be held after the meeting. Those who cannot make it can vote Saturday.
  - b) The budget still can be changed in that meeting. We must all participate in the process to understand it better.

**VII. Committee Reports**

- A. **Nominating-** Laura Maggio and Laura Rowley are working to recruit. We also need new committee members for Nominating next year.
- B. **Hospitality-** Teacher appreciation week May 2-6. Look for help requests.
- C. **Box Tops-** Kim Rogg is calling for final submissions by May 13th in MB Messenger 4/29/16 though if more come in after that date they can be logged.
- D. **Book Fair-** Maria Wilcox reported the event will take place the first week of May and will be run by Sujata Vemuri, Jen Grass and Lori Ellis
- E. **8th Grade Dinner Dance-** Dina Levy shared the secret theme of the event slated for Friday 6/3/16 from 7-9:30 pm. All the pertinent info, like what to wear etc., will be included on the invite, which will be sent out via email, hopefully on 5/2.
  1. Ticket sales for the 8th graders will take place 5/24-26/16 in the cafe during lunch for these days.
  2. Committees are busy rallying preparations and we see that there is additional funding requested for the food. Laura Rowley made a motion to approve an additional \$500 for the food budget, Kim Lynn seconded it and all were in favor to pass it.
- F. **Soaring Ahead-** no update
- G. **6th Grade Social-** Jacqueline Jackson will be in touch with Chartwells for the ice cream and shared that the social is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, June 14th at 11 am until early dismissal that day at 12:30 pm. Cindy Sinor and Janani Sharma have agreed to co-chair. Laura Rowley suggested we put a call out in the MB Messenger closer to June for more ice cream slingers for the day.

- H. **7th Grade Social-** Claire Carbonier and Kelly Lash will co-chair the event
- I. **WYC-** It Starts In Your Medicine Cabinet- was a success
  - 1. The Color Run Friday 5/5/16
  - 2. 8th Grade Orientation for moving up coming soon
- VIII. **New Business-** Parent/chef, Nadine Wilf asked why doesn't MB become part of the "Fairfield Five" along with Westport, Weston, New Canaan and Darien to have our school cafeteria offer 80% organic, natural and non-GMO food to our kids? Maria Coleman is looking into it and felt we contracted with Chartwells for the cost, pointed out MB's status as a "Green leaf" and partners with the WHS's organic garden. Maria said she would look into it along with Nadine's idea for composting waste which is a part of our current initiative so further investigation is needed. Nadine said it would cost more but she didn't know how much.
- IX. **Adjournment-** 10:17 am