

Mount Prospect School
General PTO Meeting Minutes
October 7, 2015

Round Table presented by Ms. Hozeny and Mr. Ciempola

PTO Members Present: Achint Kaur, Tissiana Oliva, Iris Schwartz, Cecilia Gomez, Catherine Santaiti, Claudine McMahon

Current Happenings:

- Assemblies:
 - Positivity, Respect, Integrity, Determination , Empathy (Lessons in reinforce character traits)
 - Announce birthdays
 - Talk about events/ themes each month (Walk-a-Thon, Autism Awareness, Giving Tree)
 - State has Week of Respect/Safety; MPS is spending a whole month on concepts through door decorating, wearing certain colors per grade, buddy classes, a new band coming as a fun, integrative way to discuss Respect
- Great start to year, not many hot button issues
- Parent Advisory Council has met with grade level representatives
- Traffic – parents turning left into lot are being spoken with
- Coming up:
 - Box Tops – prior year made >\$1400 for PTO which pays for field trips, assemblies, chrome book carts, library smart board, etc. The library smart board alone cost \$7k.
 - Wish List – request made to PTO
 - chrome book carts (we have 9 carts for grades 3-5, and K-2 use older netbooks)
 - picnic tables for learning garden – two additional are \$600 each
 - Peer Mentors chosen among 4th graders – they give up recess, are trained and go into CBAP, pre-K to 5th grade and work on social skills with students
 - Student Council members were elected in grades 3-5
 - Volunteer Orientation regarding confidentiality tomorrow 10/8 and must attend if volunteering in classrooms
 - School Picture Day 10/12
 - Lifetouch is new company
 - More options, backgrounds
 - 5th Grade whole grade picture
 - Will get sticker pictures for International Day Passports
 - Scholarship Movie - proceeds go to MPS Scholarship Fund and 2 seniors at Ridge, a boy and girl are given \$1k each (sometimes it is hard to raise \$2k)

- Sensitivity Training: for 3rd grade, funded by PEC (at MPS, there is a strong academic foundation, but there is also a focus on the kids building friendships and building kindness, learning how to relate to one another)
- Monster Mash 10/23
 - Will have Sharing Happiness Tree so those attending can choose gifts to buy
 - Achint Kaur was able to reach out to community charities and get lists of needs/requests
- Halloween Parades
 - ½ day Preschool classes on 10/29 because they don't have school on Fridays
 - K-5 on 10/30
- Grades 3-5 finished MAP testing
 - Given in fall and spring
 - It is an adaptive test – the more questions answered correctly the harder the questions become
 - The results show three tiers – concrete areas, learning areas, where teaching needs to go areas and the teachers use this information to form small groups
- Gifted and Talented program
 - Cluster grouping in Grade 3 with two classes because a large # of students qualifying
 - Will receive enriched program after mastering 3rd Grade curriculum
 - 4th & 5th grades meet with Mrs. Linstra
- CML is open to 4th & 5th grade
 - they give up recess, and must make a commitment
 - per Parent Question: can a student participate in both Peer Mentoring and CML? Yes and Peer Mentoring will take precedent
- November is a short month with teacher convention Nov. 5th and 6th, conferences and Thanksgiving
- Conferences begin 11/19 with evening session and continue Friday, Monday and Tuesday leading into Thanksgiving break
- Report Cards available online 11/19
- New Curricula: quiet year
 - Third year of Go Math
 - Language Arts established
 - Science standards have been updated by state, so there will be changes/enhancements
 - Contact Matt Hall mhall@bernardsboe.com with any questions
 - All curricula can be found on www.bernardsboe.com

Floor opened for questions from Parents:

- Discuss additional half days? 4 built into Calendar in October, November, February and March; teachers trained and used to be pulled out during the day so to reduce substitute teachers in class, the district created half days and the staff stays for training after dismissal
- New ideas?: One parent suggested Lego Mindstorm – kits exist for the school to buy for 4th and 5th graders during the day

- Discuss Foreign Language: Mrs. Stotler headed the committee to reintroduce spoken languages for K-5 (currently, Latin is taught in class in 4th and 5th grades), and is visiting Hillsborough, Princeton etc. which are model programs for the state; she will be presenting at a future meeting. There used to be a push in for languages, then it was a special, then budget cuts happened and then Latin was reintroduces by class teachers. If dual language program is pursued, it was discussed it would be Spanish and Chinese during the school day. Ideally program would be K-5, but might be grades 3-5.
- Discuss Gifted and Talented program: For third grade grouping there are three identification parts: MAP, COGATS and teacher input such as motivation and work habits; threshold score > or = 18 and 16 students qualified at MPS so there are 8 and 8 in two classes. Ms. Linstra assisted with class placement and scheduling. She pushes into 3rd, 4th and 5th with the 4th and 5th graders previously identified and meet 2 times per week. Contact Ms. Linstra with specific questions about your child or Dr. Heineman. All Power Point presentations and details are archived on web. School will test and identify all new students. If student does not qualify for G&T, enrichment binders exist and every child has access. Next year 4th grade will be clustered and the following year 5th grade. K-2 is enrichment only.
- Discuss STEM program: curriculums are being adjusted
- Update on Common Core: District's curriculums are in line with Common Core as Common Core reaches students on deeper level and teaches the reasoning behind the answer. Go Math is closely aligned to Singapore program especially at the 3-5 grade level, they are learning deeper. The Go Math website has parent resources and while Mrs. Wolf is on maternity leave, Tara Boweman is her replacement and can answer any questions.
- Discuss Middle School vs. Elementary School: Middle School has different class choices, how is it in Elementary School? K-5 has 1 teacher for every subject and differentiation occurs through small groups and enrichment
- Discuss how Parents can become more involved: A form went out asking for Volunteers, and all new Volunteers must attend training. In K-2 classes, there are in-class opportunities to volunteer. The library can always use help, as can the office. The PTO has committees and chairpersons and in addition each event calls for many volunteers, with Monster Mash, Bingo Night, International Day and Night and the Book Fair coming in the next few months.
- Discuss what happens at After Care: There is a rotation: eat snack, go to classroom for homework and go to gym or outside with ½ hour spent at each station. The children are grouped by age so activities are age appropriate. There are approximately 170 children in aftercare and 15 in before care. Contact Ms. Richardson with any questions.
- Email is the best way to reach Ms. Hozeny and Mr. Ciempola