**Middlebrook PTA Meeting**

**January 15, 2015**

1. **Call to Order – Middlebrook School at 9:15 a.m.**
2. **Approvals**
   * November 2014 Minutes – will vote on at February meeting as few members in attendance.
3. **Principal’s Report – Maria Coleman**

* Highlighted 8th grade project in Culinary Arts: goal to learn fundamentals of food preparation and nutrition. Groups competed and after a taste-testing competition, the winning group’s meal was served by Chartwells at lunch. The Kool Kookie Klub meal of Sweet Tangy marinated chicken, fatro mac n cheese, and roasted asparagus sold out at lunchtime.
* Budget has a new course proposal for 6th grade: Garden-to-Table food course to replace sweing.
* Three successful concerts were held in December, and the choral group and student government visited Ogden House, Wilton Greens and Brookdale Place.
* Student bake sale proceeds went to purchase gift cards to benefit DCF.
* Geography Bee: Alex Koutsoukos won 1st, 2nd to Flynee Crowther, and 3rd to Jackson Lent.
* School Climate: retreat with Bill Preble at end of month, group comprised of students and faculty.

1. **Teacher Representative – Marnia Kiernan**

**Grade 6**

Green

* On 2/3 - 2/5, students will tour visitors through Six Green's King Tut's Tomb, which is filled with student-created artifacts based on the research and work they've been doing in social studies. (You might even see a mummified orange or two from a recent science lab!) The museum will be open throughout the school day on 2/3 - 2/5 from 4 – 6 on 2/3 and 2/4.
* Students have been studying and poetry in RWW, and in early February, each class will transform into a Poetry Cafe, where students will snack and share the poems they've written during the unit.

Red

* In RWW classes students have been finishing up their READO challenges, readingbooks of various genres.
* Science class with Mrs. Epstein are studying the effects of mummification on orange slices as the students learn about the ancient Egyptians in Dr. Priest’s social studies classes.

Yellow

* In RWW, students are loving the brand new novel unit, featuring the novels Wonder, Schooled, One and Only Ivan, and When You Reach Me.
* Across team, in response to our new team theme of “Connections,” students are enjoying making connections among the different classes as well as to experiences outside of school.
* Teambases that earned a pig are very excited about the upcoming school pig races. The pigs had a practice competition on team before the break.

**Grade 7**

Green

* In Science, students combined their narrative writing skills and science expertise to compose eyewitness accounts of erupting volcanos.
* In RWW, students are analyzing the ways writers use word choice to convey and provoke emotions by observing different authors’ views of happiness in nonfiction, fiction, and poetry.
* The Seven Green team is engaging in Innovation Day this Friday. Each student will spend the day learning, creating, and sharing something meaningful to them.

Red

* In World Geography students are enjoying studying Africa and are looking forward to examining the Middle East.
* In RWW, students are studying Shakespeare and the times in which he lived as preparation for reading Macbeth; In English students are examining the literary structure and thematic organization of Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry.
* Students in Science are studying Plate Tectonics.
* World Language students are studying superlatives and comparisons in the Spanish language.

Yellow

* In World Geography and RWW students are making creative choices about Chinese research topics and presentations and using symbolism to depict their paths through life, respectively.
* Debates about fracking are being worked on in science whilst the topics of racism and prejudice are discussed in English.
* World language is using descriptive words to explain rooms, activities, and travel.
* Some of the math classes are using Mathopoly to review concepts and previewing a self reflection piece about themselves as mathematicians.

**Grade 8**

WHS guidance counselors visited on Tuesday to kick off the registration process. Students will choose their high school classes online beginning February 2. All students are currently engaging in the Great Debates, an interteam social studies project.

Green

* In English and RWW, students studied the art of writing an argument while researching for the Great Debates in Social Studies. They then wrote an argumentative essay on their debate topic.
* RWW students are reading Animal Farm.
* In Science, students will soon begin studying weather and weather patterns. We hope we won’t have too many snowstorms upon which to apply our understanding! They just recently submitted their Feel the Beat abstracts via Google Classroom. This is the students first attempt at writing lab abstracts.

Red

* Getting ready to begin an Interdisciplinary English-Social Studies unit (Independent Fairfield) once the Great Debates are over.
* In Science, students are studying physics and chemistry.

Yellow

* In Science, students finished their study of the heart and circulation, including a sheep heart dissection before break. They are conducting investigations about how different variables such as music genre, sugar, meditation or laughter affect pulse.
* Inspired by TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD, the 8Y team held a “Miss Maudie’s tea party,” which was a success....Students will be writing their own short stories in February

1. **President’s Report – Savet Constantine**

* Looking for sources of additional funding/fundraising. Will check with school re: process from here.
* Need to gauge interest in 2015-16 positions
* Budget meeting is on Jan 22, please spread the word. Kevin Smith will be presenting budget to MB PTA on Feb 19th.
* Switching dates for 6th & 7th Grade fun nights due to conflict with trackside nights. Chairs working on coming up with more ideas for activities.
* 8th Grade dinner dance committee kick off meeting on Feb 6th at Trackside.

1. **Officer Reports**

A. Vice President-Pam Hickey: no new members to report.

B. Treasurer – Maria Wilcox: about $10,000 short of goal for playground. Only two team grants have been submitted (whiteboard for 7Red and incentive items for 6Yellow). Photos came in $1,000 over projected revenue.

C. Parent-At-Large – Stacy Crameri: Budget is available online, increase is 1.98% over last year.

Public Hearing is on Jan 22nd at 7pm at Middlebrook. Key changes include:

* IL’s will become sole jobs rather than add-on to a position. 2 curriculum coordinators (Humanities and STEM) will report direct to Chuck Smith and serve to guide and support teachers to incorporate material. 2 coaches will also float in building to assist in classrooms.
* New courses at WHS
* Expanded wireless network, laptops computers for teachers, Google Apps use extension.
* Evaluate/review of Special Ed practices.
* Reinstatement of 3rd grade language and expanded enrichment at Cider Mill.

1. **Committee Reports**

* Nominating: need a shout-out for Spiritwear and asking people to think about roles for next year.
* Reflections: 15 entries from Middlebrook
* Science Fair: on Feb 3rd. Looking for volunteers to help assist and judges.
* Hospitality: held Winter Solstice Table on Dec 19th. Much appreciated by staff.
* Box Tops: $520 went to school. Will advertise a few more times as last submission date in March.
* Wilton Youth Council: Teaming up with Weston to bring in Dr. Robert Brooks to talk on “Raising Resilient Children” on April 27th: 11-12:30pm at Weston Public Library and 7-8:30pm at WHS Little Theater. Next session for Peer Connections starts in February.

1. **Adjournment 10:25 a.m.**