

PTO Meeting Minutes 11/19/2015 @7pm

Co-presidents Wendy Conroy & Jamie Shea welcomed attendees.

7:05 Wendy Conroy called the meeting to order and introduced Health Teacher Monica Frender.

Chenery Health Program

Monica gave an overview of the Chenery Health Program. She started with the 6th grade program and then discussed the 7th and 8th grade programs.

6th grade health is one semester (30 classes) offered twice in a six day cycle. (The students do Tech Ed the semester they are not doing health). Topics in 6th grade include:

- Nutrition
- Body systems –human anatomy and how systems interact, their parts and purpose
- Puberty – physical, social and emotional aspects of puberty

Monica paused for questions – there were none.

7th grade health is one quarter out of the school year (15 classes) offered twice in a six day cycle. (When students are in a quarter without health, they do either tech ed or study hall). Topics focus on social and emotional health and include

- Decision making – peer pressure, communication, assertive skills
- Stress and depression

Monica paused again for questions. One parent asked if there were websites/resources available to help students with time management and prioritization. Monica discussed how she addresses such topics in her class and acknowledged the importance of all teachers and parents helping guide students through this learning process.

8th grade health is one semester (30 classes) offered twice a cycle. The students have a study hall or tech ed class the semester they are not doing health). 8th grade topics look to apply the skills learned in 7th grade and include:

- Substance Abuse prevention – focus on decision making
- Human Sexuality – reproduction, how life is created, good relationships, consent, social networking, refusal skills, link between drugs/alcohol and substance abuse
- Advertising and media safety – how to become educated consumers with ads for beauty, hygiene, alcohol (they do not discuss politics, but these skills could be applied to political ads)

Monica pointed out that they do not delve in depth into these topics due to lack of time and that they are all very important topics that parents should continue to discuss with their children. She is the only health teacher currently at Chenery. Ms. St. George mentioned that the plan is to add another Unified Arts position at Chenery next year and the hope is that this will lead to an increase in health offerings at the school.

General Chenery News provided by Principal. St. George

The district's focus on Social and Emotional learning (SEL) was mentioned. If you increase a child's connections in the classroom, you increase the child's desire to learn. SEL has been happening in classrooms, but now the faculty is formally working together to further develop SEL methods in the classrooms. Jamie Shea mentioned that there will be presentations for all Belmont parents regarding the Social and Emotional Learning initiatives in the schools.

Dates are:

- January 6 (Elementary focus)

- February 3 (Middle School focus)
- February 3 (High School focus)

Lower School - Mr. Hartunian (Lower School VP) gave the following information:

- Report cards are out.
- There is a new 5th grade guidance counselor, **Robyn Vetstein**.
- The 6th graders participated in a program called “Navigating the Cyber World”. There was a follow up program for parents on 11/23 at 6pm.
- The school is still registering new students.
- Ferry Beach for 5th grade students is the week of 5/23 – 5/27.

Upper School – Mr. C-N (Upper School VP) gave the following information:

- End of term reports are on Edline now. They explain the grades that kids have received. He encourages parents and students to look at them together and discuss, so that students will get a sense of ownership over their grades and recognize that they earn them through various work.
- There is afterschool support for upper school students from teachers. He recommends that students use it.
- He talked about ways that parents can engage their children in meaningful conversations about their school experience. Rather than just asking “how was school” which often gets a short answers, ask target questions about specific classes, how students feel they are doing in a class, if the class is engaging, what is interesting about it (the kids learn about the Holocaust, Slavery and Jim Crow laws in 8th grade – these are all topics that bring not only a lot of information but also emotional reactions).
- The upper school is rolling out a positive behavior system in December to point out students’ successes (social, behavioral, academic).
- There are 294 8th graders registered for the Washington, DC trip. That is approximately 90% of students in that year.
- The annual talent show will be in **January** and students are encouraged to attend. The money made at that, goes to help pay scholarships for the DC trip. In addition, some of the staff, including Mr. CN, perform.

Committee News

The head of the FBE Spelling Bee thanked families for participating.

Dec. 8th, the student council will lead a 5th/6th grade karaoke event with help from PTO parent volunteers.

Treasurer’s Report

Elena presented the Treasurer’s Report.

Approval of Minutes

Wendy presented the minutes from the October PTO meeting. They were approved unanimously.

Adjournment – next meeting is scheduled for February 4th, 2016.