

**Wellesley Middle School PTO  
Executive Committee Pre-Meeting  
Followed by  
Meeting with Principal Ito  
Monday, September 11, 2017**

**Attendees**

Chris Norcross, Co-President	
Barbara Hirsch, Co-Vice President	Brenda Nicolazzo, Co-Vice President
Helen Hwang, Treasurer	Shelley McHale, Assistant Treasurer
Susan McCormack, Secretary	

**Pre-Meeting**

**Agenda**

- 1) School Council Elections
- 2) Financial Update
- 3) WEF Spelling Bee
- 4) PTO Facebook Page

Ms. Norcross called the Pre-Meeting to order at 9:30a.m.

1) School Council Elections

Ms. McHale will lead this effort. A call for nominees was placed in the most recent Weekly PTO Blast email. Ms. Norcross pointed out that a form exists for those interested in School Council positions in the WMSPTOHelp Google Drive. Ms. McHale will send the form out to those who contact her expressing interest and will compile the relevant information into a consolidated ballot. The ballot will be sent home with students prior to Back-to-School night for voting at that event.

2) Financial Update

Ms. Hwang and Ms. McHale provided a summary of PTO dues collections to date which revealed:

- a) Approximate dues paid to date = \$41,000. This is about 2/3 of the yearly goal based on the WMS PTO's planned budget for 2017/18.
- b) The PTO is focusing on participation this year with a goal of increasing the community's commitment to the PTO and the good works it does. Thus far, the participation rate is just under 30% of families.
- c) There was just over \$5,500 left over from last year's 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Events Committee activities. This money will be presented to Principal Ito to help defray the costs of the planned cafeteria mural artwork.

3) WEF Spelling Bee

The WMS PTO sponsors two teams at the annual WEF Spelling Bee: a student team and a faculty team. The cost for each team is \$500. The WMS PTO has budgeted \$1,000 for this expense. **The Co-Presidents will work with the Treasurers to ensure these teams are sponsored for this November event.**

4) PTO Facebook Page

Ms. Hirsch is administering the PTO's Facebook page and reported that traffic was stronger at the beginning of the school year but has diminished recently. She asks that the members of the PTO continue to promote the Facebook page as a rich source of school information. **Ms. Nicolazzo will include a designated section in the upcoming Weekly Blast email advertising the Facebook page, including a hyperlink to it.**

### **Meeting with Principal Ito**

At this point (10:00am), Ms. Norcross adjourned the Pre-Meeting and the members of the Executive Committee joined Principal Ito in his office.

#### **Agenda**

- 1) Financial Update
- 2) Brainstorm PTO Guest Speakers
- 3) Back-to-School Night
- 4) Weekly Blast Emails
- 5) October 19 PTO Meeting
- 6) Other

Ms. Norcross and Principal Ito called the meeting to order at 10:05a.m.

1) Financial Update

Ms. Norcross presented a check to Principal Ito representing leftover funds from last year's 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Events Committee. The funds will be used for the planned cafeteria mural art.

Ms. McHale updated Principal Ito on the status of the WMS PTO budget thus far for 2017/18. Dues payments are well ahead of last year's mark. The PTO attributes this to the flyer that was physically mailed to all parents at the start of the school year. (Note: Last year, the PTO relied solely on electronic communication for PTO dues requests.) Cost of the mailing was \$580. Dues payments to date are just over \$40,000 vs. approximately \$12,000 last year at this time.

Ms. McHale noted that there are leftover funds from last year's PTO efforts that were rolled over into this year's budget and were planned to be used as a cushion for this year's

fundraising. The Committee asked Principal Ito to consider potential uses for this extra money should it not be needed for this year's budgeted expenses. Initial ideas raised by Committee members included defraying the cost of student field trips, paying for additional speakers to address the WMS community at large, improvements to the middle school building and grounds (example = the round tables that were purchased in the past for the cafeteria), and staff professional development. **This discussion was tabled at this time and will be revisited at a future meeting.**

2) Brainstorm PTO Guest Speakers

WMS PTO has traditionally held at least one speaker event for the community on a topic pertinent to families of middle schoolers. The Committee asked Principal Ito for any suggestions for speakers and/or topics. Principal Ito noted that a subcommittee of the School Committee that has been working on drug and alcohol issues has indicated interest in assistance to hold such an event. This topic is particularly significant at this time as Massachusetts approaches the state-wide legalization of marijuana. **Ms. Norcross will coordinate with the School Committee about this idea.**

3) Back-to-School Night

Back-to-School Night will be held on September 28, from 6:30-9p.m. at WMS. Executive Committee members are asked to arrive by 6p.m. to help set up. The PTO will:

- a) Ensure that ballot boxes are placed at the entryways for School Committee voting
- b) Set up and staff a table in the cafeteria for PTO information at the end of the evening
- c) Set up and staff a table in the cafeteria for Spirit Wear sales at the end of the evening
- d) Produce a short (one-minute) video promoting the WMS PTO for inclusion in the overall video presentation to parents that evening. **Ms. Norcross will work with members of the Executive Committee to produce this video, which is due to Principal Ito by the end of the school day on Friday, September 15.**

4) Weekly Blast Emails

Ms. Nicolazzo noted that there continue to be parents of middle school students who do not receive the PTO's Weekly Blast Emails. She will write an email explaining the necessity of signing up on the MySchoolAnywhere system that will be sent from President Ito's office to his Parent Portal email group. The Executive Committee hopes that this will help the PTO reach as many families as possible.

5) October 19 PTO Meeting

The Executive Committee is planning an open WMS PTO meeting on Thursday, October 19, at 9a.m. in the WMS cafeteria. The primary topics will be presentations by the WMS Guidance and Technology Departments. **Ms. Norcross has plans to meet with the appropriate WMS personnel in the coming week to help plan this event.**

6) Other

Ms. Norcross presented Principal Ito with notes that Lisa Collins (PTO Co-President) took at the most recent Central Council meeting. These notes are attached hereto.

Ms. Norcross and Principal Ito adjourned the meeting at 11 a.m.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will take place on Monday, October 16, at 9:30a.m. in the faculty dining room at WMS.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan McCormack

## Central Council – Wednesday 9/6/17 @ Fiske School

### From the Treasurer, Beth Cook

- PTO dues to Central Council due by end of October - \$100 per school
- Review and confirm WMS PTO has the appropriate levels of insurance. If there are questions, please contact Beth Cook to discuss
- 2017/18 PTO budgets to be shared in a consolidated review of all schools providing budget ranges per item.
- As part of the fundraising review, in a few months, please share annual appeal letters and communication strategies that worked (or did not) to gather best practices to share
- Fee Taskforce is reviewing the actual family spend for school activities. This includes the PTO dues and any other fundraising. Will be collecting this info throughout the year
- PTO Presidents should be reviewing the reconciled bank statements each month. Specifically reviewing:
  - Expenses incurred by the Treasurer as part of the checks & balances
  - Ensuring financial processes are in accordance with the PTO by-laws

### From the Secretary, Jennifer Maddon

- Please send Jennifer the names and contact WMS presidents, VPs and Treasurer

### Superintendent Report, David Lussier

- New floor in the WMS cafeteria to better absorb noise has been installed
- Security project is ahead of schedule and will be completed at all schools in the next 8-10 weeks
- Priorities of the Administration for the coming year include:
  - Social/Emotional Learning to focus on relationship building, , problem solving and decision-making
  - Tiered Support for Students including advanced learners as well as being able to provide support in specific areas of need
  - 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills focused on critical thinking, collaboration and multi-disciplinary leaning and thinking
    - PISA test update: International test that Wellesley participated in for 15 year olds. Results were very strong (2<sup>nd</sup> overall), but did provide good insight into areas for development
    - Understanding the profile of the WHS graduate as a driver for developing curriculum to meet the needs of our future graduates
  - Cultural Proficiency and Inclusiveness: How we think, act and talk around issues of diversity
    - Working on a formal assessment (funded by WEF grant) to get a baseline of where we are. Report will come out in Jan and from there an action plan will be developed.
- Facilities: Hardy, Hunnewell, Upham (HHU)
  - The State requested a review of the project to determine if they would become an MSBA partner, as they did with the High School project and funding 30% of the project. The review was last week and an answer will come around November. Until then, the

project work is on hold. There is work being done around figuring out the swing spaces (where students in each school will go during the construction).

- Parent Portal and Contact Information
  - 97.16% of WMS families have updated their student information. A data download of all the families will be provided by the Technology department to the PTOs the week of Sept 18
  - Pitfalls: For some schools – they did not have complete lists to share early events and communicate with all families at their school. Fundraising fell short as well

**School Committee Report: projects include:**

- HHU
- Admissions policy
- FY19 WPS Budget
- Phase 2 of Track & Field project