**Westbrook PTA Meeting**

**Tuesday, February 5, 2019**

1. Welcome

Call to order – 7:30pm

Motion to approve January Minutes – seconded – pass

2. Co-Treasurers’ Report

* Boring month; Neal has copies of budget. Not much money has moved, but it doesn’t include latest Bingo Cheddar Up payments.
* We are in a great cash position. We tend to start spending money in the back half of the year.
* If anyone didn’t get their contribution receipt for tax purposes, let Mike know.
* IRS website doesn’t list us on the federal site as a 501(c)(3), but we are one. Our paperwork has been submitted. Our audit was accepted by the professional accountant, but for some reason, we’re not on that site. You can still include PTA payments in your taxes.
* Reminder to room parents: please submit your receipts for spending on parties, etc. Leslie will send an email that shows you how much money your individual class has. You can submit for reimbursement online, and that helps with tracking.

3. Co-Presidents’ Report

* Recess Update
  + We had a question in our last meeting if we could have more resources, like balls, for recess and after school. Miss Woods has coordinated with the student government to donate ball and get credit for various items for Valentine’s Day telegrams, etc. SGA will pre-sell those. Students can bring a ball to donate instead of paying for these. This is a way to replenish outdoor supplies for recess.
  + Indoor Recess – Mrs. Cox will speak to this more, but what we would like to do as a PTA is to support beefing up the indoor recess rooms. We are lucky to have these rooms, but we have a slow decline in organization of these rooms. So we’d like to have volunteers to help organize and provide supplies (markers dry out, board games go missing, etc). We all likely have extra toys at our homes that would be great to donate to indoor recess rooms. The PTA will send around an email to help support this, get participation, and ask for general items for supplies. We’ve already gotten games and supplies – those will be screened by administration for completeness and appropriateness before they make their way into the rooms (by Mrs. Cox and Miss Curry) – so this applies to things other than art supplies.
  + People are still encouraged to come for Recess Rangers. We need to re-ask parents to volunteer.
* PTA Membership Dues for 2019-20 school year
  + Heads up for next year – national PTA is approving a dues increase right now. Most of our budget comes from the family contribution. But, the PTA dues amount that we pay this year was $5.25 – i.e., for your membership card. PTA is updating the national dues, adding $1.50, totaling $6.75.
  + So along with this, we’ll consider how we do our PTA dues/family contributions/etc. It won’t happen until the next campaign in the fall.
  + MCCPTA is taking comments about this at the next meeting in Feb. Please address these to Tina Conroy (our liaison).
* Thank Yous
  + Maureen Kramer & Erin Harcourt – Science Assembly and STEM Classroom Speakers (we have rescheduled the science assembly for the end of Feb for K)
  + Missy Crawford and Amy Fox – Miss Pickle Appreciation Week
  + Chris Dixon – 4th Grade Artist In Residence performance. Really terrific performance. Everyone loved it.
  + Amanda Miller, Jeremy Miller, Lisa Marcus, Eulalia Vidal, and Silvia Scopel – MLK Jr. Day Service activities
  + Helene Krasnoff – GalleyFoods giveback fundraiser.
* We are looking for a co-VP to join the Executive Board this year. Spread the word!

4. Principal’s Update: Karen Cox

* Recently we have one of our SESS teachers expecting a high-risk pregnancy and she is leaving almost immediately, so that’s been a scramble. We need to make sure our children transition as well as they can, and we’ve been thoughtful about the SESS Program. Currently, we don’t have a long-term sub. She’ll be out until the end of the year. We have a plan that we think will work and our SESS parents will be notified soon. Last day is Friday.
* Recess: the goal is always to have children outside to get fresh air and exercise. We err on the side of caution, especially with safety. We have a list of priorities, first being outdoor weather conditions (rainy, wet, precipitation), then temperature (if it feels like the temperature is 30 degrees or below, they stay inside). During times when it’s warmer and there’s been a lot of rain, the field gets so muddy. We try to do blacktop-only recess sometimes. If blacktop has ice, we try not to make that a reason to keep children indoors. We have people outside early trying to treat the blacktop. The blacktop would prevent outdoor recess if it’s covered in snow. There are times when we do go outside and it starts to rain or gets colder, and we’ll switch to inside. The reverse happens too, so it’s not an all or nothing or totally clear cut. It’s a difficult call to make on some days. Please do dress your children for the weather so they are prepared if we go outside.
* Question – if there’s a schedule change on a Wednesday, can we figure out how to inform parents about the necessity for children to bring in instruments? Mrs. Cox can make an effort to pay attention to this. Can parents have access to schedule for music instruction? Could be a simple fix.
* Heads up – we are coming into staffing season. It officially begins in March when we get projections and allocations. She’ll share information as she can.
  + With the assistant principal position, we lost the position entirely last year and then regained it at the last minute. It’s unclear what will happen, but right now, our numbers do not justify an AP. We will be fine either way.

5. Teacher Liaison Reports: Nina Pattakos/Kim O’Connell

* Excited to have a full week of school this week
* K – they are observing meal worms and metamorphosis; they’re counting down to 100th day of school next week.
* 1st Grade – the students published personal narratives and read to 5th grade buddies. There’s a movement called young geographies that ties in many subjects, culminating with world fair. In math, they’re working on nonstandard measurement.
* 2nd Grade – in math, they’ve moved on from 2 digit addition and subtraction to to link measurement, focusing on cm and inches. In reading, they’re learning about technology and how it makes our lives better. Their artist in residence project is coming up.
* 3rd Grade – in math, they’ve moved away from multiplication and division and onto a fractions unit. In science, they’re studying animals and how they work together to survive in groups and adaptations.
* 4th Grade – they’re learning the genre of myths. In science, they’re studying earth systems, and in social studies, they’re studying early European settlements in North America. They finished their artist in residence program.
* 5th Grade – they’re writing short stories and realistic fiction and creating paltunes in media center. In reading, they’re learning about puppetry.
* The media center maker space is back. We are reading community of caring themed books in all class. Students are writing posts to celebrate Miss Pickle.

6. Committee Updates

* Artist In Residence –Mary Grasslock is coming back to do the Kindergarten opera, which students will create. We will need help from parents for costumes, etc. 1st grade will create a play. 2nd grade is still weighing options. 3rd grade did their project with Alden Phelps; they wrote and sang parodies. 4th grade performed last Friday, and 2-5th graders attended. 5th grade started auditions and casting will be done soon for Seussical the musical, to be performed likely first week of June.
* FOWS, Kerry Lawrence – almost entire FOWS board turned over after Media Center project; new group is excited. Bringing back lots of old favorite events.
  + March 9th will be Sisters Party to benefit Viers Mill Elementary School.
* Sisters School – we are trying to raise awareness in K and 1st grade and are looking forward to Sisters party. The Viers Mill PTA Is struggling this year, so please save the date for March 9th. If you can’t attend, please consider buying a ticket and your donation goes to Viers Mill. That party is about 80% of their budget for the year. Winter coat drive was successful and meaningful.
* Janelle Wong – NAACP rep – she’s going to do another workshop about race, so we’ll get the date soon. It’ll probably be a principal town hall slot. She leads a good workshop. Stay tuned.
* Carnival
  + Vanessa Brown and Jeff Senne are co-chairs, both K Parents. They are hard at work. One reminder is t-shirt art deadline is FRIDAY. Theme is Happily Ever After. This is the 75th anniversary.
  + Sponsorship chair – Rachel Hershberg – please consider helping and reaching out to your companies.
* We have the talent show submissions coming up too.
* Tina Conroy is happy to help field any questions about national and Maryland PTA.

7. Upcoming Events

* Sunday, Feb. 10 – Bingo Night
  + Can pre-order on Cheddar Up both bingo cards and food from Mama Lucia.
* Tuesday, Feb. 12 – Trash Free Lunch
* Thursday, Feb. 14 – Valentine’s Day Class Parties
* Monday, Feb. 18 – Presidents’ Day, No School
* Friday, Feb. 22– Talent Show
* Friday, March 1 – Box Tops Final Collection Day
  + Money goes to general operating fund for the school.
* Friday, March 1 – Early Release Day
* Tuesday, March 5 – Trash Free Lunch

8. Additional Issues from PTA Members

* Kerry Lawrence – president of FOWS – there are only 15 tickets left for the social, so it’s likely to sell out tonight. So that’s a heads up for people in attendance today.
* Follow up question for ball collection for outdoor recess – how will it be implemented?
  + For after school piece, we still have to work on where they’ll be stored.
  + For recess, we’ll hold some back and distribute as needed, and we have an outdoor storage facility for that.
  + A paraeducator unlocks the outdoor storage facility and helps coordinate distribution and collection. There’s a closet at the bottom of the blacktop area.
  + The children had the idea to bring in extra balls. They’re really proud.
* SGA meeting – the children led it, and Miss Woods is doing a great job. Mrs. Cox will check in about dress up day – children want to take 1st Friday of each month for fun dress up.

Meeting adjourned: 8:20pm.

Next PTA Meeting: Tuesday, March 5th