

**Middlebrook PTA Meeting  
February 18, 2016 – Minutes**

**I. Call to order -- 9:08 a.m. in 7Y Room 106**

**Attendance:** Laura Rowley, Sharon Burke, Maria Coleman, Kim Rogg, Maria Wilcox, Jessica Garcia, Jackie Jackson, Vanessa Elias, Sujata Vemuri

**II. Approvals**

- January 21, 2016 minutes – motion by Maria Wilcox, second by Vanessa Elias, all in favor.

**III. Principal's Report – Maria Coleman**

- The Middlebrook Math Counts Club competed in the 2016 Chapter Competition at Fairfield University earlier this month. The following students participated: Jeffrey Huang, Larry Huang, Rishabh Raniwala, Alexander Koutsoukos, Rhea Rhagavan, Vignesh Subramanian, Trisha Mhatre, Christopher May, and Manvitha Mallapudi. While all individuals demonstrated an impressive performance, the team of Jeffrey, Larry, Rishabh, and Alexander captured a third place finish and qualified to compete in the State competition in early March.
- Green's King Tut's Tomb Experience received rave reviews earlier this month. As part of their study of Ancient Egypt, students created artifacts and worked as docents greeting and leading the many visitors through their classroom, which was transformed into King Tutankhamen's Tomb. The week culminated in a visit from first grade students at Rowayton Elementary School. These students were also studying ancient Egypt, and when they learned about this classroom museum, they arranged for a field trip to Middlebrook School. 6 Green students were delighted to tour these visitors through the museum!
- Update on the school store: Middlebrook students, with the assistance of Mrs. Leonard and Mrs. Ellis, opened the Middlebrook Pop-up Store in the Media Center earlier this month. The school store, which is open daily from 8:00 to 8:20 a.m., allows students to test their concept for a store that provides classroom essentials, clothing with the Middlebrook logo, and goods created by the Recycling Club. After analyzing sales and profits at the end of the month, students will determine whether the store will become a permanent fixture at Middlebrook.
- The Science and Engineering Fair was an incredible success! Middlebrook has enjoyed a dramatic increase in participation over the past three years, with nearly 100 participants this year. We are grateful for our dedicated co-chairs, Sujata Vermuri and Rocio Fields, and our science teachers, who incorporated this experience into their courses and devised new ways to support students throughout the process. Please see attached table for details on our winners!

**IV. Teacher Representative – Jessica Garcia**

**Sixth Grade**

- In both 6 Green and 6 Yellow writing workshop classes, students recently completed writing research-based nonfiction chapter books. They explored several global issues such as girls' access to education and environmentalism.
- In 6 Green's reading workshop, students are exploring social issues in literature, using book clubs as a structure. Students selected their own novels and established an agreed-upon schedule for completing the assignments.
- In 6 Yellow's math classes, students finished up their coordinate art projects, showcasing their knowledge of coordinate graphing and geometric shapes.
- In social studies, students were delighted to choose the artifacts that they will research and recreate for the 6Y Egypt Museum which will open for visitors on Friday, March 18th.

- In 6 Red, students have been conducting their “Science Court” in science class, and are gearing up for their Greek Festival on Friday, February 26th.

### Seventh Grade

- In 7 Green, Busy planning their April 7th trip to the United Nations and the Copacabana Steakhouse in Port Chester as part of the diplomacy unit in Social Studies. Permission slips are due today.
- Innovation Day, based on Google’s 20% Time- was a huge success with students learning a new skill of their choosing. Student shared their new skills via Google Classroom videos and posts. #Middlebrookway and #Wiltonway on Twitter also shows some of the day’s activities.
- In 7 Yellow, the Change Agents project is in full swing with biography reading and research work taking place in the media center.
- 7 Yellow Field trip information has gone home about their upcoming trip in April.
- The Acts of Random Kindness group delivered some Valentine hearts with messages and is working on a 7Y fund raiser.
- 7 Red is planning their trip to the United Nations on April 19th.
- Students studying Latin America in Social Studies and Spanish.
- Acts of Random Kindness group created a “Mindset” bulletin board using Carol Dweck’s interpretation of Mindset and Mindfulness (shifting a negative into a more positive... ex: “I made a mistake” becomes “Mistakes help me to grow”).

### Eighth Grade

- In 8 Red, they’re engaged in the opening lessons of Independent Fairfield, our interdisciplinary English-Social Studies mock congress project.
- They are engaged in the life of Scout Finch and her family through the study of TKAM.
- They’re also working in the blending of math and science to begin an exploration of the fascinating world of physics.
- In 8 Yellow, RWW & Social Studies classes have teamed up for a music video project that is tied to making evidence based claims.
- World Language Week is coming up in March; 8Y French classes were visited by WHS students to celebrate Mardi Gras.
- In English, students just completed their reading of Animal Farm and study of the Russian Revolution.
- In 8 Green RWW, students are just beginning their reading of To Kill a Mockingbird. We are looking forward to exploring the idea of social justice by delving into this rich novel about racism, justice and poverty.
- In social studies, students have started a unit on the economy. Throughout this unit, students will learn the basic principles of economics and then apply them to historic and current events. Students will also be prompted to develop their own opinions about the extent to which the government should intervene in the economy.
- All three 8th grade teams have successfully started the initial phase of our Capstone Project. This project, which focuses on the idea of social justice, will continue through June, where all three 8th grade teams will participate in a grade-wide culmination.

### **V. President’s report- Laura Rowley**

- Thank you to the Turnover Shop for donating the \$10k check. A letter on behalf of the four Wilton School PTAs was put into the Bulletin, the Villager and Good Morning Wilton.
- The new parent coordinator, Debbie Corrigan, welcomed new to Wilton parents this month.
- Online directory research with the Cider Mill PTA president and Laura has produced the following results:
  - i. We have been looking at Mobile Arq, which the Westport School District PTAs are using. They shared a very positive experience over the past four years, although there were

some transitional issues when they implemented it. It has worked well and saved money over time.

- ii. We can sell the directory online with PTA memberships, with payments processed for fee.
  - iii. The directory is accessible via mobile phone app or online.
  - iv. Parents can opt in or out, just as they can with the current paper version.
  - v. Additional information can be added by families like cell phone and email.
  - vi. Parents join each PTA where they have children, just like now.
  - vii. It was suggested a fact sheet be put together to help people understand.
- Cyber safety expert Scott Driscoll is scheduled for 4/6/16 at a cost of \$3,950 with both a.m. and p.m. options for parent presentations. All district parents are invited to attend. WHS is contributing \$1,000, and we are requesting \$500 each, from Cider Mill and Miller Driscoll PTAs.
  - Details on presentations will be included in WYC announcements.

## VI. Officer Reports

- **Vice President- Pam Hickey**

- i. Not in attendance, but reported to Laura that we have no new members and are still down by 20 people versus last year.

- **Treasurer – Maria Wilcox**

- i. Requested of Principal Maria Coleman that MB School make checks out for visiting author and Scott Driscoll.
- ii. Noted an error recording \$77 for fundraising when it should have been for spirit wear. It has been corrected.
- iii. Good Financial Shape

Cash on Hand	55,000
PY Gift Grants	1,100
Promised in 15-16	9,750
Additional expenses 15-16	9,000
Student Enrichment 16-17	10,000
Reserve	20,000
Remaining Cash	5,150

- iv. Open checks need to be cleaned up for total of \$700. If amount is less than \$100 I am not going to stop payment on check due to fees charged by bank.
- v. Science Fair will be reimbursed \$420 by WEF. Adjusted budget was \$4,500. Projected expenses \$3,500. Under adjusted budget. I have suggested a review of expenses to see if we can cut back next year on unnecessary expenses. Don't want to change event – it is terrific, but with increased kids there is increased cost.

- **Parent-At-Large – Kim Lynn**

- i. Not in attendance, but reported to Laura the Board of Ed approved the budget at its meeting and it now goes for review to the Board of Finance.

## VII. Committee Reports

- Science & Engineering Fair- Sujata Vemuri and Rocio Fields felt that having the teachers onboard with the fair this year made a huge difference in attendance this year which was up about 40 students over last year.

Sujata asked that we replicate the process next year to help kids stick through the process with minimal drop outs in 6th grade and suggested 7th and 8th grade attendance will continue to rise by sharing these strategies.

- **8th Grade Dinner Dance** – Sharon Burke reported the group met last month and formed committees to work on food, entertainment, etc. The dance is set for Friday June 3, 2016 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Everyone has their budget. The SECRET theme is Western Casual with foods like cornbread and a simple meal. Parents will be asked to share a kindergarten picture of their kids and it will be presented alongside their 8<sup>th</sup> grade pictures, also a surprise.
- **Box Tops- Kim Rogg** The January submission was \$97.40 and the next deadline for check writing is March 2, 2016.
- **Wilton Youth Council** – Vanessa Elias reported on upcoming events:
  - i. Class Project 2021 Orientation for 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Parents (10 a.m. at Trackside, or 7:00 p.m. at Middlebrook cafeteria on Wednesday, 2/24). This is an opportunity to learn what a class project is and how to be a part of it. Contact: [susanlash@hoppinmedia.com](mailto:susanlash@hoppinmedia.com)
  - ii. “Not My Kid: What’s Really Happening with Marijuana, Binge Drinking and E-Cigarettes in Wilton” (10 to 11:30 a.m. at the Wilton Library, Tuesday, 2/23). Results of surveys highlighting substance use will be shared and discussed. Register in advance: [www.wiltonlibrary.org/events](http://www.wiltonlibrary.org/events) or 203-762-6334.

**VIII. New Business**

**IX. Adjournment 10:19 a.m.**

**Addendum: Science & Engineering Fair Results**

<b>BEST OF FAIR</b>	<b>Anika Bhagavatula</b>	<b>Banana Peels: Second Life as Water Purifiers</b>
<b>6th - Life Science</b>		
1st Place	Bella Andjelkovic & Sydney Reuter	Can distractions Relieve Pain?
2nd Place	Nathan Meyers	Is Your Toilet Paper Eco-Friendly?
3rd Place	Melanie Rutherford	Grow Light vs. Fluorescent Light
HM	Samhita Kakarlapudi	Do People See Colors Differently?
HM	Fiona O'Halloran	A is for Yellow
<b>6th - Physical Science</b>		
1st Place	Christopher McCann	Knot or Not
2nd Place	Emily Johnson & Krithika Natarajan	Stronger Stirrer Showdown
3rd Place	Jessica Wu & Maya Mhatre	Does CO2 Cause Global Warming?
HM	Rhea Raghavan	Electrolytic Fruits
HM	Avery Newcomer & Abby Kyle	The Magic of Distillation
HM	Ben Connolly	How Different Substances Absorb Energy
<b>6th - Engineering</b>		
1st Place	Dominic Roberts	Bringing Bridges Up
2nd Place	Faizaan Ali & Garrett Moe	What is the Strongest Bridge?
3rd Place	David Cox	What Bridge Designs are Strongest?
HM	Seiji Sahay	Waste Energy to Usable Energy

<b>7th/8th - Life Science</b>		
1st Place	Megha Gupta	Plants to Cool the Planet
2nd Place	Trisha Mhatre	The Effect of Fruit Packaging
3rd Place	Emma Babashak	A Bag's Life: Use and Decomposition
<b>7th/8th - Physical Science</b>		
1st Place	Vignesh Subramanian	Building Fire-Resistant Homes
2nd Place	Ashley Klancko	Watch Me Rise
3rd Place	Neel Iyer	Endothermic and Exothermic Reactions
HM	Manvitha Mullapudi	Changing The Winds
HM	Aarushi Dham & Aby Yoon	Hydro-Wind
<b>7th/8th - Engineering</b>		
1st Place	Nina Ferrucci	Building the Better Battery
2nd Place	Navod Jayawardhane	Will an Elephant Cross This?
3rd Place	Rahul Vallabhajosula	Charging a cell phone with solar power
HM	Anusha Chegu	Earthquake Preparedness
HM	Nate Newcomer	The Power Of Hydraulics