

Willard PTG Meeting
January 7, 2019

Attendance

Robin Baughman, Jennie Garofalo, Peony Keve, Matthew Lucey, Meagan MacNutt, Kristin Martines, Kim Rivers, Candace Root, Alex Ruhmann, Peter Smulowitz, Kathryn Watson, Erika Woodhouse

Teacher Update (Kim Rivers)

- Teachers are in report card season, so everyone is pretty focused on that.
- As far as the staff's PTG needs, everyone currently has everything they need and want.
- Most of the updates from teachers have been academic in nature, so it seems that's where everyone's focus is right now. One of the goals from the School Improvement Plan was to standardize teacher assessments, so the staff is spending time making sure everyone is getting the same training, sending the same message, etc.
- 4th grade currently has a poet in residence.
- During author visits last month, the same author who has been visiting the 4th grade (Gregory Mone) changed up the program, and it was a welcome change.
- 5th grade had a new author come (Suzy Becker, Kate the Great series) and that was a fun change – students seem to really like the books.
- Kim has not yet received feedback from K-3 teachers regarding author visits.
- The next Staff Appreciation Lunch is scheduled for Jan. 17.
- Also on Jan. 17th is an all school assembly.
- Grade 2 Enrichment Program (“Bash the Trash”) is on Jan. 31st.
- One issue has surfaced regarding school supplies – the younger grades are running out quicker than older grades. The process of purchasing school supplies was new this year so the staff is trying to refine that list going forward. One thing teachers did not anticipate was that students brought certain items intended for personal use, so this year the staff had to decide which things could be kept personal and which things could be thrown in the group pile. With a pre-determined vendor going forward, nothing will be personal.
- At the next faculty meeting Kim will communicate to the teachers that they can utilize room parents to solicit family donations to refill supplies.
- Kim has been running the Rivers and Revolutions program for several years. Laurie Hunter has asked Kim and her high school counterpart, Michael Goodwin, to present to the School Committee in the spring. Round 2 of the program will recommence in March.

Principal's Report (Matthew Lucey)

- The staff will be meeting with the Concord Ed Fund, and pitching two 2 grants: 1) enhancement to our music program using pitched instruments, and 2) the KIVA program.
- An ALICE refresh is scheduled for this afternoon between the staff and Concord Police – it will include a couple of live simulations followed by Q&A.
- Willard received another donation from two local gas stations (\$1,000 total). The reason that Willard was selected is unknown, but the donations are much appreciated. The funds will likely go toward a new program involving problem-based learning in regards to the landscape out front. It will be an extension for students who have an interest in being outdoors, the community, etc. Students will consult the original landscape architect's plans, conduct an assessment of what's thriving, what's not, what was planted and intended for the space, etc. then propose replacements. It will likely extend beyond the school day; the process of enrollment is still TBD.

- In regards to a Willard fields update, there still needs to be some exploration into getting a well onsite, plus some research into grub management and the restrictions on which pesticides can be used in public spaces.
- International Fair is going to be presented for recognition with the School Committee.
- Attended a presentation by the League of Women Voters last Friday regarding school budget, program, etc.
- Budget for Concord Public Schools is very close (approximately \$200,000), which is outside of FinCom, but supported by the School Committee.
- New middle school buildings will not be supported by the Mass Building Authority. An old feasibility study looked into renovating vs. new construction; new construction has been determined since then. The negative to no MSBA support is that no one offsets the expense; the positive is that needs and wants can be proposed and met without restriction.
- On February 28th Willard 4th & 5th grade parents are invited to the middle school to learn about the program.
- Need to set a date for Family Reading Night. The event has historically been scheduled for the Wednesday following February break, so Matt will check with the staff and Mr. Sweeney.
- A few new families have started at Willard. Alex will confirm with New Family Coordinators about their welcome.

Social (Meagan MacNutt)

- No new update.
- Next event is the Volunteer Appreciation Party on June 6th at 7pm at the Ruhmanns'.

Family Game Night (Meagan MacNutt)

- Next year we may want to consider a title change from "Willard Family Night" to "Willard Bingo Night".
- An event flyer will go out next week.
- Discussed whether or not to have quiet space available for this event. It is a very loud event, but it is not a long event so maybe it's not necessary. The Quiet Space Committee may want to provide some specific language about this event. Erika will poll the committee about whether or not to provide quiet space.

Before and After School (email update from Denise Carleton)

- Willard Chorus is going to the Big Sing East in March.

Fundraising (Peony Keve)

- As of December 31st, we have raised close to \$34,000, which is 96% of our Annual Appeal target. Donations will still be accepted through the end of the school year.

Communications (Kathryn Watson)

- Willard Weekly submissions need to be as complete and fully formed as possible.
- The website home page needs to be updated from "Happy Holidays" to Talent Show info. It is so important to always feature what is happening next on that home page. Alex will email Tara with the request.
- Discussed whether the Communications Committee should have a point person attend PTG meetings if Sam and Tara have a hard time attending. Vice President may be able to fill that role.

Treasurer's Report (Kristin Martines)

- No new update; everything seems to be on track.
- One issue arose regarding International Fair. The Co-chairs did great job of sticking to their \$500 budget; however, Kristin then received the custodian bill for almost \$450 (approx. 7 hours for one custodian), which is a huge piece considering the overall budget. Custodians are paid time and a half on Sundays. The event date was changed after the budget had been set, so the implication of the custodial piece may not have been carefully considered. The custodian piece of event budgets should be revisited. We may want to consider moving the International Fair back to a Friday, as originally proposed, because then there should not be a separate custodian charge since they are already required to be in the school.

Other

- By-laws need to be reviewed prior to February meeting.
- Alex is hoping that people who have been on a Committee for a while can volunteer some time to go over the Committee Guidelines, which are super outdated. Communications Committee should also be a big part of that conversation. Committee Guidelines need to be revamped to include the vendor list, etc.

Upcoming Events

- January 17 – Assembly, Crocodile River Music, African Music, Culture and Dance
- January 21 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day, NO SCHOOL
- January 25 – Principal Coffee
- January 25 – Family Game Night
- January 31 – Grade 2 Enrichment Program, Bash the Trash
- Next PTG Meeting – February 4th at 9:15am