

**BUTLER PTA Board Meeting, November 12, 2013**  
**Minutes taken by Claudia Haydon, Recording Secretary**

**Present:**

Laura VanderHart  
Emma Robichaux  
Miriam Lapson  
Mike McAllister  
Claudia Haydon  
Barbara Bulfoni  
Kate Abruzzi

Kelley Kokoros  
Karen Gutterman  
Karen Lilla  
Shonool Malik  
Ilana Finkelstein  
Maria Samson  
Julie Crockett

**Reflections, presented by Shonool.**

"Reflections" is a student art contest that has been in place for three years, running locally from November-January, with a submission deadline of January 8, 2014. Six categories are offered: dance, film, literature, visual arts, photography, and music, with visual arts being the most popular submission genre. This year's theme is "Believe, Dream and Inspire" and the interpretation of this theme is one key criteria for evaluation along with artistic merit, technical execution and creativity. Shonool will coordinate the consolidation of all entries and a group submission to the judges, who will review and return student submissions by January 16, which will then (if applicable) will be forwarded on to state review on January 18. The process for recruiting judges is ongoing. Most will be from last year's pool as they are already familiar with the process. Previous judges have included an MIT professor, local artists and musicians, etc. Suggestions welcome but parents and teachers are ineligible due to potential conflicts of interest. Applications may be submitted online only, with digital work samples. Promotion will be through an email from Mike, newsletter mentions as well as the Butler PTA website.

**Directory Update, presented by Karen Lilla.** This is the fourth year of the Butler Directory. Karen circulated a draft layout of the directory's front and back sections. The Directory's two parts include one with info for the PTA, leadership, room parents, etc. and the second, of students. We cannot list every student due to it being an opt-in inclusion, therefore the Directory is always incomplete. Last year, we had a 50-60% return in the first year of using an online Google form, with an 80% return now enhanced by use of town data. The Town insists on a hard copy, not online (due to data privacy concerns) and, with this yielding approximately 20 printed pages per student, the group discussed costs consideration. Next year we will decide whether or not to continue using Town data given the printed-copy constraints. It was decided that we'd give each family a single copy, reducing the number of printed Directories to 280; also, that the front section with PTA and administrative contact info can be listed online to save paper. Mike shared that the Butler website will soon feature photos of all teachers and their emails. The group agreed that if families misplace their copy, additional copies must be purchased for a nominal fee with proceeds benefiting the PTA. The group committed to paying attention to feedback this year and decide earlier next year

about input from Town data sources. Directories can be copied and bound in-house, promised Mike. This year, 14 families opted out and 33 didn't respond. The group voted to organize the Directory by class over alphabetical order. LABB students (13) are not listed due to privacy concerns. Everyone thanked Karen for her dedication to this project.

**Membership Drive, presented by Laura.** Three more PTA members have recently joined from PayPal, according to Julie Crockett. The full list of members will be updated and posted online.

**Fall Book Fair, presented by Miriam** as Sarah was not present. We succeeded in raising total sales of \$7,432.62, thanks to excellent community turnout. This translates into \$4,087.94 in Scholastic dollars. According to Joanne, there are great plans for the Butler library for use of these funds including new book acquisitions, digital cataloguing, furniture upgrades and modest capital/material costs. Donation of books from families and the PTA totaled 220. We'd love to see this be a greater number, particularly from the PTA. Overall there were fewer books to purchase from the fair this year. The PTA provides vouchers to kids on free/reduced lunches -- 41 were sent home and, of these, 23 were used, which is about average. The goal of these vouchers is to ensure that all students have access. As for membership gift certificates for higher-level PTA donors, 23 went out and 15 used.

**Book Fair Ice Cream Social, presented by Emma.** Ice cream was within budget. The 4th graders were disappointed that they did not get to pick a flavor per previous tradition; however, we'll carry this forward again in spring 2014.

**Fall Clean Up, presented by Emma.** We were delighted to have 10 volunteer families put in hours of hard work. Unfortunately, this year it was windy and many leaves blew back in after the clean-up!

**Conley's Night, presented by Laura.** A success! Kids sold raffle tickets, totaling \$203 and we received \$197 in dinner proceeds from Stephen Conley. Our next Conley's Night will be on Monday, January 13.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Movie Night, presented by Barbara.** Monsters University will be screened on Friday, November 22nd. Volunteers are still needed for sign-up, collecting donations, selling raffle tickets, selling pizza and refreshments.

**Art Show, presented by Karen.** The Art Show will be held earlier this year in order to avoid the inconveniences of last year's February vacation. The submission deadline is November 27. The bulletin boards are falling apart--we may need to invest in new ones. The art show will be held on December 5.

**Ice Skating.** Per Laura, no update.

**In School Enrichment, presented by Karen.** Barbara has stepped in to support this effort for the 2nd grade. All is flowing nicely. If we replicate last year plus add in a Museum of Science trip (2nd grad) and new trips for the 3rd grade but keep grades K, 1 and 4 the same, we should stay within budget and even have about \$800 left over. . MOS, 3rd add, but K,1 and 4 will be under budget. Maria and Karen are looking into grant opportunities. There is a grant opportunity in which if we pay \$1,000 the funder will match 1:1 to pay \$1,000 for an African art performance for our Martin Luther King full-school assembly. This year, we had a full-school MLK assembly for the first time and, per Mike, it was very successful in celebrating diversity as a school community.

**Ways and Means, presented by Maria.** Karen and Maria are seeking grants for in-school enrichment activities.

**After-School Enrichment, presented by Kelley.** Our fall session ends December 6. We still need a monitor coordinator. Kathleen Kim has taken this on but there have been late pickups. The monitor coordinator is responsible to know which children are in which classrooms, and follow up with parents -- particularly around parent late pickups. This has been a persistent problem despite charging \$1/minute after the first 10 minutes. We may revise our policies to say that parents consistently arriving late are prohibited from future registration. Monitor coordinators are not paid; however, they can take a free class.

**Box Tops, presented by Laura.** Our Box Tops initiative brought in \$414 dollars in October. Winning classrooms (in descending order) included Mrs. Pressey, Mrs. Blanchard, and Ms. Filippi. Emily Castleton is moving, so we will need to find another volunteer to help Alita.

**Green Team Update, presented by Ilana.** Ilana made a case for us to create a "green team" at the Butler, similar to other schools in town. This effort would include collecting of plastic bags, bottles, strategies to reduce paper, getting rid of styrofoam lunch trays, etc. Ilana volunteered to be the initial point person. Over time, the Green Team could grow to have its own line item in budget. Ilana went to another meeting in town and others have a "green team alliance" with a formal connection to Sustainable Belmont. This fall's Trex recycling challenge starts Friday, November 15. **There is also another "green" initiative called My Eco Program, where Shaw's will give to Butler 2 cents for every \$5 spend when people shop and use REUSABLE bags. (once they have signed up for My Eco using their smart phone). However, this program has not yet been advertised at Butler since there has been a lot of glitches and even the Shaw's cashiers seem unaware of the program. Once it is running better, Ilana will share it with the Butler community.**

**Principal's Report, presented by Mike.** There will be a new attendance phone line launched on Monday, December 2 to facilitate a prompt response to student absences. If a student doesn't show up to class and there is no message from a parent on this line, the front office will call up to four phone numbers for that student to confirm his/her

whereabouts. Full instructions will be included in this week's Butler newsletter.

**President's Report, presented by Emma and Laura.** Several hundred dollars have been raised in checks and PayPal donations to benefit teacher Mrs. Filippi, whose home was destroyed in a recent fire. The PTA will buy a gift for longtime former office staff Nancy, and the group discussed options of planting a shrub in Nancy's honor on the school grounds. Miriam suggested making some Scholastic Dollars available for Mrs. Filippi, since she likely kept many of her classroom supplies at home and these were lost in the fire. A suggested amount was \$1,000.

**Treasurer's Report, presented by Julie.** This year's budget is solidly on track (the budget was approved at our October PTA Board meeting). Emma shared that a small check from "Beads for Life" is forthcoming. Ilana said that "My Eco" will create some funding through our Shaw's partnership as green team items add up. Julie distributed this year's PTA insurance renewal form as an FYI, asking for input. Apparently, this is the same policy that has been carried over for at least 10 years but the PTA generally just moves it forward without changes. Laura said that she'd bring our policy to the attention of other PTA Boards to compare/contrast coverage and costs. Karen mentioned that the MCC Big Yellow School Bus grant should come directly to the school.

**Announcements/News.** NONE.

**Meeting Minutes, presented by Claudia.** The October minutes were completed shortly after the October meeting and approved by Emma and Laura, however a printed copy wasn't available at today's meeting. An email will circulate to the full Board with both the October and November minutes, prior to the December meeting, so that everyone can read them prior to a vote to approve them in December.

**Bylaws.** No update - Lucia was not present.

The meeting was concluded at 8:30p.