**PTO Meeting Agenda**

Memorial School

October 18th, 2017

***Attendees:*** Nicole Drummond, Courtney McCarthy, Dr. Martes, Maria Puglia, Kathleen Donohue, Megan Leshnick, Elizabeth LaRowe, Katie Novak, Jessy Nejm, Lindsay Rogers

1. Welcome / Introductions – Nicole Drummond
2. President’s Report – Nicole Drummond
   1. Attended Memorial Staff mtg last week – shared more about the PTO and the opportunity for grants. We have a decent budget from last year that should be used with existing students if possible.
      1. Possible ART display case grant – could it be a good opportunity for joint grant. (MCPE joint) – Note: MCPE needs to stick with founding goals (so furniture grants are a little harder to accept)
      2. Town-wide PTO Updates
         1. First meeting - October 25, 7:00pm @ Blake Middle School
         2. Meghan Leshnick - Publicity, deadline for Thursday packet is Tuesday at 10:00am
      3. Performing Arts Update – Maria Puglia
         1. Request to look for additional/other performing arts options for the Winter/Spring
         2. Windows on Wildlife – live animals that come, must be in gym/cafeteria (three live birds), would have to do two shows due to space issues (Feathers/eggs – allergy concern? – Check with Nurse)
            1. 2 program back to back category - $630
            2. Ages Kindergarten and up
            3. Could replace Curious Creatures for Grade 1 (one show is $350)
         3. Scott Jameson – Magic of communication (50 minutes)
            1. Need cafeteria or gym
            2. Touches on every sense for communication, gets kids involved, includes history Spanish etc. , story through sign language
            3. Maria to check on any references
            4. Could he replace Johnny the K
            5. One performance is $625 (additional would be $250)
         4. Brian Chevalier – Singer/Songwriter workshops, will tailor to what you want
            1. Has anti-bullying song workshops, leverages current curriculum, creates poem around it and kids perform it to whole school
            2. Spends time in each classroom and pull it together
            3. Kids can get CD of song
            4. Probably need 2 day character workshop - $1150 (could probably only do one grade with the 2 day program)
            5. Maria to check on any references (local if possible)
         5. Puppet show group out of Brookline
            1. No specific anti bullying or diversity show, but pied piper show could be a good show (kids could determine ethics of it), carboard explosion show looked cool too
            2. Need two shows (one show $600, maybe add’l $300-$400)
         6. Maria will get local school references and we can network from there
         7. Starlab came 10/17 – only half the class saw it due to illness, another day will be scheduled to cover it
         8. Ocean world 10/23 and 10/24
         9. Veterans day concert on 11/13
         10. All our typical performing arts are scheduled/booked in Fall
   * Preschool Music Program
     1. Michelle Taylor is rep, program on track with Melissa (pre-school coordinator). Schedule is ironed out, he should be starting next week
   * Room Parent Tea – went well
   * School Supply Kits –
     1. Made over $3000 on the fundraiser – for Memorial alone
     2. Going back to company and asking for reimbursement – before we purchase the missing supplies for ourselves
     3. We will discuss pros/cons next mtg to see if we want to offer again, also would like teacher feedback on the experience (first and second years)
     4. One suggestion to have parent volunteers and purchase on our own (may not be cost effective since staples program had large purchasing power)
   * Indoor Recess Boxes –
     1. Talked to teachers about it, sending out a survey to grade level leaders to get a sense of interest and needs
     2. PTO would replenish as needed
     3. Goal to have rolled out right after Thanksgiving
     4. If interested in helping put boxes together just email Nicole
3. Principal’s Report – Chris Martes
   1. Class size at 1st grade level – just hired an aide with district money.
      1. Have 4 teacher aides for 8 classrooms (every 2 teachers has 1 aide)
      2. Start Monday 10/23, Siobhan Dennehy, worked at Dale St. as reading specialist, ELL here, certified teacher. Lots of experience and relevant
      3. Interviewed 6 aides, 3 were certified teachers
      4. Now will update scheduling for classes with 4 aides and matching skillsets/needs for each class
      5. Will continue to look at this if budgets free up
   2. Lots of work to do with class size across the district – Superintendent and principals looking at this – for future budgets/space, etc.
   3. Next couple of weeks – assessment period for teacher eval of each students (in preparation of parent/teacher conferences)
      1. Need a good substitute pool, lot of value in coming here, want to personalize the process and not let technology own it. We want to own it and spread the word to build a good pool. Opportunities for improvement. (Allow teachers to have a good substitute when needed – i.e. for assessment period)
4. MCPE Update – Elizabeth LaRowe
   1. Had our first grant cycle, this is first year went from monthly to quarterly grant cycles. Allow for more strategic perspective for grant approvals/budget situation/etc. Help with timing the process. Received 10 grants across 5 schools – one from Memorial. This was the first time teachers had to present to boards and it went really well. Helps educate the board on the day to day of the teachers and the value of the proposal. This is an opportunity for teachers to show their passion – multiple presenters changed board members minds by being there.
      1. Marie Hedburg and Meredith Teaney –
         1. 8 tubs of makerspace materials that rotated classrooms for first graders. Now desired for kindergartners ($2400)
         2. Allows kids to build skills on a learning activity
   2. MCPE – blue ribbon drive
5. Vice President’s Report – Jose Cordova
   1. Volunteer Update
      1. Still need K t-shirt chair
      2. All others filled
      3. Information from chairs will go out soon
6. Treasurer’s Report – Lindsay Rogers
   1. PTO Dues received, townwide distributes back to schools based on students for room parents to use for class parties
   2. Room parents – receive $7/count of kids in classroom
      1. If new students come into classroom – reach out to Lindsay for extra room parent $/student
   3. Thank You funds donations coming in as well
      1. Family can donate money to a teacher into a Thank you fund (unlimited amount) – Lindsay would notify teacher that they have received a gift – and teacher would provide receipts for reimbursements. (Can be anyone – Aides, Specials, Teachers)
      2. There is a suggestion to build awareness of differences in PTO dues, room parent (teacher gifts), thank you fund. Maybe at transition day and PIN, or another opportunity so parents understand the asks/uses.
   4. PawSox fundraiser – can do again this spring and pick a better date
7. Superintendent Parent Advisory council
   1. Lindsay atteneded the meeting and provided updates:
   2. It’s really a worthwhile attendance – get good perspective on district as a whole. Gives you an idea of what’s happening in the classrooms. You hear more about reality etc. – interesting to hear about challenges
   3. Got to see R&D presentations for grants over the summer. 6 teacher groups presented – it was really amazing to see teachers passions for what they do
   4. Class size – need to come together as parents of children in the younger years – there are tough decisions ahead. Possibility of taking away full day K to make room. We need to advocate for it – curriculum is much different. Half day kids are getting a lot of academics in a short amount of time (curriculum same for half and full day). Portable classrooms came up, not sure its an option.
   5. Lots of big projects coming along (Dale St, other town projects needed will impact budget)
   6. We need to be at school committee mtgs., superintendent committee, warrant committee mtgs. – we need to advocate and represent
   7. Superintendent Advisory Council -- Next one Nov 15th at night (some are daytime ones)
   8. Key fact from Strategies for Children (Non-profit): 94% across MA are in FDK across the state (Organization advocates for that – Strategies for Children)
      1. Most districts have tuition based FDK
      2. Good info for warrant committee to hear
      3. Class sizes: 194 (1st grade) 195 (2nd grade)
      4. Email superintendent with concerns, school committee
      5. Key Dates:
      6. Budget preparation happening
         1. 12/18 – presented to school committee
         2. 1/30 – public hearing on budget and when will vote
         3. Then vote on April 30th at town mtg
      7. Director of student services recruiting still in process
      8. Dale St project – in disrepair
         1. Need to go through state program to be reimbursed .39c/$1 for project
         2. Submitted for last 5 years our Statement of Interest
         3. Got our site visit, told in fact that we need a new school
         4. By Thanksgiving will know if we are approved by state
         5. From the time we are accepted its about 2.5 years before school opens
8. Committee Chair updates
   1. Winter Carnival – Committee Update
      1. One or two open chair positions – in Thursday packet (shadow position, corporate sponsorship)
   2. Preschool Music
   3. Box Tops – November 1st – first submission
   4. Performing Arts
   5. Book Fair – Update on Literacy Night (now on Nov. 15th)
      1. Spring Family Night Out? Need a chair?
   6. Hospitality Committee – Holiday Luncheon Date
   7. Read Across America
      1. Visiting Author
   8. Helping Hands
   9. Laminating Committee
   10. Kindergarten T-Shirt
9. Vote
   1. Explore the Ocean World – vote for this year’s visit. Motion to fund for 10/23, 10/24, funding to pay for K students to participate to complement their Ocean Study curriculum – Nicole made a motion to approve, Lindsay second. All approved – Passed.

*The next Memorial School PTO Meeting will take place on January 17th at 9:00am.*

*The next Townwide is October 25th – 7pm – Blake Middle School*