

CMS PTO Meeting February 10,2014

Welcome by Co-President Nancy Grayson, followed by quick introductions of all attendees. Approximately a dozen parents/guardians were in attendance.

Safe Routes to School - Kate Bowen spoke on behalf of Safe Routes To School (<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org>), filling in for Heather Ross. Safe Routes to School is a national organization that advocates safe routes to school. Their mission is to provide safe, healthy and community-building ways to transport students to school (i.e. walk or bike). The opportunities to become involved range from grants that help with infrastructure to encouraging walking groups. May 7th is the official Walk to School day. Our local contact is Kate Bowen at sustainablebelmont@gmail.com

ELA and Math Curricula, Overview and Update

Patty Soliozy, Mathematics Education Curriculum Director

Lindsey Rinder, English/Language Arts, Reading Education Curriculum Director

Ms. Soliozy summarized the newly implemented 5th grade Envision math program. 6th grade has a new scheduling program this year. Organized by teams, the twelve 6th grade core teachers are grouped into three teams with each teacher in a team assigned a core subject. In previous years, teachers taught on a dual team and divided the four core subject areas. This new organizational system has allowed for smaller class sizes and a focused teaching approach. There are new books for 7th grade. There will be continued pacing options for math students at Chenery with options available in 7th grade.

Ms. Rinder spoke briefly on PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers). PARCC will be replacing MCAS assessment tests within the next few years; see <http://www.parcconline.org> for additional information. Chenery will host a field test for PARCC, with a small group of students taking part this year.

Ms. Rinder thanked the PTO for supplying additional literary texts for the 5th grade. The entire 5th grade can now learn at an appropriate skill level across the grade level at the same time, as opposed to having to share books and affecting one class reading a more complicated text without prior background knowledge of an earlier text. Students in all grades are continuing their work on analyzing author word choice and themes. The 6th grade will pilot a program of "Facing the Lion". Parents who are interested in sharing their perspective on the book and their children's feelings on the novel should contact Ms. Rinder.

A parent question and answer period followed the presentations.

Feel free to contact the Curriculum Directors at :

Lindsey Rinder lrinder@belmont.k12.ma.us
Patty Soliozy psoliozy@belmont.k12.ma.us

School Principal Report, Kristen St. George

The Talent Show was a great success, and is the official fundraiser for the 8th grade DC trip. Thank you to our staff and students who made it possible. Restructuring of team teaching is going well in 6th grade. Parents, please be mindful of MCAS dates and scheduling of appointments for your children. A small group of 7th and 8th graders will field test the PARCC test. The School District's budget is coming up for review. With our many budget issues (mainly due to the increase in enrollment), please remember that all of our staffing cuts from 5 years ago have not been reinstated. The upcoming 4th grade is at 350 students, which is about 60 students over what the building was designed to handle for a class.

Lower School Assistant Principal report, Chris Fleming

5th grade had an Author workshop as part of PTO curriculum enrichment, and science classes have been exploring Simple Machines for PTO enrichment as well. The annual Ferry Beach trip is in its planning stages. This ritual 5th grade trip will be held the week of May 19th. The 6th grade had a field trip to the Christie McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center in early February.

Upper School Assistant Principal report, Daniel Coplon-Newfield

Two Museum of Science programs came to school and enriched the upper school. Thanks PTO for all your help in supporting these programs financially. Parents, please confirm your Edline accounts and receive your student's current Progress Report. Scheduling for next year will begin approximately the first week of March for our 7th and 8th graders. The 8th grade DC trip will host 292 students and 24 staff at our Nation's capital during the first week of June. The lunchtime recycling program has helped reduced the trash by a third, thanks to the PTO Green Team.

Committee Chair Updates

PTO Clubs

The teachers hosted ten clubs for the winter season, and eight are filled to capacity. Online payment with PayPal has been a success. There will be a shorter spring season for clubs with a duration of 6 weeks.

Directory - Chenery Family Directories were distributed when the students returned to school after December break. As previously mentioned, the district adopted a new process this year that provided the Belmont School PTAs/PTOs with electronic family data for each school directory. Families were permitted to opt out of having their electronic information provided when they updated their information with the school district at the beginning of the year. If you have not yet received your directory, please contact your child's homeroom teacher for your copy, or visit the main office at Chenery to pick up one of the extra copies. Many thanks to Lorraine Kermond for the countless hours spent developing our school directory. We are also grateful for the many local businesses that bought

ads to help cover the cost of printing the directories, which are free to all.

Green team - Green Team activities continue to expand under the amazing leadership of Amanda Mujica. From recycling plastic cups, tin cans and water bottles during lunchtime, to launching the MyEco program that reduces the usage of single-use bags, the Chenery community is making a difference by helping to reduce our impact on the planet.

Buy and use your Eco Bag. Every time you use your re-useable bag, money is donated to the school of your choice. Please contact Amanda (Amanda@amandamujicadesign.com) for more information or visit the website: <http://www.getmyeco.com/home/displayHome.action>.

Teacher treat week - Teacher Treat Week was a tremendous success, and the faculty and staff greatly appreciated the wonderful assortment of treats that were provided by Chenery families. Thank you to Heidi Sawyer and Melina Jacovides for organizing Teacher Treat Week, and for making an extra effort to show our gratitude to our incredible teachers and staff.

8th grade Science Fair – 8th graders will present to 5th graders. All presenting 8th graders will receive extra credit from their teachers. Look for an upcoming date announcement.

Volunteer photocopying – The PTO would appreciate any volunteers to help with this effort. Please contact Megan Pickette with any questions. (mfpickette@msn.com)

Annual 6th Grade Star Party Tuesday, February 11th 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the Chenery gymnasium - Please note that this is a Tuesday evening, not a Thursday, which is usually used for Chenery events. This annual event is a must do activity for current 6th graders and their parents. Please note, this is not a drop-off activity and due to space limitations, siblings are not permitted.

Chenery International Fair - Thursday, March 6th, 6:00pm-8:00pm in the Chenery Cafeteria – almost 20 countries will be represented! Live music and student performers. The theme this year is etiquette and tradition from around the world. Come and celebrate the many different cultures represented in our Chenery community at the 2014 International Fair! The Fair is open to all families in the Chenery community and is free to all who attend.

5th & 6th Grade Socials – both the 5th and 6th grades will be having an ice cream social and bingo afternoon. Look for details in the upcoming month.

Treasurer's report – The report from September 1, 2013 to February 1, 2014 was approved.

Secretary's Report - Minutes were approved from the November 21st, 2013 meeting.

Adjournment at 8:50pm.