

## McCarthy-Towne School PTSO Meeting Minutes Tuesday, May 16, 2017

Chris Hanlon, PTSO Chair  
Judy Bourdon, PTSO Jr. Chair  
Julie Maranian, PTSO Treasurer  
David Krane, Principal  
Michele Abroff  
Naehan Chen  
Shelley Cole

Dr. Glenn Brand, Superintendent  
Tracey Smith, Parent Involv. Coordinator  
Kerry Lewis, PTSO Secretary  
Jen Pratt, PTSO faculty representative  
Dick Krieger  
Pamela Chen  
Liz Portanova

### **Call to Order**

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

Jen Pratt led a Responsive Classroom greet called Bridge (Arch) Greet with the meeting attendees. The April Minutes were approved with a couple small edits.

### **Dr. Brand**

Dr. Brand shared he was happy to attend our meeting, to be there to connect with the McT families. He started by saying that it has been a challenging year. The student tragedies have impacted us all, and the staff and committees continue to work through related challenges.

Dr. Brand shared that concerns regarding the early gr. 7-12 start times started about three years ago. Kids get on the bus as early as 6:30am. Our start times are very early, even within our athletic league. All school districts in the league are considering changing the start times as there has been a recent uptick in research and focus in the news on student well-being and the relationship to sleep. The district Wellness Committee studied sleep and put together a great report last year and recommended exploring a change in start time as a result. This year a small, working group tinkered with the school schedules to explore options and now a larger group has taken on the matter. Dr. Brand shared that this is a complex matter in our district due to the demand on the transportation system (regional setting, 32 buses in 3 tiers) and our open enrollment. To make this happen we can 1) play with the current schedules in an effort to maximize the current number of buses or 2) study what it would take to do single tier bussing where all the elementary schools would start at the same time. There would be a large financial implication for the latter. There are now five options. The community was recently asked for their input via a survey; 2600 responses were received. The committee will review the data and make a recommendation to School Committee at the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. If a change is to be implemented, it would not happen prior to the Fall of 2018. Dr. Brand hopes a decision will be made this fall so that any budget implications can be considered for the next year. Dick asked if having neighborhood schools (as opposed to open enrollment) would decrease the district's costs. Dr. Brand replied that an in-depth analysis of this has not been done.

Capital planning was the second topic. Dr. Brand shared that they've explored what our capital infrastructure needs are for our large, regional school district; there's a long list. The district has let a lot of things go and we need to try to make up for lost time. The largest priorities are the very old Gates, Conant, and Douglas Schools. Thankfully, AB received a MSBA grant to help with future construction costs. Only 17/89 school districts who applied received this grant. We can only do one project at a time with this grant. The MSBA sets a very regimented schedule that we must adhere to; it's a long process that will take 5-7

years. The big question is what are we going to do. How can we have the largest impact on students? What's the best bang for the buck? The committee has shared the various options the district is considering. A twin school on the Gates property may make the most sense, but a decision has not yet been made. The cost is in the ballpark of \$1 to \$1.5 million, and we'll be reimbursed approximately 45% of that from the MSBA. Enrollment projections can affect the reimbursement rate; MSBA looks out ten years and will only support a building for that population. Our enrollment projects indicate a slight decrease in enrollment followed by a sharp increase. On December 4<sup>th</sup>, there will be two town meetings (Acton and Boxborough) to vote for design funds and to hire a district manager. Later there will be a second vote when we know the project cost and reimbursement rate. Using our excess in deficiency funds (savings) for some of this project is a possibility. The other buildings (aside from three identified elementary schools) are in need of various repairs and upgrades as well; a first pass through these buildings would total \$13 million. There is a short-term priority list for these jobs. This list and the strategy will need to be revised and solidified once we know where we are going with the building projects; things are fluid right now. Moving forward Dr. Brand suggests we need to shift our strategy and make sure we are keeping on top of our buildings' needs. He encourages parents to read the School Committee packets online for more Capital Planning details.

### **Principal's Report**

David echoed Dr. Brand's recommendation to take a look at the School Committee documents online. There's a ton of great information regarding all of AB's initiatives there. He also encourages parents to attend School Committee meetings.

Hiring for the next school year has begun. David is interviewing for a new special education teacher as Isabel O'Connor is leaving. Tom K. is moving to the jr. high, so McT is also looking for a new P.E. teacher. David has received about fifty applications for this job.

The placement process for next year is ongoing. The faculty is trying to streamline the process and make sure special education teachers are included from the beginning.

The School Council is almost done writing the School Improvement Goals for the 2017-2018 school year. This group has had many deep, thoughtful conversations. The plan will be presented in the Fall.

David thanked the families again for raising so many funds this year. The PTSO has kept up a fairly steady stream for the eight years David had been at McT. The schools assistant hours will remain the same and that's critical to our success.

The McT Scholarship will be awarded to a deserving alum on May 25<sup>th</sup>.

The Parker Damon Fund will be spent towards McT's art integration efforts and goal for the next school year – training new staff and exploring new techniques for all faculty. Some of the faculty's Thursday afternoon time will be spent on art integration next year.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Our total funds available are \$123,246.01

The PTSO made \$62,645 this year, coming in at about \$12K under our goal.

#### Fundraising/Income:

- Yard Sale brought in \$1,881.75 - \$619 short of our goal and custodians have not yet been paid.
- Received another \$230 in Auction income, bringing our total to \$41,028
- \$362.80 from Box Tops brings our total to \$999, \$149 above our goal.
- Another McT t-shirt sale brings our total to \$1,250, \$575 above our goal

#### Expenses/Activity:

- Field trips are in full swing. Deposits for Thompson Island, Lowell trip, Merrowvista, Ecotarium, Discovery Museum, and Michele's Menagerie have been received. Paid off Merrowvista, Ecotarium, Michele's Menagerie, Thompson Island, and Discovery Museum.
- Finally spent the Parker Damon Fund of \$1,385.43. It has been rolled into another fund to support faculty plans to work on art integration.
- Reimbursed Hanna \$73.52 for art integration supplies.

#### **Looking Back**

The Yard Sale was a success. Merriam had to back out at the last minute due to lack of parent volunteers. Becky is considering running the sale again next year, but would like a co-chair's help.

The Mileage Club has been very successful. There are 5 more meetings left (Fridays 8:30-9am) if you'd like to join. Tom has been a great help to Chris. Maybe this role can be included in the new P.E. teacher's job description. Perhaps Mileage Club could be a year-round activity and the gym can be used in the winter.

#### **Looking Ahead**

Family Field Day will take place at 5:30pm on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Steering Committee has these positions open: Field Day Chairs, Yard Sale Co-Chair, PTSO Jr. Chair, PTSO Secretary, School Photo Day Coordinator. Please let Tracey know if you're interested in one of these roles.

The meeting was adjourned at

Respectfully submitted,  
Kerry Lewis (PTSO Secretary) and