

# Westbrook Elementary School PTA Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, October 4, 2011**

Co-President, Cathy Stocker, called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Diana Sherbacow, PTA Secretary, distributed the September minutes, and asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. As there were no corrections, the September 2011 PTA meeting minutes were approved by affirmation.

## **Treasurer's Report**

- Treasurer, Karen Lambert, reported the PTA online dues registration is off to a smashing start with \$37,259 received (goal - \$39,500). The classes that achieved 75% participation and will receive an extra recess are - Atkinson, Buss, Fernandez, Imler, Woo, Lawrence, Quinn, Bergen, Finn, O'Connell, Tsakos and Vincent.
- The Quickbooks version the Treasurers' use is no longer working due to the age of our laptop (2006) and Karen and Li are concerned about the possibility of losing data. If anyone knows of a newer laptop that could be donated and/or a more updated version of Quickbooks, the PTA is open to any suggestions/donations.
- Reimbursements are working well. If you need to be reimbursed, blank forms are in the Treasurer's box in the office, please fill-out the form and put back in the box.
- PTA Co-President Cathy Stocker has sent class budgets to the room parents. Class dues are \$12. If you have not paid, please do so.

## **Co-President's Report – Cathy Stocker & Karen Thornton**

- We have received a lot of great feedback from the online registration. We still need to raise a little over \$2,000 to meet our operating budget of \$39,500. We will continue to nudge everyone to donate so we can reach our goal and may still need to do a small fundraiser. We use these funds to pay for our Artist in Residence, all cultural and science programs/assemblies, musicals and Elmos.
- If you have not already done so, you can still purchase the school directory online. You do receive a directory with PTA membership and may buy an additional directory for \$10. When you receive the email for the link to the directory, please verify your information. An online version of the directory will be available to everyone whose dues are paid.

### Initiatives:

- **After School Activities**

Keyboarding: This fun activity will be taught by Ms. O'Connell to teach typing skills and how to navigate a computer keyboard. There will be 10 sessions beginning on October 12<sup>th</sup> from 3:15-4:15 PM in the computer lab. Cost is \$41.50 and will be limited to 20 kids in grades 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>.

New! Glee Club: Mrs. McNeil has found a wonderful professional musician to head up the Club. The first session will consist of 10 meetings/rehearsals plus a performance. There will be a second session offered at the beginning of next year with 10 meetings/rehearsals and a final year-end performance. We will first offer to the older grades (3-5<sup>th</sup>) and will most likely begin on October 24<sup>th</sup>. The fee will be approximately \$110.

New! Lego Clubs: Beginning this winter we will offer 2 concurrent sessions of "LegoRobotics" on Wednesdays for students in grades 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup>. In addition, beginning the end of October we will offer "Junior First Lego League" for Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> grades. The sessions will last for approximately 7 weeks. More details will be forthcoming.

Traditional Programs - Languages, Arts & Crafts, Mad Science etc. are already underway.

Please make sure to pick up your child on time. The school office closes at 4 PM so there is no safety net for students who are left behind. The school makes sure the students get to their activities but parents\guardians must pick up students as soon as the activity is over. Pick up is located inside the building outside of the room where the activity is held. The main door to the school will be locked at 4:30 PM.

- **Safety**  
We have been having many problems with illegally parked cars on Allan Terrace. This problem will get especially difficult when our school construction begins. Cars parked on the corner and near the fire hydrant make it impassible for buses. It is really a very dangerous situation and is of our utmost concern. Adult volunteers are going to be policing the area to help improve the situation. (Add to WINS chart.)
- **Sidewalk Petition**  
We will be making an application for a sidewalk on Baltimore Road. We greatly appreciate any expertise anyone would like to give - writing letters, etc to petition the county. We hope we have a good chance to get the sidewalk because it will adjoin an existing sidewalk and affects both Westbrook and Westland walkers.
- **Bus 1119**  
Due to WSSA construction on the middle and elementary school routes, bus 1119 has been delayed on several occasions this year. The PTA and the principal are looking into the problem including talking to WSSA to see how we can help the bus navigate the construction in order to cut down on the delays.
- It is truly overwhelming to see how so many people have chipped in. We want to thank everyone for all his or her help in getting us off to a great year. For the record, we would like to thank:
  - **Wendy Cohen** for her tremendous efforts in singlehandedly processing hundreds of PTA memberships.
  - **Lisa Carmel** and all the room parents who helped us during our fundraising campaign, gave such a strong showing at Back to School Night and continue to support our teachers and students all year long.
  - **Maureen Kramer** for getting us all hooked up so we can cash in on our Giant and Safeway receipts.
  - **Kristin McNavage and Kari Swenson** for arranging a fun and sunny rescheduled Back to School Picnic.
  - **LeeAnne Graeb & Anne Brooks Rudzki**, the Trash Free Lunch ladies, for hosting a terrific lunch event on September 27 and setting such a good example for all of us.
  - **Mikel Moore & Tara Gorman** for hosting a delicious and greatly appreciated New Parent Coffee on very short notice.
  - **Julie Reiley** for arranging a very informative NAMI Parenting Seminar.
  - **Julie Coe, Orly Isaacson, Lisa Finneran, Bob Scribner, Janet Gaffney, Tiffany Leeson, Mikel Moore, Beth Marans, Ellen Crupi and Li Ives**, the before and after school activities chairs, for all their efforts in establishing, advertising, and organizing our many diverse offerings.

- **Beth Marans** for cheerfully making ICB room reservations for our many PTA-sponsored activities.
- **Kristin Wardour, Tiffany Rowan and Wendy Bailey, Ms. Lopez and Ms. VanO** for planning and organizing Gail Dailey's going away party.
- **Erin Harcourt** for collecting all of our volunteer information and planning the volunteer trainings.

### **Principal's Report**

Ms. Jones reported the following:

- We are halfway through the first marking period. Interim Reports went home this week to all Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students. For 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, reports went home only if there was a problem. The end of the marking period is October 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Upcoming events:
  - Parent Visitation Day – Monday, October 10<sup>th</sup>. This is a countywide event from 9:15-11 AM. Please wait until 9:15 to enter the building so we can take attendance and the lunch count and then please come and join us in your child/children's class room(s).
  - Parent Coffee - Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM in the Media Center. We will be talking about how we are using "Stop and Think" in the classrooms in response to our half-time counselor.
  - Superintendent Dr. Joshua Starr, Listen & Learn – Wednesday, November 16th at B-CC High School from 7:30-9 PM. If you would like to read his transition report it is available online at [www.montgomerycountyschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomerycountyschoolsmd.org). It is a very interesting report; he is very up front about where the problems are. He has already made a visit to Westland Middle School.
- Giving Tree - Thanks to Claire Slaubaugh you will see the Giving Tree bulletin board in the main hallway. This is an opportunity for teachers to tell us what their needs are. The items needed will be listed on apples on the tree, please pull a card and buy the item and we will make sure it gets to the teacher. Items I know we are in need of are playground equipment, especially balls and games. We really go through these items. If you are not sure the item is appropriate, please send me an email. Nothing motorized or that requires batteries are allowed. We would greatly appreciate any donations.
- Shelter, Lockdown and Fire Drills - We have changed the names of our safety drills to match the language used by law enforcement so we are all coordinated. A Shelter Drill is when we secure the building from the outside and make sure all students are accounted for. Students in the portables would be brought into the building if it is a weather-related emergency such as a tornado warning, otherwise they are left in their classrooms. This drill would be used for weather, local emergency, etc. A Lockdown Drill is when the threat is from inside the school building. All lights are turned off, doors locked, teachers account for all students and then send an email to the principal. If we must go under a shelter or lockdown, we do not share the reason with the students but a phone message and/or email will be sent via our connect ed system. We must also conduct Fire Drills – two in the month of September and then once a month for the rest of the year.
- Lost and Found -During Visitation Day and the upcoming Halloween Parties, please look through the lost and found for any items that may be yours. We will be donating the items at the end of the marking period.

### **Teacher Report: Natalie Atkinson**

Ms. Atkinson gave a brief report on each grade level.

- Kindergarten: All classes have completed M class testing; in math working with patterns, getting used to the integrated curriculum and using Elmos
- 1<sup>st</sup>: Diving into integrated curriculum using sensory words to enhance word groups
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Working on place values and starting graphing; in writing concentrating on nutrition and health habits and creating power points
- 4<sup>th</sup>: Collecting insects to determine health of a stream; realistic fiction
- 5<sup>th</sup>: Strathmore trip - Tuesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>  
(Please note – a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade report was not given.)

### **Committee Reports**

Spirit Wear – This year we will have a lot of new items. We have found a new vendor and you will be able to see samples and order at the Book Fair. You will also be able to pay online or by check and all items will be delivered before the holidays. For spring we will have additional items – shorts, t-shirts, tank tops etc.

MCCPTA – It was quite a long meeting because they needed to work through a lot of procedural rules. Dr. Starr will be conducting a Question & Answer session at Carver Education Center on October 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM. The first early advocacy effort will be a community roundtable for the budget on October 12<sup>th</sup> at Norwood High School. This will be our first early opportunity to talk to the BOE and advocate against budget cuts.

Welcoming Committee - One of our goals this year is to give a warm welcome to all our new families. Please sign up to be a mentor family. This way a new family can reach out to you if they have a question. This will be an ongoing program.

PTA Website – We plan to make this site very reliable and up-to-date. Over the next month we will be putting it together. We will have students write some of the articles and it will also serve as a gateway for FOWS. We want the website to be a great resource for you. If you would like anything on the site, please let us know.

### **Activities/Dates to Remember**

October 10 – Parent Visitation Day  
October 20 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Artist in Residence performance (1:30pm APR)  
October 21 – No School  
October 28 – Classroom Halloween Parties  
October 31 – No School

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.