

## **Weston PTO Board Meeting Minutes – September 6, 2011**

Board Members Present: Liz Hochberger, Karyn Taylor, Rebecca Parkhill, Maris Feinstein, Nancy Trodden, Deb Sullivan, Cristen Tabors, Cheryl Maloney, Laura Miller, Robin Ewald, Rosemary Tomaso, Alice Benson, Lea Kelsey, Lilly Yun, Tanya Spranca, JR Ortiz, Catherine Niemann, Tina Chartrand, Leslye Fligor, Stacey Philipkosky, Keitrice Johnson, Doreen Shytle, Dana Markmann, Diane Mayer, Kristin Moeller, Suzanne Lenox, Carrie Winchman

The meeting was called to order at 7:35pm.

### **Opening Business:**

### **Approval of March, April and May 2010 PTO meeting minutes.**

The Minutes were approved.

### **Treasurer's Report: Tina Chartrand**

As reported by Liz... This year's budget has not been approved yet. Tina will send out a copy of the 2010-2011 budget to everyone. Please talk to Tina about any changes or concerns you have concerning this year's budget. Still continue to purchase what you need in these early days while waiting for the approved budget.

Tina reminded everyone to use the tax exempt forms. She will email them to you if you need them.

### **Superintendent's Report: Cheryl Maloney**

Cheryl reported that the schools had a good opening, despite power loss earlier in the week. The administrators had just finished FEMA training one week prior to the hurricane.

## Building project updates:

### High School science labs-phase one completed in sprinkler project

- Site work ongoing
- Foundation poured
- Request by Jonathan Dietz & Margaret Burns to open fabric so design classes can follow the progress during the construction.
- Hallway built as exit in back of C wing and new sidewalk between Middle school and High school.

### Field School

- September 19<sup>th</sup> presentation by JLA on the new Field school.
- Important MSBA meetings this month.
- Board approval on September 28<sup>th</sup> will move project to next phase.
- Must seek funding from town before design documents developed.
- Debt exclusion vote for the entire sum (even though will receive third of eligible costs from MSBA) November 12.
- Help needed in alerting citizens to election, encouraging absentee ballots for those going away on long weekend or otherwise engaged on Saturday.
- Town Meeting Monday, November 14<sup>th</sup>. 2/3rds approval needed to pass.
- Arsenic testing part of site preparation, acceptable range is 40 ppmillion and one spot tested 79 – following EPA protocol fenced in area, further analysis of data indicated no need to fence but we will continue to do so.
- Next step, more testing to determine extent of contamination and then removal.

### Other initiatives:

– 1:1 initiative at the Middle school for the iPad program, grade 7. Information meeting on September 19<sup>th</sup>.

-Preparing for Weston's 300 year celebration.

-Participating in scarecrow.

-Program Review of Health and Wellness program, K-12.

-This year's green initiative: reduce waste.

### **School Committee's Report: Ed Heller**

Not present.

**Legal Council: Aviva Jeruchim**

Not present.

**New Business: Liz Hochberger**

Reminder to update the Cori forms to everyone that works and volunteers in the schools. There was a discussion as to how often the Cori forms need to be renewed. Some thought 1 year and others 3 years. Liz will look into this issue.

Danielle Black is setting a timeline for school council. Listing the openings, etc. Voting will take place on September 19<sup>th</sup>.

Madeleine Kenyon will be the METCO family friends representative. The job description has been cut down from previous years due to budget cuts. The PTO/METCO will be hosting the ice cream social outside of the library on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Carrie Winchman volunteered during the meeting to help with the organizing. Madeleine will help find other volunteers for the day.

Liz would like for a faculty member to join the PTO Board meetings. She is actively looking.

**Old Business: Liz Hochberger**

Outstanding PTO Board Meeting Minutes from March, April and May 2010 were approved.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**CALENDAR PRODUCTION: Carrie Winchman, Kristin Keating Moeller**

This year's PTO Calendars were printed on August 23rd - about a week later than last year's.

Changes compared to past years are as follows.

A new phone system at the schools prompted all new faculty/administration telephone numbers; the size of the PTO diagram was increased to include Global Education and Creative Arts subgroups: Looking at Art and Wordfest (although latter two are not board positions); small July and August calendars were added to June's left margin with a place for families to write in summer appointments; spring campaign for families editing or changing student directory information was successful; used digital proofs more

extensively this year as opposed to hard copy proofs; used envelopes in lieu of wafer sealing; used new printer Microprint in Waltham; note there is a new pda application being piloted this year.

A change that had been planned for this year but was *not* implemented was the feature to include a "C" for Country School students and "W" for Woodland School. In July, elementary principals asked us to reconsider this feature given that their student assignments are still in flux in mid-August.

Recommendation for next year would be to print PTO Membership addresses directly on the calendars. We did this last year but I was reluctant to do it this year. I have since learned that this is the easiest method and costs only \$50.

So far, two errors have been reported.

I want to say a special thank you to Diane Kaskon, Janet Bohlin, and school administrative assistants who were a major resource and very willing to help.

#### **MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL: Alison Barlow, Catherine Neimann**

Calendars were printed in two batches: Bulk Mail went out 8/26; I delivered the faculty/staff/town Calendars (totaling 532) on 8/31.

I'm processing 10-20 Calendars per day, as people newly register and pay. Once they've done so, I let them know that they can pick them up at my home (there's a plastic bin on my back porch). (I mail them to out-of-towners).

For those that still want a Calendar, it's best to sign up online at our website:

WestonPTO.org. Alternatively they can contact me at [teambarlow@comcast.net](mailto:teambarlow@comcast.net), or go to the Case House where they have some for sale.

I do plan to attend the METCO parents' meeting in Boston on 9/15, and will have some for sale.

#### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH: Laura Miller, Cristen Tabors**

Community Outreach held an Ice Cream Social the week before school started for all families new to Weston. The event was held on Thursday, August 25th from 2-4PM at the Field School. Over 85 new students and their families were invited to come and meet other new families as well as administrators and PTO representatives. The goal was to help new students meet other students in their grade/school as well as help answer any questions that parents may have regarding school or the community. The event was a huge success with Ben and Jerry's serving 118 ice cream sundaes - delicious on a hot summer day! During the event, contact information was collected for the new families interested in joining the PTO. In addition, a METCO representative was at the event selling copies of the METCO cookbook with proceeds supporting the METCO

scholarship fund. A photographer from the Weston Patch attended the ice cream social and posted her photos on the Patch website under the event title "We All Scream at Field School Ice Cream Social."

The next Community Outreach supported event will be the UNICEF drive in October.

### **PARENT EDUCATION: Deb Sullivan**

\* Parent Ed will kick-off the year on Tuesday, November 1st at 7PM in the Amy Potter Center with a presentation by Dr. Elizabeth Englander "Kids and the Internet - Cyber Issues all Parents Should Know". Dr. Englander will address the importance of understanding today's on-line world as well as helping our kids navigate the complexities of social media.

Dr. Englander is a Ph.D in Clinical Psychology and Professor of Psychology at Bridgewater State University. In addition to being a well-known author and researcher, Dr. Englander is the Founder and Director of Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center - a center which brings free or low cost anti-bullying services to Massachusetts schools.

The presentation is being co-sponsored by the WCCA and WCPA (Wayland Children and Parent's Association).

### **GLOBAL EDUCATION: Wendy Teplow**

Liz reported that Global Ed is looking for volunteers in spring. They received a good response.

The exchange students come from Brazil and France. Kim Young coordinates the exchange program at the High School.

November 1<sup>st</sup> at the Amy Potter Center there is a program for Internet Safety, "What Parents should know".

### **WESTWORD: Stacey Philipkosky, Diane Mayer**

Diane reported that things are going well. Reminder that Westword goes out on Wednesday, please submit reports the Thursday before.

### **HIGH SCHOOL: Alice Benson, Doreen Shytle**

- I. Delay of School—Freshman Orientation—due to electrical power outage

- II. First monthly Parent Education Forum scheduled for September 15, 2011—“411”
- III. NEASC Review and Reception
- IV. Sprinkler System Installation Update
- V. Science Wing Construction Update

**MIDDLE SCHOOL: Suzanne Vocatura, Lea Kelsey**

First Meeting with John Gibbons and Karen Hillman 8/25/11 10:00:

MEETING MINUTES as follows:

PTO Chair Goals:

*Go green* - Eliminate plastic bottles. Significantly reduce paper, such as hand-outs.

Electronic communication received in advance will make for a better forum.

*To have 552 contributions* - Representative of the 552 kids that walk these halls. Create a visual meter - forthcoming.

*Increase kid awareness* – Set your goals high - every step counts.

Reviewed School Support as it pertains to PTO:

*Danette, Admin. Assistant.* - Supplies information, such as, new family information.

*Tracey, Aide* - Responsible for the daily announcement of information and reminders to parents.

*Deb, Bookkeeper* - Handles the cash/check side. Is contacted by the Magazine Company for the Drive. In turn she contacts our Coordinator.

*Janitors* - Require Building Use Forms for any spaces to be used by the PTO. Such Forms can all be filled out at the beginning of the year. As events near, a reminder email can be sent.

Reviewed the flow of information and communication to and from parents:

Listserv - Last year we discussed automatically signing families up for Listserv and beyond that a vehicle for parent's to manage their own data. This year while Listserv is being phased out - it is wonderful to know that the vehicle is now in place for families to manage their own data, whereby it is uploaded to all schools achieving consistency, efficiency and accountability. So, exciting. John to report back on what will be available for communication to parents at a 100% hit level.

Reviewed PTO Events in September:

*New Families Orientation and Tour 9/1 at 2:50-3:30pm in library* - Changed to just counselors and kids. PTO will provide refreshments and name tags and will contact parents separately via assigned mentors. New parents will be informed to attend first principal's coffee, 9/8. Past hand-outs of information to new parents can now be found on the website, which is working per recent feedback. We will verify with Danette if there is a building layout on the website to help new families. Working to recruit Lisa Williams, previous PTO Membership person to be the Coordinator for new families.

Since our meeting Danetta has forwarded a list of new families for us to contact to pair with mentors.

*Supply Shack Opening* - Not listed in PTO calendar - John suggested first Friday of School, 9/2. We discussed low traffic and mission. Kids, in general do not bring money to school. Daily announcements can be made to inform parents as to when the Store will be open to best streamline time & effort with achieving the Store's goals, which are to provide a convenient source to purchase supplies, rather than a primary source. We will structure a schedule accordingly.

*Principal's Coffee 9/8 at 9:00am in APC* - Good venue for new families. We will notify Westword and listserv.

*Volunteer Orientation Meeting 9/9 at 9:00am in APC* - Electronic communication before hand will provide for a meet and greet, question session and review of goals.

*Back to School Night 6th Grade 9/26 6:45pm* - There will not be plastic bottles but rather water dispensers with small paper cups. We did not discuss how every year we hit parents up to donate to the beautification fund - I'm not fond of putting parents on the spot and I think we can through the 552 volunteers ask direct for plant donations if need be.

#### Construction on School Premise -

John advised us that the grounds are safe. We have not heard anything to the contrary. John to be updating parents.

#### Current Course Form -

John informed us that there was an extra column that was not suppose to be there that may have caused some confusion - a letter explaining will be sent.

#### New Families Orientation Thursday, September 1:

We provided refreshments which included going greener with our decanter filled with lemonade versus plastic bottles. The spread of food was provided for 30 children and counselors and received quite well with personal notes of gratitude by Kari Anne Wye, Counselor and Karen Hillman, new Vice Principal. We had 6 families providing food in an effort to increase volunteers in order to reduce the overall cost to each family.

Lisa Williams is our new Family Coordinator and she is working with us to pair new families with mentors that have similarities who will reach out and enrich the lives of these new families during the entire school year.

#### School Store Opened Friday, September 2:

I met with Mary Ellen Sikes, long time coordinator in order to transition this responsibility from Mary Ellen to a new Designee. Currently there is no one willing to take on this task. However we do have a healthy 50 some volunteers, many of whom have never worked the store. We will be open every day in Sept and Oct and I have worked with these 50 volunteers pairing parents in training with seasoned veterans in accordance with their requested work days. Unless there is training being done on a given day – I have purposely left volunteers solo in an effort for them to bring a friend, who may never have volunteered to learn the ropes and keep a healthy pipeline for next year. Also, this further expands the number of volunteers, who all appear very happy to serve and bring a friend.

We are working to remove 4 locked cash boxes that are fixated to the booth and take up about 30% of space that cannot be utilized since the keys are lost.

We are entertaining selling healthy snack bars versus the current tic tacs and or both.

The September and October Schedule has been distributed to workers.

Creative Arts Committee:

It appeared that we had a low number of volunteers, specifically 5. I suggested that Rebecca Parkhill send a list of dates and times and that I would find willing able volunteers ready to go – We will be in touch – she greatly appreciated the effort and idea to help coordinate more efficiently.

**FIELD SCHOOL: Dana Markmann, Beth Kressley-Goldstein**

Field school is off and running. Pots and planters are blooming and the Welcoming Coffee was well attended on Sept 2nd with around 50 parents present. Room parents have all been drafted and orientation is set for the 7th.

**COUNTRY SCHOOL: Rosemary Tomaso, Robin Ewald**

We are off to a great start at Country School this year. As in years past, the outside of the school was decorated with balloons to welcome students and teachers alike. Linda Angelucci was kind enough to design and fill our outdoor planters once again.

Room Parent Orientation was held today, September 6th, and all classrooms are covered from Preschool through Grade 3. Tomorrow morning, September 7th, we will be hosting our New Family Coffee. Invites have been sent to both preschool families and those who are new to town.

We welcomed back Mrs. Lambo to the third grade this year after her maternity leave. Third grade teacher Ms. Machen has returned, as we have five classes. Ms. Whitney has moved to first grade and Mr. Davis has moved to second grade. Mrs. Padden, who taught preschool last year, will now teach first grade. Ms. Mellen has joined us to teach at the preschool level. We are also welcoming new music teachers, names will be forthcoming.

Our first School Council meeting is October 19th at 3 pm; all are welcome to attend. One position for a parent will need to be filled via election this year.

- Upcoming BTSN events are:

Thursday, 9/22 at 7 pm (K & 1)

Thursday, 9/22 at 6:30 pm (WestonPAC BTSN in Country School Library)

Tuesday 9/27 at 7 pm (2 &3)

Thursday, 10/13 at 7 pm (Weston Windows)

## **WOODLAND SCHOOL: Nancy Trodden, Amanda Grant**

The 2011-2012 school year at Woodland has begun. The school looked fantastic on the first day, both inside and out, thanks to the janitorial staff who worked hard all summer. Alison Barlow and Michele Schuckel once again did a beautiful job on the planters out front. PTO provided brightly colored balloons to teachers to help guide the children to the right classrooms the first few days.

Room Parents are fully recruited, and room parent orientation was a success. We are fortunate to have many enthusiastic parents volunteering. There is a mix of both experienced and new room parents ready to pitch in and support the teachers. Virtual folders have been made online for room parents to access their resource guide. This is a first for Woodland room parents and our intent is to offer efficiencies and reduce our reliance upon paper.

Tomorrow morning we will host the Woodland School New Parent Coffee for families new to Weston and families who are just starting out at Woodland School. In addition to school leaders we will have representatives from WEEFC, Newcomers, and the WCCA to help welcome these families into the Woodland Community.

In the next few weeks we look forward to assisting with the following events:

- Back to School Night (K and 1)                      September 13<sup>th</sup>
- Back to School Night (2 and 3)                     September 30<sup>th</sup>
- School Pictures    October 7<sup>th</sup>

## **CREATIVE ARTS: Rebecca Parkhill, Maris Feinstein**

The Creative Arts Committee is looking forward to a rich and varied year of events for Weston Students. The Committee will not only review and discuss Creative Arts, for 2011-2012, but Wordfest and new this year, Looking At Art. Below is a description of events taking place during the month of October 2011.

### Creative Arts - Co- Chairs – Maris Feinstein and Rebecca Parkhill

- Epic Brass – This quintet will be performing for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders on October 13<sup>th</sup> at the Field school.

### Wordfest Committee Jennie Lucas and Pat Kehoe

- Barbara O'Connor – On October 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, Author Barbara O'Connor will be visiting the 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Field School for a 3 day writing workshop.

- Suzy Klein - On October 21<sup>st</sup>, Suzy Kline will be visiting the 2<sup>nd</sup> graders at Country School.

Looking At Art - Co-Chairs Ali Fernandez and Jean Arturi

- Looking at Art will not be going into the classrooms in October. They are scheduled to begin classroom visits later in the year.

LAA chairs, Jean Arturi and Ali Fernandez, met with Amber Bock in the spring of 2011 to map out K-5 curriculum in order to update/align LAA lesson plans with established school curriculum. Over the next 2 years a core group of LAA volunteers, with the assistance of WPS art teachers, will research, develop and implement new units in grades 1-5.

- Kindergarten- Lascaux Caves and Art Around the World (remains the same)
- First Grade- Japan
- Second Grade- Artists Who Make a Difference
- Third Grade- Journals- "art of notebooks" to record observations, ideas, in the spirit of DaVinci, Audubon, and others
- Fourth Grade- Art from Regions of the US
- Fifth Grade- Colonial Art/American Revolution

The new 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade lessons will be in place for Jan/Mar visits this school year. 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade will be updated for the 2012-2013 year.

General timeline:

- September- assign volunteers to classrooms, coordinate visit dates/times with teachers
- November- orientation meeting for new volunteers
- December- each grade level team meets to review their art and lessons
- January- first set of LAA visits (1.5 hrs for kindergarten, 30 min for 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>)
- March- second set of LAA visits (1.5 hrs for kindergarten, 30 min for 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>)

**MATH AND SCIENCE COUNCIL: Lilly Yun, Tanya Spranca**

The PTO Science and Math Council is off and running this year, coordinating with teaching staff to provide enrichment to the K-12 Weston Public Schools. We will continue to bring enrichment that has been successful to date, such as programming from the Museum of Science, Mike Francis and Domino Physics. At the same time, we have identified a few areas for improvement this year. For the elementary grades, we plan to focus on increasing parental involvement during enrichment events by distributing sign-

up sheets at Back-to School night. We also plan to focus on improving our communication to parents by sending emails and submitting articles to the Town Crier about the PTO Science and Math enrichment programs that students experience in the classrooms. For the Middle and High schools, we plan to work with Larry Murphy, Department Head of Science and Technology Education, to source enrichment around three new topics: 1) Computer/Tech 2) Engineering and 3) Environmental Sciences. We hope these new initiatives will increase the community's awareness of the value of Weston's PTO-sponsored programs.

As in the past, we will work closely with faculty to provide the types of enrichment programs they want to supplement their curriculum. Larry Murphy will be our faculty liaison for science and math at the Middle and High Schools. Tracy Manousaridis, Mathematics Specialist K-5, will be our faculty liaison for math at the elementary schools. Impacting our committee is the absence of a replacement for Pam Bator, previously the Science and Social Studies Specialist for K-5. In the meantime, until her replacement is found, both Tanya Spranca (co-chair), and I, are coordinating with Tracy, the principals and the grade team leaders to support the science enrichment at the elementary schools.

The PTO Science & Math Council will host the first monthly meeting for Middle and High school enrichment on Thursday, September 8th from 8:30 am – 9:30 am in the Principall's Conference Room at the High School. The first monthly meeting for Elementary (K-5) school enrichment will be hosted on Tuesday, September 13th from 9:30-10:30am at the Field School Library. We welcome the participation of all parents in the Weston School Community to join our efforts to support and enrich the science and math curriculum in the Weston Public Schools. If you have any questions, contact Lilly Yun at [lkyun@mac.com](mailto:lkyun@mac.com) or Tanya Spranca at [tspranca@yahoo.com](mailto:tspranca@yahoo.com).

**WEBMASTERS: Suzanne Lenox**

Calendar update. The power outage from the hurricane slowed down update input.

Keep the updates coming. Call Suzanne for if help is needed.

The calendar download can be done in two different forms, either static or subscription. The subscription one will change according to changes to the school scheduling. The block schedule 1 – 8 should download on static.

**WESTONPAC: Kim Costello**

***Summer***

Worked on our events for the upcoming year

We had the opportunity to meet with our new Interim Director Ed Orenstein to go over our goals for the upcoming year.

***Upcoming Events***

**Special Ed BTSN** for grades K & 1 at Country and Woodland schools and 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Field.

**Thurs, Sept 22nd** - 9:15 am – Back to School Welcome Coffee at the home of Penny Peddie. Parents will also have the opportunity to meet Ed Orenstein.

**METCO: Keitrice Johnson**

JR introduced Keitrice. METCO is looking forward to a great year.

On the 24<sup>th</sup>, the Weston/METCO Citrus sale begins.

They are looking for possible ideas for fundraising.

They are looking for volunteers for the annual Gospel Jubilee.

**OTHER NON COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**WCCA: Alison Slater**

1. Recap of Kindergarten Orientation Parties and Kindergarten Coffee
2. Upcoming School Age Events for K-3: Mini Marathon on Oct 15 and pajama movie night on Friday, Jan 20
3. Co-Sponsorship with PTO of Parent Education speaker Dr. Englander on Nov. 1

**WEEFC: Joan Heilbronner**

Not present.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40pm.

