

**McCarthy-Towne School PTSO
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday November 5, 2014**

Shelley Cole, PTSO Sr. Chair
Julie Weir, PTSO Jr. Chair
Carolyn Dee, PTSO Secretary
Chris Hanlon, PTSO Treasurer
David Krane, Principal
Glenn Brand, Superintendent of Schools
Nancy Giansante, McT Teacher
Tracey Smith, Julie Hobbs, Kerry Lewis, Maureen Greer, Janet Munson, Palma Cicchetti,
Kathleen Guinee, Michelle Abroff, Sorel Sammons and Bridget Matz.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 P.M.

The minutes of October 14, 2014 were approved as amended.

David welcomed Glenn Brand, Superintendent of Schools to our meeting.

Principal's Report

David thanked everyone for the wonderful lunch that was provided to the staff on the Professional Day. The day was a success for all involved. David visited Merrowvista with the 5th grade for the first time. He found the children very engaged in all of their activities and the food was delicious. Matt went the following night. Both thought the experience was meaningful and educational for the students and teachers.

The Professional Learning Day was held on November 4, 2014 for the teachers. With the primary grades they discussed their goals and what they want to focus on when T.C. visits in January. They also discussed what portfolio's represent in our school and how they track a child's progress throughout their time here.

Within grades K-3 we have had additional children join the school since the beginning of the year. Otherwise class sizes seem to remain steady in all grades.

November proves challenging with no full week of school within the month. Conferences are ongoing and the teachers are reporting that they are going well.

Treasurer's Report

Chris reviewed the Treasurer's Report through October 2014. On December we will make the 1st of 3 payments to the district for classroom assistant. As of now the Annual Appeal has brought in \$3,500. \$520 was raised through Family Portraits and \$955 was raised through advertisement in the directory. We have spent \$1,000 to update the Auction software which has proven to be invaluable during the Spring Auction. Fundraising is slow to start this year but he hopes it will pick up in the coming months. The Treasurer's report was approved at 7:20 P.M.

Fundraisers

The Annual Appeal is ongoing. So far we have not collected as much as last year but are hopeful that it will pick up in the coming months. It was suggested that we put the financial information on the PTSO Website with a Thermometer to gage what our goal and how much we have collected so far. Everyone thought that was a useful suggestion and will look into doing that.

Spirit Wear order forms will go home in backpacks on Friday.

The Fall Social will be on Friday Night from 6 – 8 P.M. Everything is set and they have many High School Students volunteering to help out.

The Book Fair has begun and the kids are excited about it. Teachers have developed wish lists if parents may donate a book to the classroom if they wish to do so. Teachers have already talked to the children about just right books for their reading level.

Glenn Brand – Superintendent of Schools

Glenn Brand introduced himself as the new Superintendent of Schools beginning the job in the summer. He is currently visiting PTSO's from all the schools and gathering information. He is also conducting an online survey to gather information from parents as to how we move forward in the future.

The group expressed that they are in support of Acton-Boxboro's school choice where elementary school parents choose which school they believe is the best fit for their child. The group also stated that good communication between schools was crucial to the success of all schools. We expressed that the schools seem to concentrate on the children who are at the top of the spectrum or the bottom but the middle spectrum children seem to get lost within the system.

Some issues that were addressed were:

- a. To remain conscious of the space issues within the schools. We only see enrollment increasing and we should start thinking about space issues now.
- b. Improve the access in and out of the schools. At the beginning of the day and the end of the day safety is a concern with the busses and all the children walking around the schools.
- c. Continue to reevaluate the start times at all schools.
- d. Testing continues to be an issue. Are we teaching to the test or the student.
- e. Project Wellness in the Junior High is a wonderful program and maybe it could be expanded to include the Elementary School.
- f. We need to add more classroom assistant hours in all grades.
- g. It was suggested that the children begin learning a language at the elementary level.
- h. It was suggested that we examine the elimination of the ½ days was it a good thing or not, are people in favor of it or not?
- i. Examine ways to make our High School have smaller classes. Teams in Junior High really help with the transition from Elementary School to Junior High.

- j. Examine the grading system as it is different in every school. At McT we are in favor of not offering grades because we believe the children reflect on their work rather than focus on grades.
- k. Look at all school and as some are older than others and are in need of attention. Come up with a master plan in relation to all schools.

Glenn thanked the group for all their insight into the future of our schools.

Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2104. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Dee
PTSO Secretary