

# McCarthy-Towne School PTSO Meeting Minutes

## Wednesday, October 14, 2015

Julie Weir, PTSO Sr. Chair  
Julie Hobbs, PTSO Jr. Chair  
Julie Maranian, PTSO Treasurer  
Kerry Lewis, PTSO Secretary  
Dr. Brand, Superintendent of Schools

David Krane, Principal  
Jen Pratt, Faculty Representative  
Tracy Smith, Parent Involvement Coordinator  
Janice Vatland  
Judy Bourdon

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 P.M.

### **Minutes**

With 2 minor edits, the Minutes of September 15, 2015 were approved.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Julie Maranian, Treasurer, shared her October report as well as the Income Sources chart for 2015-2016. The following are the highlights. The current balance is \$117,000. So far the Direct Appeal has brought in \$4,465 from 33 participating families. The Activities Expo raised \$4,447 and the Family Picture Day brought in \$160. The Charleston Wrap Fundraiser has ended; the total earnings are coming.

### **Principal's Report**

David Krane shared that it has been a great start to the school year. Teachers are utilizing many ideas from The Responsive Classroom's The First Six Weeks of School. Morning Meeting continues to start the day in each classroom with specialists also attending. The big news is that David and a small group of teachers attended a Responsive Classroom Leadership Conference in Austin, TX last week. It was a phenomenal experience that was both inspirational and practical as the leadership team thinks about how to sustain the Responsive Classroom practices at McT. They also discussed how to integrate meaningful academic pieces into Morning Meeting. David shared that he's looking into having a Responsive Classroom staff developer come to McT for training in the future. At this time this may be a better use of funds than sending teachers to the five-day summer workshop. There is now a tab on the school website about the seven guiding features of The Responsive Classroom. More info. will be added. On October 27th there will be a Responsive Classroom Parent Info. Forum at McT. David and some teachers will show some of the components of Morning Meeting, such as interactive modeling, sharing, etc are.

The new teachers are settling in nicely. The faculty is a source of great support to them.

Back to School Night was widely attended and the staggering of the classroom meeting times was successful.

Teachers College will be visiting the primary classrooms next Monday and Tuesday to continue the teachers' work with the Reading Workshop model. They will build on their work from last year.

David and Jen Pratt shared that some teachers are now beginning to implement a math workshop model in the classroom. This follows the same basic structure of Readers' Workshop where the lessons start off with a whole-class mini-lesson, then small groups meet based on a need or focus area while other students work independently on a menu of activities. Classroom assistants are utilized. Like Reader's Workshop, the goal is to provide differentiated instruction, allowing students to grow at the rate they need to grow. Ongoing and unit pre-assessments are integral to the success of this model.

Five more students have enrolled at McT since October 1<sup>st</sup>. A few have also exited since the start of the school year. There are many new 5<sup>th</sup> grade students across the district.

### **Fundraiser Updates**

We still need a couple of Steering Committee roles filled – Tag Sale Coordinator and Auction Co-Chair.

The Activities Expo was a success. It raised \$4,447. Over 25 businesses and 75 families participated. Attendance was lower than we would have liked. Julie Weir and Julie Hobbs worked very hard to pull this off. If it's to continue every

year, a committee must be formed. A survey was given to participating families and Julie and Julie talked to businesses for feedback. Things are to be reviewed and discussed before deciding if the Expo will be continued on a yearly basis.

The Annual Appeal is ongoing. 33 families have made donations so far. We're hopeful we will get more before the tax year ends.

It was suggested we revisit the company we use for the catalogue fundraiser. Sales went down this year.

The School Directory will be released in late October. We're using a new printer. The format is a bit cumbersome and time consuming.

The Book Fair is from November 5-7<sup>th</sup>. More parent volunteers are needed.

The Auction Committee is forming and they've met, though they're always looking for more volunteers. Next weekend there is a Kick-Off Party at Tracey Smith's house.

Kathleen is working to contact all the parent volunteers for the Class Potlucks. All families should hear something about their class's get together soon.

### **SUPERINTENDENT DR. BRAND**

Dr. Brand is enjoying getting to know McT; he makes an effort to visit each month.

The school budget process is the same as last year, and work has begun for the 2016-2017 school year. The School Committee will vote on the budget by the first week in February.

There has been a slight decline in school enrollment. The enrollment number as of October 1<sup>st</sup> is the official number used to project and compare teacher section needs, etc. The district's long-term plan has been to decrease the number of elementary teachers to coincide with the decline in enrollment, but we have to see where things fall. The district's Special Education and ELL needs have increased, and Dr. Brand expects these numbers to continue to rise. We are transforming as a district and with these different needs, we will require more resources.

The Existing Conditions Study is underway. Dr. Brand wants to be mindful about replacing or repairing key building components. What are the needs of the districts' buildings? This study will span a couple of years. The preliminary report will be presented to School Committee in November and another one with cost estimates in February. Once all the building assessments are completed, a suggested capital improvement plan with an escalation value put on each item or future need will be reviewed. There will be a committee of administrators and community members formed to focus on space planning. The second part of the study will look at the space guidelines in place for all public schools, compare those to the existing conditions in our district, and make decisions regarding improvements.

The Strategic Plan is ending this year. A focused and manageable new plan is needed, and work has started on this.

The Wellness Committee has been asked to focus on the topic of adolescent sleep and school start times. They're pulling together the research. We can learn from other districts that have studied the topic. There are many obstacles and things to think about before a change would ever be made.

### **Future Business**

The first parent forum is scheduled for Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> at 7 P.M. to discuss the Responsive Classroom.

The next PTSO meeting will be November 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 P.M. in the library. Kirsten Nelson, the Director of Food Services, will be present to share school lunch info.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kerry Lewis, PTSO Secretary