



General Meeting Minutes for the 2008 - 2009 Academic School Year
April 14 , 2009 @ 7:30 p.m.
Wilkins School Library

PTA Board Members *in attendance*: 19

Co-Presidents: Krista Hanks
Christine Poisson
Vice President: Gillian Smith
Secretary: Jil Romano
Treasurer: Michele Donoghue

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 p.m.

President's Report

- Pledge of Allegiance.
- Introduction of everyone in attendance.
- Reviewed the current open positions for the 2009 -- 2010 academic year: President and Secretary for Executive board, including Committee Chairs for Magazine Drive, Reflections Program, Curriculum Enrichment at AMS (all grades), and Family Information Night. Any of these positions could be managed in a "co"-chair capacity.
- Introduced open forum discussion with the Amherst elementary and middle school Principals: Gerry St. Amand, Clark & Wilkins School and Porter Dodge, AMS (Amherst Middle School) with all members in attendance.

Secretary's Report

The committee chairs received copies of the March 2008--2009 minutes via Email prior to the April General Meeting. The March minutes were reviewed. Jil Romano requested a motion to receive the minutes. Gillian Smith moved to accept the minutes. Cheryl Forster seconded the motion. The March 2008-2009 minutes were accepted.

Treasurer's Report

- Art to Remember income is still coming in, but the expenses have not been paid out yet. The actual profit from this fundraiser will be reported at the general meeting in May.
- Received an invoice for Curriculum Enrichment @ AMS which has to be paid.
- Play expenses will be forthcoming.

Copies of the Treasurer's report for March 2008--2009 were reviewed at the meeting and copies were available to all that were present. Michele Donoghue requested a motion to accept the budget for March and Porter Dodge second the motion.

Principal's Report

Gerry St. Amand -- Clark & Wilkins Schools

Clark-Wilkins has been identified as a School In Need of Improvement based on the results of the October 2008 NECAP. This designation has occurred since one of our subgroups—educationally disabled did not make adequately yearly progress in mathematics for the second consecutive year.

We will be using grant funds to purchase tee shirts for all students, staff members, and volunteers to wear on Field Day 2009! A sample of the tee shirt design was sent home via email on Monday, April 13, 2009.

Step-up Day will take place on our last day of school, presently scheduled for Wednesday, June 17, 2009. All students currently enrolled at Clark or Wilkins in grades K through 3 will have an opportunity to meet next year's teacher and classmates during this process. Current fourth graders will also visit the Amherst Middle School on this date.

Students who will be entering Kindergarten in August of 2009 will meet their new teachers prior to the last day of school this year, at a date to be determined.

The "Fourth Grade Spring Concert" under the direction of Robert Allwarden will take place at 6:30 and 7:30 P.M. on Wednesday, April 22 in the Wilkins School Multipurpose Room.

Third quarter report cards will go home with all students on Friday, April 24, 2009.

Students in grades 2, 3, and 4 will take the computerized NWEA mathematics and reading assessments between late April and early May. These assessments provide one reference point and tool for our placement process.

Fourth grade students will take the Spring 2009 Science NECAP starting the week of May 11.

Fourth grade classes, under the direction of David April, will complete the North Pack Monadnock hikes during May or June.

The annual Clark-Wilkins Writing Festival, which showcases the writing talents of all of our students, will take place in the Wilkins School Multipurpose Room between Monday, May 18 and Friday, May 22, 2009.

Spring Music Demonstration programs for first graders at Clark School, under the direction of Wilmerlee Findlay, will take place on Friday, May 15, 2009.

Thanks to the efforts and talents of Katy Kennedy, literacy coach, Neal Vaupel and his fourth grade class, and the cooperation of Maria Lemelin and her second grade class, we now have two professional development tapes that have been used to inform all staff about effective instructional practices in literacy to meet the wide range of student learner needs across the elementary level.

Phase 3 building renovations at Clark-Wilkins will begin in mid-June and continue throughout the entire summer, which will keep the schools "off limits" through July and August, but which will provide the schools with much needed improvements to the heating systems, handicapped access, electrical configuration, office and conference spaces, art room and health offices, as well as improved library-media services.

The continuing support of the Amherst PTA is greatly appreciated for the curriculum enrichment you provide to all students, as well as the ongoing support you provide via the Spring Grant process.

Porter Dodge -- Amherst Middle School

AMS did not make AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) in mathematics for the first time this year, but missed it with the same subgroup educationally disabled as Clark-Wilkins. If that same subgroup misses AYP next year, then AMS would be identified as a school in need of improvement. A school is identified as "In Need of Improvement" if any particular subgroup fails to make "Adequate Yearly Progress" for two consecutive years in the same academic area.

The importance for checking the sexual offender registry periodically for updates on any new offenders who have moved into our Town was discussed. Parents and guardians should access the site to be aware of the people on this registry, which also shows a pictures of those listed.

Cell phone usage during school hours is an issue. Students are required to have their phones turned off during school hours and not everyone is following the rules. They have steps in place for students that do not abide by the rules and they are escalated as necessary.

School Board

Rob Graybill -- SAU#39 PTA Representative

Absent. No report.

Committee Reports

Curriculum Enrichment at Wilkins. Rocks and Minerals by Barbara Medlyn at the end of March to Grade 2 classes. Lowell Industrial Park presenters came to Wilkins last Thursday and Friday to present to Grade 4 classes in coordination with the field trip to Lowell Mills. Bay Colony Educators set to come to Wilkins in early May for presentation to Grade 3 classes.

Play. Jackie McKnight reported that tickets for the play Peter Pan are selling well. Approximately \$15k sold already and \$6k in advertising for the Playbill. 500 tickets are left to sell, mostly for Thursday night. Flyers are going out about tickets tomorrow (4/15) reminding parents about the play and that tickets are still available.

Art to Remember. Gross sales were \$8,200 with a net profit of approximately \$3,400. Profit down by 30% because of art not being done at Wilkins this year. The committee chairs asked Gerry St. Amand if consideration to bring art back to Wilkins is possible. Mr. St. Amand stated that tentative consideration would need to be discussed with Mrs. Prescott (Art Teacher) providing it can be done as an art special and incorporated into her curriculum, not into the classrooms.

Grants. Grant committee is established and the first preliminary meeting is scheduled for April 20th.

Adjournment

Krista Hanks made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Christine Poisson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Submitted by:

Jil Romano

Secretary

Next Meeting: May 12, 2009 @ 7:30 p.m. Wilkins Library

Contact Information

PTA Board ~ ptaboard@amherstpta.org

Bellringer Newsletter ~ ellenbr68@alumni.umass.edu