

Minutes

PTO Meeting – March 18, 2009

The Woodland School

9:30 a.m.

Approval of February PTO Meeting Minutes

- The February Minutes remain unapproved because they have not been made readily available to parents and teachers online
 - o The Minutes have been sent through the proper channels to be posted online, but there has been a breakdown in communication along the line
 - o The PTO is aware of this and has taken measures to ensure parents and teachers can get information
 - o Anyone that wishes to have the Minutes e-mailed to them can send a message to Susan Reale at sreale1231@yahoo.com and she will forward a copy to your e-mail account

Mr. Celebre

- Mr. Celebre reported that things are running smoothly
- He noted there were many parents at Woodland Walks where students received necklaces for completion
- Parents should expect a letter in their child's folder about nominating teachers for their excellence in education
- Mr. Celebre will be meeting with Cultural Arts Committee about next year
 - o He wants to work with the teachers to decide on the direction of the programs offered
 - o He would like to see a well rounded program focusing not just on musicals but encompassing other areas too
- The new Woodland Principal will be announced on Tuesday, March 31st at the BOE meeting
- He is looking forward to "The Battle of the Books" and "Science Day"
- The NJ ASKS are coming up and parents are reminded not to let students get too overwhelmed by them
 - o Guidance counselors will separate students that may need assistance or more time
 - o Teachers are busy getting all students prepared to do their best
- Letters for Teacher Requests for next year
 - o Please do not request a particular teacher ; instead tell Mr. Celebre the type of child you have and they will make the right fit
 - o Teachers work together to make sure every class is balanced and students are in the best environment for them
- There was a question to Mr. Celebre about a specific situation with a teacher
 - o Mrs. Ryan the Teacher Liaison for the PTO reminded parents that is often a good idea to contact your child's teacher directly when you have a question or concern

Teacher Liaison – Mrs. Ryan

- RADD was fantastic – there were no hitches
- The Winter Fair was a success
 - o Mrs. Ryan donated a pizza and movie party and shared the story of the great time she and some students had
 - o Jacqui Mandelbaum recognized how appreciated all of our teacher's time is
 - o Without these donations from teachers, our fundraising efforts would not succeed as they have this Winter
- Casino Night
 - o Teachers are excited
 - o They are invited to attend at a cost of \$25 per person

Winter Fair Re-cap

- The Fair made more money than budgeted and was a huge success
- The question of whether to do it again was discussed
 - o The Fall Festival will be on the schedule next year
 - o The "Wizards" basketball team will be coming to Woodland next January or February 2010
 - o The importance of mixing it up was brought up
 - o A suggestion to alternate between the Fall Festival and the Winter Festival each year was discussed

RAAD – Read Across America Day

- Jill Larson thanked all the volunteers
 - o There was a snow day on the scheduled RAAD, but everyone showed up the next day too
 - o It really made a difference for the kids and Jill's hard work was acknowledged by Jacqui
- Jill suggested changing the activities a bit next year to keep things fresh for all the students

Casino Night

- There are a lot of last minute RSVPs
- Tickets will be available at the door
- Great Silent Auction items
- Mrs. Ryan offered to recruit some teacher volunteers for the evening
- At the time of the meeting the attendance number is up to 150 people

Spring Clothing Sale

- Bonnie Heuvelman is working on all orders including the new mesh shorts and whit tank tops
- It was noted that the girl tank tops are acceptable for school
- Orders are due by March 20th

Science Day – Friday, April 24th

- Anya Mulhauser updated everyone
- Mad Science is coming to the school and has offered their services with only a slight increase from last year
- The committee already has many volunteers but is always looking for more
- Students love to see their parents in the classroom so please contact Anya if you are interested
- Food items are also needed that day for volunteers, parents, etc.
- Mrs. Pontoriero's class really needs volunteers to run the experiments in her classroom; no parents have volunteers as of this meeting
- Class schedules will be slightly off for the day, including the cancellation of popcorn that day

SOS Forms

- This is the main vehicle for volunteers to get involved
- It is now available online through the "Food Days" website
- Anyone that completes the form online will qualify for a chance to win a \$25 gift card to Staples
- The paper copy of the SOS will be attached to the W@W but please try to complete it online
 - o The online form is still broken up by time commitment
 - o Parents will use their Food Days user name and password to log on
 - o Warren Middle School and ALT already utilize this service
- Parents were reminded that the SOS Form no longer includes Home Room Moms
 - o Pat Wurst will be handling that separately
 - o If you are interested in being a HRM, contact Pat directly or fill out the form that was sent home in your child's backpack

Somerset Patriots Game – Friday, May 22nd

- Tickets will be \$7 a piece and the Woodland Community will sit in the same upper level section
- Christine Prinzivalli and Susan Reale will be handling the ticket distribution and seating
- Jennifer Lapioli will be coordinating all students interested in singing the National Anthem at the game
- This exciting game will be over the Memorial Day Weekend
 - o It was a choice between this weekend and Communion weekend
 - o The PTO felt that this may be a year that many families have decided to stay local and this is a great and affordable evening out with your family

Dr. Crisfield

- Also in attendance with Dr. Crisfield were Peter Daquila and Roberta Monahan from the BOE
- Dr. Crisfield gave a lengthy report of the budget and our status as a community
- He noted that Woodland School has always been very supportive of getting parents out to vote
- Two documents were distributed
 - o Budget at a Glance

- Summarizes the Budget and Revenues
 - It also lists the expenditures to run the Warren Township Schools
 - Draft Potential Budget Cut Analysis
 - List the 2009-2010 Budget Deliberations
 - Dr. Crisfield explained some of the areas that will be affected if the Budget does not pass
 - The “Budget at a Glance” is available online at www.warrentboe.org
 - Click on “business office”
 - Then click on “Budget Information”
- 2009-2010 Kindergarten Class
 - There are more students at all 4 elementary schools than anticipated
 - There will be some staffing cuts in the new year, but not as many as previously scheduled
 - The guidelines for classroom size (max of 20) are suggestions rather than the absolutes
 - If the Budget does not pass these guidelines will have to be revisited
 - There are 66 Kindergarteners scheduled to enter Woodland this Fall
- Re-Zoning
 - This issue was discussed but it is not likely
 - All BOE members agreed that it tears a community apart and are confident that the growth of students is balanced throughout the town, not just at Woodland School
 - It would be a last resort
- New Principal
 - He or she will be at the BOE Meeting on March 31st
 - Dr. Crisfield did not want to presume anything until the position is officially filled
- Budget Vote
 - The vote is April 21st
 - Important to reach out to those not at the meeting
 - We need to get everyone to engage in a full on promotion
- Tax Impact
 - Dr. Crisfield pointed out the difficult economic times we are in right now
 - Raising taxes is a last resort and he is cognizant that any tax increase is significant
- Smartboards
 - Jackie Dardis asked how the partnership with the BOE will work now
 - The PTO provides the hardware (actual Smartboards) to the school
 - The BOE is committed to providing the additional software needed to run them including programs and training
 - Alternative plans to train and maintain this investment are being looked into
 - Jacqui Mandelbaum noted that Mrs. Darby is looking into interesting advances in Smartboard accessories

Art Show – Wednesday, April 1st

- Mrs. De Pinto will be holding the event in the gym and all are welcome to attend to see your child's hard work and talent
- Volunteers are needed that morning to help hang the pieces on the walls
- Mrs. De Pinto is always very helpful to the PTO and needs our support for this event to be a success

School Snack Guidelines

- Mr. Celebre reported that our school will finish the year by sticking with our usual snack policy
 - o Each party should include one healthy snack and one can include one other
 - o All snacks must include a list of all ingredients which will be reviewed by Mrs. Stambaugh
 - o No candy is allowed at class parties or events
- It is his belief that the NJ State Department will be sending out new guidelines to each district in the state – it should be received by September 2009
- There was a debate between PTO members regarding who should choose what a child eats or is offered
- It was noted that Food Day offerings have been scaled down to reflect and meet nutritional guidelines, i.e. low fat hotdogs and no pepperoni offered anymore on pizza day

YMCA

- This afterschool program has now become a cooperative effort between the YMCA and the BOE
- The programs are being offered at all schools Warren elementary schools now
- After BOE approval, a flyer will be attached to an upcoming issue of the W@W

PTO Closet

- Bonnie Heuvelman passed out a signup sheet for volunteers
- The PTO is working with the BOE to get the necessary shelving to complete this project
- This shelving can be costly
- There needs to be an itemized system so we can keep costs down and not continue to purchase items that are hidden in the closet