

CMS PTO Meet, Thursday 4 February, 2016

Welcome by Wendy Conroy to guest speakers Kylie Sparks Youth Librarian) and John Phelan (Superintendent. BPS).

Caitlin Corrieri, 8th grade teacher, kicked off with thanks to families and PTO for treat week offerings to the Chenery staff.

Kylie Sparks from Library spoke about programs and events that the Belmont Public Library has to offer our middle school kids. Examples given included:

Monthly programs like *Homework and Hot Chocolate Club*. 5-30 kids attend.

Monthly *Animee club*, *Just Dance program*. *Movies series* in the summer (free). *Summer reading program*, and events based around the reading theme (Olympics this summer).

Girls Who Code Program (Only 3% of coders in the next 5 years are likely to be female – this program is an initiative to balance the sexes of coders). Another program for this will happen in the Fall. It is for 6-12th graders. *Babysitters training course* – get certificate. PLUS Community service credits for volunteering at the library – check in with the children’s department for upcoming opportunities.

Other Library Offerings:

Electronic resources for students (eg, Muzzies for help with foreign languages).

Tutor.com – live people online to help with homework.

Discounted museum passes.

Parents and kids are welcome to come see Kylie and have one on one talks and get recommendations for books for their kids. Sign up to be on the Teen mailing list to get all the information for upcoming events.

<http://www.belmont.lib.ma.us/teen-center-home>

Pre-John Phelan presentation, a youtube video playing from KSL. Showed the Chenery staff in their full glory at the CMS talent show last week (Glow Trotters/Lunch Ladies (?)) and spoke about how this video shows both how the kids have learnt to be a great audience (they were enthusiastic about each and every performer), and how the staff set a great example of working hard and having fun, by putting on their own performances.

JOHN PHELAN presentation:

JP talked about the Social and emotional learning program that has been going on in Belmont. The social/emotional learning program is going well, and predicted to be a huge success to kids and teachers and shift the culture to open up learning opportunities. Talked about this initiative – the State is following this program and opening it up around the state. Belmont is a little ahead on it. It’s all about learning more than just the academic stuff. Documentary: about these ‘soft skills’ – all about giving the kids confidence. Spoke about the challenges the BPS system has/faces. E.g. Space challenge. You can read more about this presentation online (<http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps>). Enrollment is growing – exceeding building capacity. Gone up Over 400 students over the last 4 years. In ten years since 2010, predicts growth of 1000 kids. Even since October 1 2015 have gained 83 students. International, and national families are moving to Belmont. Task force developed for space issue. Modular classrooms are going to be increased at the high school, chenery should procure 6 modulars, and Burbank may have to. Discussed how the modular’s would work – having kids outside in classes – need to connect up all the electric’s this summer underground – modular’s will go on tennis courts. Town meeting on Monday night this will all be presented for a vote in May for funding.

Task Force had also Explored other options like building onto the existing buildings. The town will have a say on the solution.

Talked through the MSBA Building Process for the New High School Project. 5-6 year process kicking off Monday night at Town meeting.

Parent concerns about the high school plans. Reassured about how great modular's are now – should have no concerns.

BUDGET discussion

District still benefiting from the override money. Been able to hire, keep budgets 'uncut'. Mild winter has even helped as gas bills are down. Getting ready to hire for next year – will advertise in April. Finance committee will be presented with a list from schools of things they need that have accumulated over these past years of frozen budgets. Coming together of all Belmont department heads really helps getting the things you need. Schools also helped by contributions from PTOs etc.

Schools are still trying to be frugal to 'save' for the building of the new high school.

CHENERY UPDATE:

Daniel Coplion-Newfield: Upper School – Middle of the school year – lots of anxieties, etc. Mock trial for 8th graders coming up. 7th grade had MOS experience this morning. Encouraged parents to contact teachers and/or edline if they have any concerns. 7/8th grade dance tomorrow night (Feb. 5). Spoke about Cheetah 'spotting' system. They have tickets with cheetah spots on – they wanted to thank the 95% of students who are doing what the staff expect, vs. focus on the 'less cooperative' kids (about 5%) who do not do what's expected. If they are acknowledged for doing the right thing, encourages them to continue to do it.

Jonathan Hartunian: Lower school; all running smoothly in the classrooms. PTO has been funding some assemblies – speed one recently. 6th grade has a couple of field trips coming up (theatre and challenger). April has 5th grade bingo. Finished the testing for ELL – should finish tomorrow. Lots of kids learning English. Next round of tests in March/May.

Kristin St. George: Talked about the upcoming modular's and wants parents to feel free to come forward with any questions and/or concerns. Families should know they won't be for the 5th graders. Talked about team structures at chenery and how they are working together. An entire team will not go out to the 6 mods - would be too isolating for that team. She will share more with families around the feb. break time. Modulares will not be ready to move into until November '16. Won't get the old computer lab back – it will stay in the library.

Q&As with parents.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Winter session has started and new registration system work well. Please pass on any constructive feedback. 14 clubs, 169 registrations.

Upcoming events: PTO programs march 10, 7pm, health educator coming in to talk with parents about how they can talk to their kids about puberty, decision making, discussing social media, electronic use at home etc.

Treasurer's report: Wendy presented on behalf of Elena. Spoke about where PTO money has been spent.

Secretary's Report – minutes from PTO meeting on 11/19/15 approved.

Meeting Adjourned.