

McCarthy-Towne School PTSO Meeting Minutes Tuesday, February 23, 2016

Julie Weir, PTSO Sr. Chair	David Krane, Principal
Julie Hobbs, PTSO Jr. Chair	Julie Maranian, PTSO Treasurer
Tracey Smith, Parent Involvement Coordinator	Kerry Lewis, PTSO Secretary
Chris Hanlon	Shelley Cole

The meeting was called to order at 9:03am.
The Minutes of January 2016 were approved with minor edits.

Principal's Report

David shared that the video and slideshow for Kindergarten Night have been updated, and he's looking forward to the presentation on March 1st.

The School Committee passed the budget without issue. There will be close to a 4% increase, just enough to maintain current services. Another 1.0 ELL position has been added, so that'll make 2 ELL teachers instead of 1 for McT and Merriam next year. David again added that the ELL caseloads are very large and while another full-time teacher will help, it still isn't enough. A district policy has been created about how and when the ELL students should receive help from the reading specialist to ensure a clear distinction is made between the ELL and reading specialists' roles in the schools. While there won't be any budget cuts, David shared that we need to push harder as a community about issues such as class size and the need for more ELL, reading specialist, and special educator positions to meet the increasing demands of our population.

The Superintendent continues to oversee the district's cost analysis. There is going to be a need for new schools based on recent assessments.

MCAS will begin for some of the students on March 28 and carry into April. (More will take place in May.) Teachers and parents will receive the results in the Fall. This year the 4th graders will not have a long composition. Instead, there will be more writing based on reading. David shared that McT does not teach to the test, but encourages students to do their best.

David reminded families to take vacations during the scheduled school breaks, rather than pulling children out of school.

Treasurer's Report

There is currently \$94,719.56 in available funds. Recent income includes \$461.80 from Box Tops and \$6,149 from the Online Camp Auction (waiting for one more check which will make it \$6,300). \$400 from the Direct Appeal (now totals \$6,145 with 41 families and 1 company match contributing) was deposited. We have surpassed last year's donations and this year's Direct Appeal goal.

Recent expenses and activity includes the 3rd grade Museum of Fine Arts trip and a late deposit for the 3rd grade Eyes on Owls in-house field trip. Additionally, we paid the Bedford Charter Service \$640 for the bus to the Museum of Fine Arts. Soon we will be receiving \$200 from the Big Yellow School Bus Grant to put towards this expense. Hanna Melnychuk was reimbursed \$119.47 for art integration supplies, and there were also five automatic payments deducted from the account for things like the Safe Arrival system and Auction software.

Other Updates

The PTSO budget will be presented in April and voted on in May.

The PTSO is still looking for a Spring Tag Sale coordinator as well as someone to organize the Scrip program. Please contact Julie Weir if you're interested.

We discussed putting all the PTSO meeting agendas in the school bulletin to better reach the parents.

The 2016-2017 district calendar was approved and can be found on the district web site. Please note that the first Thursday of the school year, Sept 1st, is NOT an Early Release Day. Since Columbus Day and Yom Kippur fall so close together, there will not be school Mon., 10/10 through Wed., 10/12. June 19th will be the last day of school for the '16-'17 school year if there are not any snow days.

The Book Swap was rescheduled to Wed., 2/24 from 6-8pm due to snow day. Movie Night is scheduled for Fri., 2/26. This is a free event but the proceeds from the concession stand is a fundraiser for the 6th grade trip to Thompson Island. Lip Sync registration is over; there will be about 35 groups performing. The Auction is April 9th. Willow Books Night will be March 31st from 6-8pm.

The next PTSO meeting will be March 15th at 7pm in the library. Representatives from the Acton Finance Committee will join us.