MIDDLEBROOK PTA MINUTES 1/18/18

(unapproved)

1. Call to Order - 9:05 a.m. in LLC. In attendance were: Hillary Morrissy, Nicola Davies, Vanessa Elias, Laura Rowley, Ginna Yerral, Lauren Feltz, Tara Peterson, Jackie Shaw, Carolyn Lyon, Mary Jane Reis, Jen Acerra-Markey, Ritu Malik, Gretchen Jeanes, Lauren Yoon, Elizabeth McKay
2. Approval of 11/16/17 minutes - a motion to approve was made Ginna Yerrall and seconded by Jen Acerra-Markey. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Principal’s Report – Lauren Feltz
   1. School is continuing its work with the ADL (Anti-Defamation League). On 1/11/18, two trainers from the ADL came in for an assembly to facilitate conversation around challenges students face in middle school. That was followed up with on-team group conversations the following day using the 45 minute FLEX time.
   2. Student response to the assembly was varied, with 8th graders being less enthusiastic, however, there were good follow up discussions. For example, it was noted that boy on girl harassment tends to be verbal versus physical in middle school. 6th graders were great participants and eager to learn.
   3. A big challenge in middle school is that it can be hard to know what to do or say at this age, or being able to speak up to peers, especially if a perpetrator is a friend.
   4. The goal is to learn what to say, and hopefully know that other students will have their back. Ms. Beck-Moore is going to launch an Upstander Club.
   5. There were only three negative responses from parents, mostly as they felt some of the content was not age appropriate.
   6. The work is ongoing, and making connections from anti-semitisism to other behaviors.
   7. Due to weather related closures, the second quarter end date has been moved back three days.
4. Teacher Representative’s Report – Tara Peterson
   1. 6 Green: Spanish students spent time cooking and preparing treats and crafts for their Octavitas celebration, which included dance instructions and trivia games. Thirty-Six Green students are busy finalizing their experiments and presentations for this year's Science and Engineering Fair.
   2. 7 Yellow:  After a successful and enjoyable field trip, students are following character change in book club groups.  We are looking forward to the second half of the year with units in studying plate tectonics and earthquakes, writing a companion book for their favorite all time book, and building algebraic problem solving skills.
   3. 7 Green: new committees on team such as Team Beautification? Trying to get more students involved. Each team was given two Chromebook chargers to make charging easier for students who forget them - thanks LLC.
   4. 8 Red: is excited to be starting the high school registration process and is kicking off our 3 service initiatives during flex this Friday
      1. Middlebrook's Memorials - the 8RED team works to maintain the memorial sites on our campus and to educate the Middlebrook community about these special places
      2. Bridge Builders - the 8RED team works to engage as a part of the transition program for the 5th grade class as it prepares to move to our school next fall.
      3. Service Club - the 8RED team works as a 'handyman' service completing odd jobs for others who work in our school.
   5. 8 Yellow: had an impressive showing for the Dec. Toys for Tots Drive.  Currently, students are working on a trial project in Social Studies (centered on the actions of Andrew Jackson), RW students are reading *To Kill a Mockingbird* (along with some companion texts) as an introduction to our historical fiction unit, WW classes are beginning a literary analysis unit, and WL classes are working on grammar.  We will be having our team geography bee this week to determine our 8Y rep. in the school bee this week, too.
5. President’s Report – Hillary Morrissy
   1. Reflections winners have been announced, and there was a display of the visual arts entries at the Wilton Library. There were approximately 15 total participants this year.
6. Officer Reports
7. Vice President – Laura Rowley:
   1. Membership: We are up to 360 members from 343 in November. Most of that increase was from teachers, as we distributed fliers in November and our teacher rep followed up with teachers.
   2. Quick update that the Stop & Shop Rewards program has generated $1,020.30 so far this year with only 207 people signed up. Lauren Feltz is hopeful some of this can go toward granting Someday Wishes or holding an evening event from various groups of students working on projects to benefit the school/students. Elizabeth McKay suggested a giving tree type sign up to help with this as well.

1. Treasurer – Jackie Shaw
   1. In December, we received $11,500 from the Turnover Shop, which is up $250 from last year.
   2. In January, we received the second check from Lifetouch for $5700, bringing the total from school photos to $6200.
   3. Still waiting for custodial bill from the 6th/7th Grade Activity Nights.
   4. Total income is now at $50,400 including Turnover Shop and Photo income, so there should be a good surplus for this spring.

1. Parent At Large – Lauren Yoon
   1. The BOE meeting is 7 p.m. tonight, and the Superintendent will be presenting his budget. The budget and presentation will be posted on the district website. The public budget meeting will be next Thursday, 1/25 at Middlebrook at 7 p.m.
   2. There is a 3 p.m. meeing with Gail Lavielle and Tom O’Dea at the BOE to hear Wilton’s concerns (no public comment during this meeting).
   3. The BOE is also looking at forming a committee to draft a policy on hate.
2. Committee Reports
3. Science Fair: Ritu expressed gratitude to WEF for its grant to help with costs. There are 135 participants this year, representing 97 projects, with the largest category being Engineering. Due to the increase in participants additional judges are needed. Several meeting attendees offered to reach out to potential judges. Science Fair is 1/30/18 with a snow date of 2/1/18.
4. Fundraising: Nothing new to report.
5. Box Tops: Planning to kick off a competition in the next couple weeks. Hoping that the prize can be a homework free night for the winning color. Lauren Feltz will ask teams.
6. Hospitality: Ginna Yerrall reported the December potluck was a huge success, and the committee is hoping to plan another one for late February or early March. Beyond that is Teacher Appreciation Week in May. With the success of parent donations, it may be possible to reduce the Hospitality budget next year.
7. Special Education: Mary Jane Reis reported that Disability Awareness Month has moved to March, and they are hoping to have students do something to show inclusion. TIMs (Top Inclusion Model at WHS) will likely participate, but their plan is unknown at this time. She mentioned wanting to work with teachers about working with students on mindfulness as this could benefit all students. Lauren Feltz suggested that a couple of teachers (Anna Ruopp and Joanna Cloherty) practice mindfulness and would help co-plan something potentially. Mary Jane also reported that there is now an unofficial Facebook page (Wilton Parents of Special Needs Children Networking Group) to help parents. The PAB is looking into the option of becoming a SEPTA (SPED PTA) which would give them the ability to fundraise. Its current structure keeps them dependent upon a state grant (about $1200) as they will lose that grant if they fundraise.
8. Wilton Youth Council:
   1. Currently looking for a Treasurer, and have hired a bookkeeper to help making the demands of the role very manageable.
   2. Book - How to Raise an Adult – TED talk on January 24th Weston Library 10am and Wilton Library - 7pm Book Discussion about book Feb 28th – this registration is capped at 20 participants.
   3. Susan Bauerfeld will lead a program on March 20th at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. entitled Managing the Impact and Influence of Digital Devices and Content: What to Do, How to Do It, and Why It’s Important.
   4. WYC has received a state grant to help combat opioid addiction. The grant runs from January 1 to April 30th, and includes an upcoming Narcan training.
   5. YTY ski trips are ongoing and planned for 1/19, 1/26 and 2/2. They are nearly at full capacity.
   6. The Color Run is May 3rd this year, after school. Middlebrook staff, students and their families are invited to participate.
   7. There is a new national movement called Wait Till 8th, which asks parents to sign a pledge to wait until 8th grade to give students smart phones. The chromebook rollout at MB has actually helped as phones are no longer used in middle school.
   8. WYC is considering screening a move –options include Screenagers and Race to Nowhere.
9. New Business:
   1. Words on the Wall - Carolyn Lyon reported the appliques for walls have been ordered and the cost came in under the $700 requested. Hoping to get some volunteers over February break to install.
   2. Lauren Yoon would like to nominate Lauren Feltz for the PTA’s Administrator of the Year award. She has asked for help in writing the application. Vanessa Elias offered to discuss with her.
10. Meeting Adjourned at 10:37am.