



## PTA Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting date: 01/08/13

7:00 Library

### Attendees:

- Brian Biscegelia-Kane [bkane@belmont.k12.ma.us](mailto:bkane@belmont.k12.ma.us)
- Sara Smith [sarawsmith@mac.com](mailto:sarawsmith@mac.com)
- Maria Samson [maria-samson1@gmail.com](mailto:maria-samson1@gmail.com)
- Frank Dill [fydill3@aol.com](mailto:fydill3@aol.com)
- Kelly Kokoros [g.kokoros@verizon.net](mailto:g.kokoros@verizon.net)
- Ben Castleton [becastleton@gmail.com](mailto:becastleton@gmail.com)
- Amy Lim [andreasenamy@hotmail.com](mailto:andreasenamy@hotmail.com)
- Laura Vanderhart [lvanderhart@hotmail.com](mailto:lvanderhart@hotmail.com)
- Yamini Saravanan [ysaravan@gmail.com](mailto:ysaravan@gmail.com)
- Qudsia Ejaz [ejazj@gmail.com](mailto:ejazj@gmail.com)

### Upcoming Events:

- Reflections Arts Program: Shonool Malik (Maria)
  - Low turnout. 8 entrants. We didn't get the theme from national office until too late to recruit participants.
- Math and Science Night: Katherine Maslova & Kathleen Kim (Frank)
  - Coming up Jan 17<sup>th</sup>. About 7 science tables and 8 math tables.
  - We need two more volunteers for math tables
  - There will be observation sheets so the kids can write down their observations
  - Kathleen handed out announcement that will go in backpacks
    - Polymers
    - Molecules
    - Red cabbage litmus test
    - Dry ice
    - Planting
    - Circuit building
    - Bridge building challenge
- Ice Skating Night / Food Drive: Theresa O'Connor & Jenny Murphy (Maria)
  - Boxes to be placed throughout the school to collect food from Jan 11<sup>th</sup> through Jan 25<sup>th</sup>
  - Ice skating night is Jan 25<sup>th</sup> at Vigirola Skating Rink. Need to bring your own.
- Paprika Kids
  - Feb 1st – 3rd fundraising shopping event. 10% proceeds will go to Butler.
  - Run by a Butler parent.
  - Located on Trapelo
  - She will make flyers and Katherine Whittemore will help her.

- Library Night
  - Feb 7<sup>th</sup> 6:30-8:00
  - 1<sup>st</sup> half hour will be activities (making bookmarks and think of a word and insert them into madlibs to be read to them later)
  - refreshments and library open house
  - Mr. McCallister is a reader, but she is looking for a woman. Open to suggestions. Tom Perrotta (Little Children) is a local novelist whose son went to Butler. Mr. B will contact him. Or Bill Skelly, former Selectman. OR the Castleton family singers could perform! Ben is willing. Another option is Clayton Christenson, who is an innovator.

PTA Standing Committees:

- After School Enrichment: Mary Christensen (Emma)
  - Distributed a flyer for next session.
  - Registration starts Friday. It is online, but there is a hardcopy in the office for those who can't do it online.
  - New classes: Crafty Kids, Zumba, Cursive, Lego Engineer robotics for K-1
  - It is a 12 week program (lego classes are only 6 weeks so there will be two offered)
  - Qudsia requested a Math Circle for younger kids
- In  School Enrichment: Anila Bello & Yamini Saravanan (Maria)
  - Feb 12<sup>th</sup> Lowell Museum for 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Using a grant from Mr. Chu and a Yellow Bus grant. Total budget is \$1200. 4<sup>th</sup> grade still wants to do a Museum of Science trip. Can we charge \$8? Mr. McC knows who could not afford that and maybe they would be excluded.
  - Mr. B wants to go to a sustainable farm when the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade studies Native Americans and living with nature.
  - We, the PTA, are willing to fund different programs than the traditional ones. Just tell us what you want. ☺
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> grade will go to the Science Museum, and to Plimoth Plantation in late May
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> grade went to Nutcracker and will get a speaker on Sled Dogs for Alaska unit
  - 1<sup>st</sup> gr: Kites and meteorology, and hoping to do a Discovery Museum trip in Acton
  - K: Yamini hasn't been able to get in contact with the teachers. They didn't do the apple picking in the Fall. Yamini is contacting Belmont Savings to try and fund the Crocodile Music Group, a group that teaches geography through the drumming of diff countries in Africa.
  - Brian suggests to keep trying to get in touch with the teachers, but if you have tried three times then get in touch with Mike.
- Fundraising: Cara Cogliano & Lilia Halpern Smith (Maria)
  - The Fund a Need enrichment fundraiser before Christmas raised \$700!
  - The FBE asked us to not use the name "Fund a Need" though since they use that term.
  - Bottle Drive was successful. 10 bags of plastic, and 15 boxes of glass. We will get a check from the redemption center soon, but she doesn't know how

much it will be for. She thanks all the volunteers who helped to gather and transport.

- Kelly wants to do a Margarita's fundraiser for March. If you go and mention Butler they will donate 15% to the school.
- Health & Safety : Kevin Sullivan (Frank).
  - Hand sanitizers: The PTA used to fund it. The sanitizer containers have been empty for a year. Should the PTA put this back in as a line item? Nurse Page would like us to refill. We have to buy special refill containers.
  - Frank provided the following email from Mike McC:
    - *Many parents have asked questions about school safety measures in light of the CT shooting before vacation. I have done my best to connect with every single parent who expressed concern. Along with the rest of the district (and very likely every other school in the country) Butler is conducting a review of its security procedures. At the local level I am working on our emergency handbook and anticipate we will take most of our January faculty meetings to review it. At the district-wide level, Dr. Kingston established a School Security Advisory Group to review our protocols, practices, and physical capacities. The group will then recommend remediation and improvements, some of which might inform our budget requests. I anticipate interior locks will be a major topic for all schools, in Belmont and beyond. Members include Fire Chief Frizzell, Police Chief McLaughlin, Steve Mazzola (Director of Technology), Tony DiCologero (Director of Finance), Fred Dominici (Director of Buildings and Grounds) and me. Last week Dr. Kingston asked me to chair the group, and I agreed to do so.*
    - *In case parents have not had a chance to see it, there was an interesting article in the Boston Globe a few weeks ago about the Newton Public Schools and their security considerations in light of the CT shooting ([http://www.boston.com/yourtown/news/newton/2012/12/buzzers\\_and\\_cameras\\_may\\_soon\\_e.html](http://www.boston.com/yourtown/news/newton/2012/12/buzzers_and_cameras_may_soon_e.html)). The article was interesting to me for two reasons: 1.) Because it is always nice to know that it is not just Belmont who is trying to figure these things out, and that even well organized towns like Newton are re-examining their systems and 2.) That by comparison, the Butler School is way ahead of many other schools. When I first arrived the school I found was very similar to the ones described in the article – unlocked, no cameras, no buzzers, no clear pick-up and drop off traffic plan, no volunteer sign-in computer, no IDs, etc. I am happy that in the last four years we've come a long way, but I can agree that we still have things to work on. Please feel free to share the link with any parents who would like to read it. If parents have any other concerns, please get in touch with me.*

Principal Report: (Note read by Frank in Mike's absence)

- Playground Update:

*On Thursday, 12/6, the Butler Community Playground was re-opened, just shy of one year to the date that it was originally taken down (parents may remember that it was taken down over December Vacation in 2011). Granted it was not the way we pictured the big re-open – I was out of the district in Marlborough, MA at a School Leadership Institute and the fence installer decided on his own to open it to a mob of students exactly at dismissal time – but the important part is that once again, kids were playing on a*

*playground at the Butler School, something that had been absent for too long. In the days that followed the next week Grade-level teachers took their classes outside to the playground and reviewed the rules of the playground and the safety reminders.*

*The short perimeter fence that is erected is called a “collapsible fence” and it will remain in place until the spring/early summer time when the contractor returns to hydroseed the back area that is currently fenced in with more permanent chain link fencing. Once grass is grown (solid enough to be able to be mowed), the collapsible fence will be taken down and moved to the back field so that we can shut down that field next fall to re-grow grass back there. Also in the Spring will be the return of the surfacing company, XGrass, to complete the top cap of the poured rubber surface. The final coat won't be black as it is currently out there – there will be different colors to match the playground color scheme. Once that is completed, the storage container in the back (that is currently holding the XGrass materials) will be removed. The final piece of work that will happen out there is that in the Spring the basketball courts will be repainted so that everything looks new together. We do not have an exact date for that work as it is weather dependent – we need three consecutive days of non-freezing temperatures (during both the day and overnight).*

*All in all, the reviews of the playground have been positive. It is nice to see so many students playing on it – before school, after school, on the weekends, and even over vacation. We kept the name of the old playground the same – the Butler Community Playground – because it really is a social spot for Butler families. It is also why we put so many benches out there and ensured that the sight lines were clear; we wanted to make certain that it is a playground that is easy to parent on, allowing kids to run and play in safety and allowing parents the opportunity to sit and talk with each other in comfort. Students yelling “Good bye Mr. McAllister!” from the top of the playground as I get into my car in the evenings is a great reminder of how the old playground used to be. It is nice to have it back, even in its currently not-quite-finished-as-of-yet form.*

PTA Business:

- October/November/Dec Meeting Minutes: Sara Smith
  - All approved
- Budget Review: Ben Castleton
  - Ben handed out budget
  - In the past we have handed out checks to teachers for reimbursement, so we needed to change it so that teachers request reimbursement. Only 7 have requested.
  - Random budget issues: Money provided as startup for International Fair. Box Tops check has come in and is not accounted for.
- Open Event and Standing Committee Positions: Frank
  - Still looking for volunteers to run the Electronics fundraiser.
  - Still looking for co-president elect and a nominating committee volunteer and for book fair coordinator for next year.

Other:

- Laura would like to create a Butler handbook. Please let her know if there are any categories or info that should be included. There will be a section that is relevant to

- all Elementary schools in Belmont.
- Mr. B heard that Mike received 30 emails from parents after the Newtown shooting and he called each parent and had lengthy conversations with them.