

CMS PTO Minutes November 3, 2011

Welcome/President Remarks

The meeting was called to order by President Peggy Eysenbach at 9:00am. Peggy and Megan started the meeting with a welcome to the attendees. Peggy took a moment to thank and acknowledge the parent participation that the PTO has had in the early part of this year. This year is off to a great start, with over 17 committees within the PTO! At today meeting we have over 35 parents attending along with the administration staff, Principal Kristen St. George and Upper School Principal Daniel Coplou-Newfield. Lower School Principal Heidi Johnson was attending to the departure of the 6th grade on their field trip to the play "The Phantom Tollbooth".

Special guests at this meeting were the 3 new Belmont Public Schools Curriculum Directors; Colleen Foley, Foreign Languages; Deborah Darlington, Science and Deborah McDevitt, Social Studies. The 3 directors gave an engaging over view of their role at Belmont Public Schools. See attached powerpoint presentation and below for Q&A summary.

Very special guest Ellen Girouard, the young adult librarian at Belmont Public library attended the meeting as well.

Principal Report – Kristen St. George

A big thank you to students, parents and teachers for their patience with the unexpected October flood in the building. New Carpet tiles are coming for the small meeting room, and the cafeteria will need a few new ceiling tiles. Thankfully there was not much damage. We just need a little more patience for the paving to be completed on the roads surrounding Chenery, stated Ms. St. George.

Media literacy curriculum training for the 5th grade teachers had taken place over the past weekend. Great experience and sharing of ideas for the attending teachers. Media literacy teaching is occurring within the teaching of library research skills. This is a pilot program this year and is funded by the Foundation for Belmont Education.

Your Kiddos should be settled by now, if not, please contact the school so they can address any issues that may be occurring.

Assistant Principal, Upper School - Daniel Coplou-Newfield

Grade 8th – National History Day and 1st trip to Washington DC. National History Day will now start in mid-December. This will allow the teachers and students to

become better acquainted with the subject matter and have time to improve research skills needed for the project.

Washington DC trip – still in planning stages. 5 day/4 night Spring time trip. To top off the 8th grade curriculum experience.

Presentation by Curriculum Directors – see attached outline.

The Directors gave a powerpoint presentation outlining their roles as directors in a 5-12 model, with the emphasis on their roles at Chenery. Also each department went over the individual grades (5-8th) curriculum.

Q&A session from the parents:

How do online textbooks and online sources work within the school? Online textbooks can be difficult to use, sometimes just as expensive, glitches with software use. Online sources? we are always searching for useful links for teachers.

Keyboarding Classes? Some research has shown it is almost too late to teach middle scholars age children keyboarding skills, but how to work on speed and proficiency? Use online keyboarding instruction.

The directors mentioned how they work with 8th graders to make transition to high school easier, which brought up the question how to ease transition 4th into 5th? The directors are in favor of their being responsible for one content area for grades 5-12, rather than the previous model of grades k-12. The directors do work with the lead teachers in 4th grades to coordinate between the 4 elementary schools.

Foreign Language and 6th grade, why taught in 4 quarters? Felt that dividing the year into alternating quarters made better sense than having one group for the first 2 semesters and the second group the last 2 semesters. Hopefully there will be better retention for 7th grade.

Committee Reports

Membership - is up this year by 5% with an estimated 500 members. The membership funds are just shy of \$1000 from the goal.

5th Grade Pasta Dinner was extremely well attended with over 345 families participating. The kids and their families enjoyed food and music with the whole class dancing together at the end.

Gift Wrap – delivered today. A little below the goal but so helpful in supplying an income to the PTO. Cookie sales in the Spring.

Upper Enrichment – budget about \$9000. Ball in the House for 7th grade, Science Museum is coming.

Lower School Enrichment – Archaeology Outreach for 6th grade came in October. They did a dig on the grounds and lab work the following week. They will have a program on electricity in December. 5th graders will have their 1st program in January, Simple Machines. In the spring Ben Franklin (5TH) and Mythmasters (6th) will be coming and presenting their programs.

Teacher Appreciation Week – November 28th to December 2nd. Bring in any kind of goodie for teacher's to enjoy at their leisure in their café.

Upper School Dances – what fun! Need a few more volunteers to man the snack table NOT chaperone. Next dance is January 20. Lower school parents are invited to volunteer.

Newsletter – Super job. Great work. Arrive in timely manner.

5th Grade Activities – look for more fun to come!

PTO Clubs – excellence response by teacher and students. 11 clubs this session may have online registration for next session. Fee's double this year, have not been raised in several years, the fees now inline with other schools.

Treasure Report – Right on track with expenses and income. Nothing over budget so far this year.

Secretary Report – minutes approved from September 8th meeting.

NEW DATE for next meeting – January 12th, 7:00pm

Adjourned at 10:30am, right on time.