

**Wellesley Middle School PTO  
Public Meeting  
Followed by  
Executive Committee Pre-Meeting  
Followed by  
Meeting with Principal Ito  
Monday, January 8, 2018**

**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**

Superintendent David Lussier	Principal Mark Ito
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In addition, the meeting was attended by approximately 30 members of the WMS community.

At 8:45am, Ms. Collins welcomed everyone and introduced Superintendent Lussier, who gave an update about important school district topics and then took questions from the audience. A summary follows.

Weather-related school closings / delayed starts – Superintendent Lussier explained he weighs a large and complex number of factors when deciding to close the schools or delay start times due to weather. These range from road conditions in Wellesley to the ability of teachers to find child care for their own children when their towns cancel school for the day. He asked for patience with the decision process during these challenging times.

School Budget – The current school budget has been challenged by a significant, unexpected drop in state funding for special education (approx. \$700,000). The school district expects to spend down its reserve this year and/or ask the town for additional monies to cover the gap. If this lower level of funding continues going forward, it will present a material challenge to the budget. School Committee is expected to vote on the budget on January 30. The budget will then go to Town Meeting for final approval. NOTE: There is a chance that the state will release emergency funding for special education to our schools but this is unlikely to occur until very late in the school year, after the budget must be finalized.

Middle School building needs – WMS has two significant infrastructure needs: paving and pipes. The pavement around the school is severely cracked and can no longer be resurfaced. Many of the pipes in the building are 30+ years old and there have been leakage issues. These projects will require funding very soon.

“Profile of a Graduate” initiative – This effort is about to launch with the goal of defining what the community expects of a Wellesley High School graduate in terms of skills/abilities/values/etc. This is part of Wellesley Schools’ 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning effort. **On Monday, January 22 at 7pm, Ken Kay from EdLeader21 will lead a discussion in the WHS auditorium.** A committee will be formed consisting of parents, teachers, staff, students, alumni and industry experts to generate a white paper on this topic by the end of the school year.

*Question:* Could we change the start time for WHS to 8:30 for all?

*Answer:* There are complex issues that arise when considering such a change. It is being considered but there are more pressing matters at this time.

*Q:* Will the second bus for high school students continue next year?

*A:* Most likely it will not due to funding issues. The amount parents pay for bus service covers only a small portion of the actual cost.

*Q:* Will funding issues affect class sizes?

*A:* No – small class sizes are a priority.

*Q:* What are potential targets for funding cuts?

*A:* As mentioned, the second bus for the high school will likely be cut. Professional development for teachers will be cut. NOTE: Elementary school enrollment has been declining more than projected and this trend is expected to continue. This enables the school district to eliminate some elementary school classrooms and helps the budget. We will begin to see this decline hit the middle school and high school soon.

*Q:* Will the 40B projects affect our school enrollments?

*A:* Yes, but not as significantly as one might think because only about a quarter of new families are expected to send students to Wellesley public schools.

*Q:* Are we seeing results from our SEED education efforts?

*A:* Yes but much more work needs to be done. The ChallengeSuccess initiative is just beginning in the high school and Superintendent Lussier noted that even small proposed changes have been met with parental pushback. He also noted that there are material sources of stress on our children outside of school as well.

*Q:* What is the status of HHU?

*A:* The state has agreed to partner with the district to help fund construction of needed building space. Actual construction is probably 6+ years away.

The audience thanked Superintendent Lussier for his insights and Ms. Collins turned the floor over to Principal Ito, who presented the following updates:

1. Katie Greer, an expert on youth and technology, will present to parents on Thursday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30pm in the WMS auditorium.
2. Security updates are proceeding. Surveillance cameras will be installed soon and teachers will be receiving magnetic key cards to open doors.
3. Backpack weights are still a concern. The school has purchased hand-held baggage-weighing devices and backpack weights will be checked randomly in the cafeteria in the mornings to assess the severity of this issue.

The audience thanked Principal Ito and Ms. Collins took the floor and noted:

1. The WMS technology recycling drive is planned for January 16 – 30. This effort combines fundraising with our green initiatives. A separate email will be sent to parents describing this.
2. The WMS CPK fundraiser is planned for February 7. WMS will earn 20% of all dine-in and take-out purchases that day, provided patrons hand a school-provided flyer to CPK when paying.
3. The next PTO meeting is Monday, March 12.
4. The movie *Screenagers* will be shown on Sunday, April 8, at WMS, time TBD.

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

**Agenda**

- 1) Technology Drive
- 2) CPK Fundraiser
- 3) Katie Greer event
- 4) Budget discussion
- 5) 8<sup>th</sup> grade activities planning

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

1) Technology Drive

Ms. Collins has signed WMS up with Recycling Advantage. **She will put a drop box on the table in the front office clearly labeled for this effort and will empty the box every few days. Ms. Nicolazzo will send a separate email blast to the community describing the event. She**

will include information about what can be recycled and how Recycling Advantage will securely wipe all data / information off of donated items. The Executive Committee will plan a date to convene to pack and ship all donated items.

2) CPK Fundraiser

CPK requires patrons to hand them a physical flyer in order for WMS to get credit. Ms. Norcross will position herself close to CPK when school gets out early on February 7 in order to personally hand out flyers to any students approaching CPK for lunch.

3) Katie Greer Event

The Executive Committee should plan to arrive by 6:15pm that evening.

4) Budget discussion

The PTO is currently on budget for FY 2018. Ms. Norcross noted, however, that Spiritwear sales are lagging last year. The Executive Committee proposed that the Spiritwear Committee be asked to open during events held at the WMS auditorium such as the Katie Greer event, school plays, etc. Ms. Norcross will follow-up with the heads of the Spiritwear Committee about this.

5) 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Activities Planning

Ms. Norcross will check in with Susan Frigoletto regarding the status of this effort.

At this point (10:10am), 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) Upcoming Meetings & Events
- 2) Fundraising
- 3) Budget
- 4) Other

Ms. Norcross, Ms. Collins and Principal Ito called the meeting to order at 10:15a.m.

1) Upcoming Meetings & Events

Principal Ito was provided with a full calendar of planned PTO events through April. The Katie Greer event was discussed in some detail. The PTO asked Principal Ito to consider ways to engage 8<sup>th</sup> graders in Ms. Greer's topic. (NOTE: During the day, Ms. Greer will make a presentation to 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders only. The current 8<sup>th</sup> graders saw her presentation 3 years ago.)

2) Fundraising

The following methods will be used to engage students in the technology recycling effort:

- a) Principal Ito will make a series of morning announcements
- b) Information will be included on the video monitors at the school
- c) Ms. Collins will generate a flyer to be placed on several bulletin boards throughout the school.

3) Budget

A total of \$67,000 has been collected through parent contributions to the PTO to date. Unfortunately, only 47% of families have contributed – below the PTO’s target of 50%. An expense of over \$5,000 was recorded in this year’s budget for last year’s 8<sup>th</sup> grade gift to the school. Ms. Hwang will follow up with Ms. McHale to determine if this accounting is correct.

6) Other

Principal Ito has submitted a grant proposal to WEF to fund sending a WMS group to California to be trained by the ChallengeSuccess team.

Last year, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation was streamed to all classrooms at a cost of \$1,500. Principal Ito would like to have this streaming again this year and has asked the PTO to fund it. Ms. Hwang will review the budget to see if this item is already included.

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

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will take place on Monday, February 12, at 9:30a.m. in the faculty dining room at WMS.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan McCormack