

## **Nelson Place School PTO Meeting Minutes**

September 20, 2010

President Debora Connor opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

### Mr. Kelley's Report

- Nelson Place has improved MCAS scores. We are now among the ten level 1 schools in the city. Eight students had perfect scores in math.
- Students who scored proficient or above on the MCAS will be treated to a pancake breakfast at school along with their parents. 135 kids will participate. Mr. Kelley asked that the PTO fund the pancake breakfast.
- There are some parking issues at Nelson Place. It tends to be very congested in the morning and afternoon. It would be best if people didn't park too close to where the busses enter and exit the parking lot.
- To contact Mr. Kelley, either call the school or email him at [kelleym@worc.k12.ma.us](mailto:kelleym@worc.k12.ma.us). If dissatisfied with his response, contact the quadrant manager, Dr. Delores Gribouski at 508-799-3221 or [GribouskiD@worc.k12.ma.us](mailto:GribouskiD@worc.k12.ma.us).
- Staff introductions were made.

Treasurer's Report – Barry McGrath had not yet arrived, so Debora Connor spoke on his behalf

- Motion to accept treasurer's report was approved.

### PTO Newsletter - Debbie Jerszyk

- The PTO Newsletter is sent home in backpacks every month, usually around the 1st of the month.
- The first newsletter of the 2010/2011 school year will go out in October.
- To submit information for the newsletter, contact Debbie Jerszyk at [debra.jerszyk@sepracor.com](mailto:debra.jerszyk@sepracor.com).

### Enrichment Committee – Gretchen Switzer

- Committee consists of teachers and parents who bring cultural programs to the school to enrich the curriculum.
- Upcoming events include Gary the Clown who will come between May 25 and June 9 as a reward for MCAS.
- If you have ideas for programs, contact Gretchen at [switzers4@verizon.net](mailto:switzers4@verizon.net).
- Programs take place during the school day. Sometimes they are for younger children and sometimes they are for older children. Every effort is made to plan an equal number of programs for each age group.

### Operation Turkey – Gretchen Switzer

- Collect canned goods and cash donations before Thanksgiving to make it possible for families in our school who might otherwise not have a Thanksgiving dinner to have one.
- Recipients are anonymous.

### Family Nights – Meg Mulhern

- Once a month, something fun is scheduled for kids and families.
- Pumpkin Night will be held on October 22 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. – pumpkin painting, a DJ, hot dogs, raffle baskets and more! 500 people came last year, so volunteers are needed

for set-up and clean-up and to help out during the event. You will be schedule for a 1/2 shift, so you will still have plenty of time to enjoy Pumpkin Night with your family.

- Coming up:
  - Sharks night
  - Greece at Hanover Theater on February 19 at 2 pm. Tickets will be subsidized. Exact cost has yet to be determined, but it will be under \$20 per ticket. Seats are in the first balcony section.
  - Ice Cream Social in February. Friendly's will donate the ice cream and the Worcester Fire Department will have fire trucks on hand for the children to investigate.
  - Tornadoes game in June. Children from Nelson Place will be invited to go out on the field to sing the national anthem.
  - Considering a Bruce Jakes night as a parent social. It's been done in the past and it's 3 1/2 hours of entertainment and fun.
- A new committee chair is needed for next year. Meg and Lisa will no longer have children at Nelson Place, so ideally, someone could join the committee this year to learn the ropes, then take over as chair next year.

#### Fundraising – Deb Steigman & Kristy Lewandowski

- Fall fundraising programs include:
  - Entertainment Books (\$12.50 for each book sold goes directly to the school! It's not too late to order more.) If you don't care to purchase or sell a book, please return the one that was sent home with your child.
  - Yankee Candle to begin the first 2 weeks in October. Orders will be delivered before Thanksgiving. This year we will make a nice profit because we have partnered with Flagg Street and Norback schools for this fundraiser.
- Other fundraisers include:
  - Papa Gino's night
  - 99 Restaurant night
- If fundraising is not your thing, donations of cash or a check made out to Nelson Place PTO are always welcome.
- If you shop at the Big Y or Price Chopper, stop by the service desk or go online and choose Nelson Place as the recipient of the points earned by your rewards card.
- This is a great committee to join. You will only be asked to work a couple of days each month.
- In the spring, a special fundraiser will take place to raise money for art supplies.

#### Hospitality – Deb Steigman & Tara Prentiss

- This committee organizes events such as:
  - Teacher Appreciation Week, including a brunch (April)
  - Community Reading Day
- It's a fun and easy committee. Sign up and you'll be informed about what is needed in terms of help.

#### Books & Beyond – Jill Andros & Karen Naylor

- A reading program for grades K – 3.
- Great volunteering opportunity. Very easy and not time-consuming. It takes about 10 minutes once a month.
- Volunteers needed to tally student's reading submission paperwork and distribute prizes once a month. Those who volunteer must find time to go into the classroom to distribute prizes and turn the children's Books & Beyond forms in for the raffle during the first week of each month.

- A new co-chair is needed for next year.

#### TRIPP – Jill Andros & Lea Carnes

- A reading program for grades 4 - 6.
- Great volunteering opportunity. Very easy and not time-consuming. It takes about 10 minutes once a month.
- Volunteers needed to tally student's reading submission paperwork and distribute prizes once a month. Those who volunteer must find time to go into the classroom to distribute prizes and turn the children's TRIPP forms in for the raffle during the first week of each month.
- Volunteers are needed for the TRIPP carnival in June.

#### Ice Cream – Chair Eileen Gallagher was not present. Overview was provided by Debora Connor.

- Ice cream is sold after lunch each Friday for 75 cents and the children always look forward to it.
- Contact Eileen Gallagher to sign up to hand out ice cream one Friday each month.

#### Spree Day - Chair Eileen Gallagher was not present. Overview was provided by Debora Connor.

- Spree Day is an event for students, (takes place in June).
- Activities include face painting, various bouncy equipment, hot dogs, cotton candy and a dunk tank.
- Volunteers are needed for set-up, clean up and to man stations during the event.

#### Library – Peggi Harris & Karen Naylor

- The library is run by volunteers.
- Each teacher has a weekly library time scheduled and volunteers are needed. Come in once a week or once every other week. 2 volunteers are needed for each class.
- Volunteers are especially needed for Kindergarten classes.
- Younger siblings are welcome to come with their parents who volunteer.

#### Box Tops – Maureen Economou was not present. Overview was provided by Debora Connor.

- Please cut out Box Tops and send them in with your child.
- There is a collection box in the library.
- Box tops are collected year-round.
- Reminder flyers will be sent home in backpacks.

#### Scholastic Book Fair – Amy Hurley

- The book fair will take place March 7 - 9, 2011. Children can shop for books during their classroom visit, or come with their families to shop one evening.
- Volunteers are needed to help children choose books, run the cash register, set-up and clean-up. Set-up will take place on Friday, March 4.
- Each teacher has a wish list for their classroom library, so book fair provides an opportunity to purchase books for the teachers to use in class.

#### PTO Website - <http://www.nelsonplacepto.org> - Sarah Kyriazis

- A new website will be launched in mid-October.

- The new website will have the functionality to allow committee chairs to log in and update their own committee's pages. Those chairs who don't wish to update the pages themselves can email updates to [sarah@newmarketmedia.biz](mailto:sarah@newmarketmedia.biz).
- Teachers who need help with updating their pages on the WPS (Worcester Public Schools) website can contact Sarah. The Nelson Place PTO website will have direct links to the teacher pages on the WPS website.
- The website is sponsored by local businesses. The sponsorship cost is \$100 per year, and it enables us to maintain the website and pay for hosting. Contact Beth Proko at [bproko@charter.net](mailto:bproko@charter.net) to learn more about sponsorship opportunities.
- There was some discussion of setting up a Facebook page for Nelson Place PTO, where upcoming events could be posted, but comments or photos would not be allowed. Mr. Kelley will run the idea by WPS. They may or may not go for it.

Landscaping – a chair is needed. Debora Connor spoke about the committee.

- Committee chair is needed to organize students and parents alike for Fall and Spring clean-up, including grounds keeping, planting flowers, etc.

Holiday Store – Dave Francis

- Low-cost gift items are available for sale at school, so children can buy holiday presents.
- This year's Holiday Store will take place during the week of December 5.
- Volunteers are needed for set-up, clean up and manning the store while students shop.
- \$500 of the proceeds from the Holiday Store are donated to a less fortunate school in Worcester.

School Sign – Karen Naylor was not present. Debora Connor spoke about the committee.

- Karen Naylor maintains and updates the sign to list upcoming events and school closings.

CPPAC (Citywide Parent Planning Advisory Council) – Deb Steigman

- Meets first Tuesday of each month at the downtown library at Salem Square at 7 pm. It's open to the public and all are encouraged to attend.
- The purpose is to open the lines of communication between school administrators, school committee members and parents.
- At Nelson Place, we are fortunate, because we have lots of involved parents, but other schools in the city don't have such great participation.
- This is a forum to share best-practices.
- Participation in this group sends a message that parents care and want high-quality education in our public schools.
- As a result of CPPAC, the math curriculum in the WPS system has been changed for the better.

New Business

- Miss. Quitadamo spoke about the Hole in the Wall Gang, a charity established by Paul Newman in 1988 that offers children who are seriously ill the opportunity to go to summer camp. Last year, her class produced a poetry collection which they sold in order to raise money for the Hole in the Wall Gang. They raised \$2,400 and this summer a delegation of students, parents and Miss. Quitadamo visited the Hole in the Wall Camp and presented a check. Since the delivery of the check, another \$380 has been raised.
  - Miss Quitadamo was contacted by the media specialist at Hole in the Wall Gang. They want to "shine a light on the Nelson Place family", and write an article about the children who have raised money for children.

- Supporting the Hole in the Wall Gang represents such a great example for our kids about how we should live in this world. As such, Miss Quitadamo wants to embrace the whole school and invite all to participate in future efforts to support Hole in the Wall Gang.
- Motion to adopt Hole in the Wall Gang as a cause worth supporting was accepted.
- There are still a few poetry books left for \$10 each. All proceeds will go directly to Hole in the Wall Gang.
- The next endeavor to support Hole in the Wall Gang will be a collection of art supplies to support their hospital outreach program at UMass Memorial, where camp specialists visit the bedsides of seriously ill children weekly.
- Motion to support Mr. Kelley's request for funding of the MCAS pancake breakfast was approved.
- Election of 2010/2011 PTO officers took place. Because only one person was nominated for each position, ballots were not cast. Instead, nominations were approved in the public forum.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Landry  
PTO Secretary

To sign up for any of the committees mentioned above, contact the committee chairs:

Library - Peggi Harris - [chaz@charter.net](mailto:chaz@charter.net) and Karen Naylor - [karennaylor@hotmail.com](mailto:karennaylor@hotmail.com)  
 Enrichment - Gretchen Switzer - [switzers4@verizon.net](mailto:switzers4@verizon.net)  
 Fundraising - Kristy Lewandowski - [klewandowski9@msn.com](mailto:klewandowski9@msn.com) and Deb Steigman - [dsteigo@verizon.net](mailto:dsteigo@verizon.net)  
 Books & Beyond - Jill Andros - [bobandjill@androsfamily.com](mailto:bobandjill@androsfamily.com) and Karen Naylor - [karennaylor@hotmail.com](mailto:karennaylor@hotmail.com)  
 TRIPP - Jill Andros - [bobandjill@androsfamily.com](mailto:bobandjill@androsfamily.com) and Lea Carnes - [lcarnes9665@charter.net](mailto:lcarnes9665@charter.net)  
 Family Nights - Lisa Lussier [mlussier1@aol.com](mailto:mlussier1@aol.com) and Meg Mulhern - [mmulhern@intlceramics.com](mailto:mmulhern@intlceramics.com)  
 Hospitality - Deb Steigman - [dsteigo@verizon.net](mailto:dsteigo@verizon.net) and Tara Prentiss - [tprentiss@charter.net](mailto:tprentiss@charter.net)  
 Ice Cream - Eileen Gallagher - [MILESIA38@aol.com](mailto:MILESIA38@aol.com)  
 Box Tops - Maureen Economou - [tonyamaureen@verizon.net](mailto:tonyamaureen@verizon.net)  
 Spree Day - Eileen Gallagher - [MILESIA38@aol.com](mailto:MILESIA38@aol.com) and Anita Pratt - [pratta76@verizon.com](mailto:pratta76@verizon.com)  
 Scholastic Book Fair - Amy Hurley - [ahurley@assumption.edu](mailto:ahurley@assumption.edu)  
 Operation Turkey - Gretchen Switzer - [switzers4@verizon.net](mailto:switzers4@verizon.net)  
 Holiday Store - Dave Francis - [justdave3@hotmail.com](mailto:justdave3@hotmail.com)