

**Wellesley Middle School PTO
Public Meeting
Followed by
Executive Committee Pre-Meeting
Followed by
Meeting with Principal Ito
Monday, November 13, 2017**

Public Meeting

Attendees from the WMS PTO Executive Committee

Chris Norcross, Co-President	Lisa Collins, Co-President
Barbara Hirsch, Co-Vice President	Brenda Nicolazzo, Co-Vice President
Helen Hwang, Treasurer	Susan McCormack, Secretary

Invited Guests

Principal Mark Ito	Vice Principal Cathi Gordon
Tony Bent, School Committee Rep	Melissa Martin, School Committee Rep
Kate Mahoney, Guidance Dept. Head	

In addition, the meeting was attended by over 30 members of the WMS community.

Principal Ito welcomed everyone to the meeting and discussed the following:

1. Report Cards
 - a. Term 1 report cards have been sent home with all students
 - b. Parents are encouraged to review these documents with their children in an encouraging manner
 - c. Teachers and guidance counselors are available if anyone has questions
2. MCAS
 - a. Results of last year's MCAS testing have been mailed out
 - b. This was a new test format and a more rigorous test
 - c. More students scored this year in the "Partially Needs Improvement" category
 - i. WMS continued to outrank the state average
 - ii. Anyone having concerns about results should contact a teacher, guidance counselor or school administrator
 - d. Starting this year, all MCAS testing will be performed on computers, including written portions
3. Turkey Promenade
 - a. Will take place on Wednesday, November 22
 - b. Students are asked to bring donations to benefit Voices Against Violence and the Wellesley Food Pantry
 - c. NOTE: Additional 6th grade parents are needed to help sort donations. Please consider helping out at this event**

- d. Principal Ito will email a list of items requested by homeroom
 - i. Note, however, that any and all donations are appreciated

Lisa Collins conducted a brief PTO meeting to discuss business-at-hand

1. The Book Fair will begin on Monday, November 20, at 9am in the WMS library
 - a. The PTO will send out a reminder email this week
2. Principal Ito has asked the PTO to increase its budget to pay for a speaker in the spring of 2018
 - a. Speaker will be Katie Greer, a social media expert
 - b. She will speak to 6th and 7th grade classes during the day as well as parents in the evening
 - c. Her fee is \$2,000 above the line item in the 2017/18 PTO budget for speakers (which currently stands at \$2,000)
 - d. Ms. Collins put the issue of a budget increase to a vote of those present

MOTION PASSED: To increase the PTO's budget for speakers for the 2017/18 school year by \$2,000 to fund Katie Greer's presentations.

3. Three modest fundraisers to expect over the next three months:
 - a. Amazon Smile will be encouraged for those shopping on Amazon during the holiday season
 - b. The annual Tech Recycling effort will begin in January
 - c. A CPK day is planned for February

Tony Bent and Melissa Martin from the School Committee took the floor

- Wellesley's School Committee is very active (more than many other towns) and works very hard
- Three main responsibilities of every School Committee in the state
 - School Superintendent (hiring, firing, supporting)
 - Development of Policy
 - Development of BudgetHowever, Wellesley's School Committee touches on many other issues, primarily due to robust community involvement
- Items on the current agenda regarding WMS are as follows:
 - Heating system
 - Certain parts are beyond their useful life
 - Stopgap measures are taking place currently
 - The School Committee hopes for a funding vote at Town Meeting in the spring for replacement parts
 - Parking lot repaving
- Some of the School District's over-arching goals currently:
 - Social / emotional programs
 - "21st Century Learning"

- School security upgrades – note that these are ahead of schedule
- A Fees Committee is reviewing the burden of fees on parents
 - Very difficult to reduce fees
 - Reviewing the issue of the fairness of fees charged
- Question from audience: Has the Committee considered having active shooter drills for students?
 - Response:
 - The Committee cannot make this decision – can only recommend that schools have appropriate security measures in place
 - However, the District is working with the Wellesley Police Department on protocols for various types of drills and considering when/how/where to best phase them in
- **Many ways to communicate with the School Committee – see the town’s web site for more details – participation is welcomed**
 - Email
 - Monthly office hours
 - At the end of each School Committee meeting, time is allotted for “Community Speak”

Kate Mahoney took for floor for a brief presentation on the WMS Guidance Department

- Ms. Mahoney reviewed the Department’s web site with the group
- A WEF grant was used to purchase a lending library
 - Parents can borrow books on a variety of subjects as described on the web site
 - Contact anyone in Guidance to request a book
- For students facing course selections, there is a Course Selection tab on the site
- In 6th grade, all SEED curriculum is taught by the Guidance Department
- Ms. Mahoney welcomed parents to call the counselors to discuss any topics of interest

Cathi Gordon welcomed parents to the meeting

- stressed that her door is always open
- encouraged parents to call or email her at any time

At this time, the Public Meeting was called to an end by Ms. Collins and the PTO Executive Committee Pre-Meeting began.

Executive Committee Pre-Meeting

Attendees

Chris Norcross, Co-President	Lisa Collins, Co-President
Barbara Hirsch, Co-Vice President	Brenda Nicolazzo, Co-Vice President
Helen Hwang, Treasurer	Susan McCormack, Secretary
Maura McDade, VP-in-training	

Agenda

- 1) Maura McDada
- 2) Review of Public Meeting
- 3) Creative Arts Budget
- 4) Screenagers film

Ms. Norcross and Ms. Collins called the Pre-Meeting to order at 9:45a.m.

1) Maura McDade

Ms. McDade has volunteered to train under the current Co-Vice Presidents this year and take over the role of Vice President next year. The Executive Committee welcomed Ms. McDade.

2) Review of Public Meeting

The Executive Committee was pleased with the turn-out for the public meeting. The timing for the next public meeting will be altered slightly as follows:

- 8:30 – 8:45am – arrivals and coffee
- 8:45 – 9:45am – presentations

3) Creative Arts

The Creative Arts Committee has funded several activities already in the 2017/18 school year. The Committee has just over \$9,000 left in its budget and expects to meet all future funding needs with this amount.

4) Screenagers

Sunday, April 8, 2018, was chosen as the date for the showing of Screenagers. The Committee is hopeful that an early April date will avoid as many sports conflicts as possible. The time will be 4-6pm. Ms. Collins will book this event, which will cost \$400.

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

Meeting with Principal Ito

Agenda

- 1) Security / Safety Update
- 2) ChallengeSuccess
- 3) Vision and Hearing Screenings
- 4) Other

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

1) Security / Safety Update

Gates have been ordered which will block access to the hallways in the evenings and weekends when certain areas of the school (e.g., the gyms, the auditorium) are in use.

Principal Ito stressed that parents need to be particularly cautious driving around the school in the winter. He noted that the posting of a school representative at the Donizetti Street entrance in the morning has greatly improved traffic conditions in that area at that time.

2) ChallengeSuccess

Principal Ito informed the Executive Committee that WMS will be joining the ChallengeSuccess program next year. A discussion ensued.

- Teacher training is planned for next fall
 - Could next year's PTO budget include funding for teacher housing and transportation while in CA for training? **This item will be added to future budget discussions.**
- **The Executive Committee will consider how the PTO might help prepare this year's 8th grade parents for ChallengeSuccess, which is currently in use at the high school**

3) Vision and Hearing Screenings

Ms. Nicolazzo noted that the nurses still need volunteers to help with these screenings.

Anyone able to help is encouraged to contact the WMS nurses' office.

5) Other

Potential speakers for future WMS PTO Public Meetings were discussed

- David Lussier
- Kate Mahoney and/or WMS academic department heads – to speak on homework strategies
- Someone from WHS to speak on ChallengeSuccess

The Executive Committee will check again to ensure that all emails from PowerSchool and MySchoolAnywhere have been merged. Principal Ito may need to send another email to parents reminding them to add their contact info to our lists.

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

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will take place on Monday, December 11, at 9:30a.m. in the faculty dining room at WMS.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan McCormack