

Merriam PTO Meeting Minutes October 28, 2009

Board Members Present: Donna German and Kim McCormick, PTO Co-Chairs, Tricia Forrester, Secretary

Also Present: Ed Kaufman (Principal), Dianna McNeish, Beth Davis, Ronit Ben-Shir, Lisa Sajedi, Zing Liao and Eileen Sullivan. Teachers present were Christy Nealon, Rachel Russell and Fran Strhom,

Fundraising Update

At 6:13pm, PTO Co-Chair Donna German called to order the second PTO meeting of the 2009-2010 school year. Donna reported the PTO needs volunteers for three big upcoming events:

First Annual Game Night

Diane Johnson is looking for five volunteers to be game gurus, one at each table. Ed said he would get a wish-list of games from the teachers to have at Game Night. Fifty percent of the profits go directly to the Merriam PTO.

First Annual PTO vs. Staff Basketball Game

Donna reported the PTO will be having a PTO vs. Staff Basketball Game on December 4, 2009. The PTO will be looking for volunteers to help sell tickets and work the concession stand. More information will be coming out about the event in weekly emails and Friday flyers.

Basketball Sales for January/February 2010

Donna reported the PTO is looking for a volunteer to run the concession stand for the weekend basketball games.

International Night Kick-Off Meeting

Beth Davis reported the kick-off meeting for International Night was happening that evening at 7:30pm. The committee would be looking for volunteering in February. The goal of their meeting tonight would be brainstorming ideas.

Grade-Level Report

Ed turned the meeting over to the teachers for classroom updates.

First and Second Grade Update: Fran Strohm reported the first graders just went on a field trip to Good Harbor Beach. It was part of their unit studying tidal pool creatures. They are also learning about American symbols, addition, telling time (hour) and recognizing pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters. The second graders just had their field trip to the Sudbury school house as part of their unit on Acton Long Ago.

Third and Fourth Grade Update: Rachel Russell reported the third graders were working on elapsed time (how it passes) and adding money. They are working on three digit addition and subtraction as well as measuring with rulers. In Language Arts, the students are learning about the parts of a story and how their ideas can be made into stories. In Social Studies, they are learning about the Pilgrims and North American Wampanoag Indians. In fourth grade, the students are notching up the math measurements, addition and subtraction as well as grammar. In Social Studies, they are studying the different regions within the United States.

Fifth and Sixth Grade Update: Christy Nealon reported the fifth graders were using protractors, reviewing multiplication and working with pattern blocks and partial sums in Math. In Science, the students were studying the ecosystem and water cycle. (The fish were starting to die and the students were trying to figure out what the causes were.) The student terrariums were fairing well. In Social Studies, the students were reviewing geography and the differences of the thirteen different colonies (Northern, Middle and Southern Colonies, their economies and money.) In sixth grade, the students have started a unit on Early Man. Kim Connors would be coming in to speak about what an archeological dig would be like. The students are working with the DARE officer. The sixth graders just finished a sleepover to Nature's Classroom. Ed commented that it is a grant that funds the trip. Many said it was a wonderful, positive experience for the kids. Ronit Ben-Shir said she would be willing to coordinate more parent participation next year.

Nature In A Backpack

Ed introduced Eileen Sullivan, Acton Public School Curriculum Specialist, for her presentation of Nature In A Backpack.

The goal of the program is to get small groups of kids back out into nature to awaken their enthusiasm of what is outside their classroom. The students can use their art and writing skills to observe nature in the Merriam

backyard. The backpacks are would be grade level K-2, 3-4 and 5-6. The backpacks would have an instructional guide, nature journals, bug boxes, paper and pencils. The plan is to have backpacks in every classroom with teachers, assistants and parents trained to lead small groups outside a couple of times in the Fall and Spring.

Eileen led us in an exercise using objects found outside. We were to match her example of a crisscross pattern after viewing it for three to five seconds.

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

PTO Minutes by Patricia Forrester, Merriam PTO Secretary 2009/2010