

Chenery PTO Meeting
January 10, 2013
9:00am-10:30am

President Megan Pickette called the PTO meeting to order at 9:05am. Megan welcomed those in attendance, and asked for introductions.

Assistant Principal Heidi Johnson reported on Lower School activities. The 5th grade trip for Ferry Beach will be during the week of June 3; further information will be provided to parents in February after the winter break. On January 22, 25 and 31, the fifth graders will have enrichment activities on simple machines. The 6th grade teams will be attending a performance of "Oliver!" at the Wheelock Theater. Heidi also discussed how the staff and administration are incorporating new standards for ESL students as well as for teacher evaluations. Additionally, the administration and staff are addressing the increased student population in Chenery, which includes planning for future classes that are anticipated to be larger than in prior years.

Assistant Principal Daniel Coplon-Newfield reported on Upper School activities. Report cards for the Upper School students will be going out at the beginning of February. Daniel noted the benefits of using EdLine, not only for report cards but also for viewing all student assignments. With the flu outbreak, as well as maternity/paternity leave, many teachers are needing substitutes this school period. The Upper School Talent Show will be held on January 31 at 6:00pm, and is open to all Upper School students; families may attend. Daniel reported that they have opened the Community Room in the school during lunch for students who may need help connecting with other students; outdoor recess is now an option during 7th grade lunch to alleviate some of the crowding in the cafeteria. Daniel shared an update on enrichment activities, including Arabica (7th grade) and the Museum of Science presentation on heat transfer (7th grade). The Washington DC trip for 8th grade students will be held June 3-7, and roughly 90% of the 8th grade students are attending this year. There will be a parent meeting in March to address the upcoming transition to high school for 8th grade students, and course selection will begin shortly thereafter.

Principal Kristen St. George reiterated the opportunities faced by the administration and staff with regard to the changes in state and federal law related to public education. She also reaffirmed the dedication of the administration to address the growing student population issue. The spring musical ("Once Upon A Mattress") is rapidly approaching, and she encouraged parents to attend the promoted parent meeting to learn more about having students become involved in the production. Kristen answered questions related to the Common Core Standards. She shared that Superintendent Tom Kingston has committed to a third year as interim superintendent for Belmont.

Co-President Nancy Grayson shared a funding rubric that she created for the Chenery PTO to help provide guidelines when considering PTO funding requests that are not included in the budget. The parents in attendance provided feedback and agreed that the rubric would be helpful. Several parents also suggested incorporating a timeline for funding requests, as well as an application process. Kristen agreed that this would be helpful for the teachers and the administration.

Megan provided updates on volunteer opportunities and will be sending out an e-blast via listserv to parents asking for their participation. Opportunities include: serving snacks at Upper School dances, assisting with the 6th grade Star Party (2/28), making copies after school for teachers, assisting with the International Fair (4/25), and participating on the 8th grade fundraising committee.

Enrichment programs are progressing nicely, as reported by the Assistant Principals. There is also a 5th grade Author in Residence program, which is ongoing, and received additional funding from the

Foundation for Belmont Education. The 5th grade Activities Chairs are planning upcoming 5th grade events; 6th grade students have a skate night on January 18.

Rita Carpenter announced that PTO Clubs were a great success last fall, and that the second session of clubs is open for enrollment. The second session will begin on January 24. There will also be a third session of PTO Clubs later in the spring.

Megan shared that 8th Grade Class Night planning has begun, as well as planning for the 8th Grade Reception. 7th grade parents are encouraged to help with the 8th Grade Class Night, as has been the annual tradition.

Megan also reported the current membership numbers, including that between the Membership Drive and the Gift Wrap sales, roughly 50% of the families are participating in giving to the PTO at some level. Nancy noted that 2/3 of the families participating in Gift Wrap sales do not participate in the Membership Drive, and conversely, 3/4 of the families participating in the Membership Drive do not participate in Gift Wrap sales. After some discussion regarding amounts raised by both efforts, the group agreed to keep the Gift Wrap sales another year.

Heidi Sawyer shared that the Teacher Appreciation Week was a great success. The annual Teacher Appreciation Lunch will be held on May 23.

Lucy Yeghyayan-De Lefevre is organizing the International Fair, which will be held on April 25. Volunteers are needed for this event.

Elena Hanley presented the Treasurer's Report. Rita Carpenter motioned to approve the report, which was seconded by Megan Pickette. The motion passed and the report was approved.

Megan presented the minutes from the prior PTO meeting. Lyn Bodmer motioned to approve the minutes; Elena Hanley seconded the motion. The motion passed and the minutes were approved.

Megan Pickette adjourned the meeting at 10:40am.