

Clarke PTO Meeting  
December 10, 2015 8:45 am @ Clarke Middle School

Members and Guests Present: Anna Monaco – Principal, Jennifer Velis – Co-President, Alison Arshad – Co-President, Trish Weisberg – Fundraising, Carol Colwell, Yaxin Zhang, Kiruthika Ramakrishnan – Treasurer, Jane Kennedy, Lori Benjes, Betsy Wilkinson, Kathleen Lenihan, Ahmad Raffif, Carrie Wu, Genevieve Davy, Stephanie Mitzenmacher – Secretary

- Approval of 11/2015 Minutes: Alison moved to approve the minutes. Kiruthika 2nd the motion. Vote to approve was unanimous without additions or changes.
  
- Principal's Report – Anna Monaco
  - Principal Monaco shared thanks from teachers and staff for the parent donated desserts during conferences.
  - Choral Concert went well, kudos to Mr. Coombs.
  - Follow-up on agenda items from previous meeting:
  - Food drive was successful without over 3000 items donated.
  - Empty bowls is currently scheduled for Wednesday the 16th, and another reminder will be sent out. Proceeds will go to the Greater Boston Food bank.
  - PTO donated \$1700 to Clarke Middle School. Funds will be used to purchase shelving as well as a "standing desk."
  - School Committee meeting:
    - Request made to take more students to Costa Rica (up to 40), which brings the overall cost of the trip down. Principal Monaco also addressed concerns over international travel and supports currently scheduled trips (Costa Rica, Quebec, China).
    - DC registration going well. There are currently a lot of requests for scholarship money for this trip.
    - Town Meeting Article 2 passed releasing design funds to move forward with the project.
    - Betsy Wilkinson asked what the scope of the project would be. Explained by Principal Monaco that the project has been scaled down to only address capacity issues
  
- Treasurer's Report – Kiruthika
  - Revenue is down on most fundraising however; membership dues have gone well for the current school year.
  
- Clarke Night Out - Jane and Jennifer
  - March 11th – St. Patrick's Day Theme
  - Current Needs for the event
  - Graphic Design skills – posters/flyers
  - Auction items such as sports tickets/vacation homes
  - Gift card tree/baskets

- Lori Benjes suggested engaging the kids – having them donate for the auction – babysitting/tutoring/etc...
- Book Fair Update – Genevieve Davy
  - Revenue is slightly up with an overall goal is \$800 gross.
  - Proposed “buy a book for CNO” for book basket for donations...
- METCO Update – Genevieve Davy
  - Metco potluck was held at the Boston Nature Center and Wildlife sanctuary. Ten Lexington families, dozen teachers, a large number of METCO families were able to attend. Strongly suggested that for future events the venue should be booked earlier. Additionally, the cost to rent the venue for the evening was \$400 so the PTO budget should be increased to reflect the true cost of holding such an event.
    - There is ongoing difficulty in connecting families and in particular families transitioning from elementary school.
    - Deb Sabin and Claire Sheth will be stepping into the METCO role next school year.
- Debt Exclusion Campaign – Kathleen Lenihan
  - We still do not know the date of the vote and what will exactly be on the ballot. If Hastings receives MSBA funding, the vote won’t take place until spring. Actual construction numbers will most likely not be available until March. Even without a set date for a vote or specifics on the ballot questions it is important to start working on the campaign. Volunteers are desperately needed.
- Other:
  - Board Positions for 2016/2017 – requested that board members start reaching out for replacements and report back to Co-Presidents with suggestions and interested parties.
  - Stop & Shop rewards - Robin Abrams explained that there was a glitch in the computing system. Schools who registered early were not included in the program and therefore not accumulating money.
  - Endorsing the YES Campaign – Kathleen Lenihan requested that the board vote to endorse the debt exclusion. Due to the high dollar amount expected for this debt exclusion, Betsy Wilkinson suggested a careful approach to PTO support. Kathleen Lenihan offered to draft support language to be sent out to the board via email. On 12/11/2015 Alison Arshad sent out the following language in support of the debt exclusion requesting board votes over email:

“We are making a motion to support and endorse the debt exclusion campaign and the proposed projects – a new Hastings, a total of 6 modulars to be installed at Bowman, Bridge, and Fiske or some combination thereof, additions/renovations at Clarke and Diamond, and possibly a new HVAC system at LHS.

On 12/15/2015 Alison reported via email that the Clarke PTO Board voted in support of endorsing the debt exclusion campaign.

- Jennifer Velis adjourned the Clarke PTO meeting at 10: 50 am

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

- 2015-2016 PTO Meetings: Jan. 14, Feb. 11, March 10, April 14, May 12, June 9
- Dec. 11 - Book Fair ends
- Dec. 11 - 1/2 day - conferences (11:45am dismissal)
- Dec. 15 - Discovery team sponsored breakfast
- Dec. 24 - Jan. 3 - Winter Vacation
- Jan. 12 - Adventurer team sponsored breakfast
- Jan. 14 - PTO meeting (8:45am)
- Jan. 14 - 1/2 day - professional development (11:45am dismissal) Jan. 14 - Staff

Appreciation Luncheon

Clarke PTO Meeting Minutes Submitted by PTO Secretary, Stephanie Mitzenmacher on 1/11/2016.