Middlebrook PTA Meeting

October 17, 2013

1. Call to Order – Middlebrook School @ 9am in the Media Center
2. Approval of September 19, 2013 Minutes – Aileen Senneff
   1. Aileen Senneff has stepped down. Savet asked for volunteers to search their contacts to see who may be interested in taking over the position.
3. Principal’s Report – Maria Coleman
   1. All three open house nights were successful.
   2. 7th grade ‘ Bird of Prey’  assemblies was also very successful. A note of interest, one bird did fly off during the first assembly so caused speculation among students during the day but it was caged by the end of the day.
   3. Team read week has started last week.

Please donate to the book drive . The Boxes are everywhere but all are mostly empty. The response so far this year has been much slower than previous years, The books go to a Bridgeport nonprofit which then distributes them to all the schools in need. All books for all ages are accepted. So please de-clutter your home of those books your kids can donate.

* 1. Red ribbon week is this week 10/20-25. It is sponsored by Youth to Youth organization which promotes healthy (drug and alcohol free) lifestyle.
  2. Choral performances are coming up. Please enjoy as they have been working hard.
  3. Teachers and Adminstrators have been promoting the PTA fundraiser with the kids by highlighting the various rewards that are being offered .

1. Teacher Representative – Luisa Nanos
   1. Made a special plea for PTA participation in the book drive. The empty boxes should be filling up by this time but remain unused. Please send in your used books.
   2. October team updates gave insight to what kids are working on.

8Red

* Learning about skeleton and muscles.
* Discussing most important figures and events in US history
* Gearing up for our 11/7 trip to Philly!

8Yellow

* Philly trip draws near! November 14.
* Finishing up poetry unit in English. It’s been a pleasure reading the poetry of our 8th graders! Lots of talent.

8Green

* RWW: Wrapping up our first novel Animal Farm. Students are learning much about propaganda and are even creating their own.
* English: students have studied elements of short stories and are now composing their own short stories.
* Social Studies: In social studies students are finishing the Sentries research project. Last week they engaged in a simulation that required them to take the role of a professor. Each professor presented arguments to a museum board in an attempt to convince them to create a new exhibit on a specific topic. During each presentation audience members "tweeted" (commented in a closed chat room) about the conference. For homework, students blogged about the presentations. This week students are using what they learned in the presentations to write a persuasive essay on the most influential person or event in U.S. history.

6Red

* Getting ready for our Big Bronx Zoo trip!!!!
* Poetry unit underway in English - leading up to Poetry Festival in November.
* RWW - getting graphic with graphic novel art adaptations of literature

6Yellow

* In the classes of social studies, science, Spanish, students will begin their first projects in the coming month. In Spanish, the focus will be on likes and dislikes, in social studies, famous archaeological sites, and in science, cells!

6Green

* In Math 6, the students have been studying the different ways positive numbers can be represented and applied while beginning to incorporate problem-solving strategies. In Advanced Math, we have been working on representing real numbers, both rational and irrational, positive and negative.
* In RWW, students are reading a mystery book for outside reading and making an original creative bookmark to complement their book.
* In Spanish class students are working on a group project to describe to their classmates their likes and dislikes. They will be presenting entirely in Spanish using a Powerpoint and Wordle to practice their fluency and Spanish speaking skills.
* In science, we are studying the traits all living things share and how they’re grouped. (classification)
* The students in Six Green social studies have begun their study of human origins with the Becoming Human Web Quest. This will give us a better understanding of the different human species throughout earth's history and leave us with a good foundation for going forward with our studies of ancient civilizations.
* In English, we are going to explore the theme of survival in several literary works, most extensively in Gary Paulsen’s novel, Hatchet.
* Across team, students have been engaged in daily independent reading, with teachers providing the opportunity for SSR at various points in the day. This has led to some incredible student enthusiasm about reading.

**7R**

* English, RWW, World Geography classes: Ask your children about BOW! We are investigating why one country in a group of three countries in the same biome is developing differently. Much research and discussion will go into each group's final decision.
* Science: Much work is going on in the study of ecology, including predators, prey, and food webs.
* Math 7 and Advanced Math 7: Students are working on adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing integers, fractions, and decimals that are both positive and negative.
* Algebra: Students are studying the many aspects of scientific notation.
* World Language: Students are engaging in activities concerning celebrations and traditions in the Hispanic world. They will, for example, plan fictitious parties in order to deepen their linguistic and cultural understandings.

7Yellow

* Teachers built support for the school spirit day - Rainbow Day - by pre-modeling some color options.
* The project, Developing/Developed Nations, helps students use a variety of resources to gather information to then make a persuasive writing piece.
* The 7 Yellow Acts of Random Kindness (ARK) group is continuing work this month by building on last month's success with peace rocks.

7Green

* On 7 Green, students in Social Studies and RWW/RWL completed their “My Favorite Place” project with small group presentations. In English, we are living in the 1960s as we begin our first novel, The Contender.
* All three 7th Grade teams enjoyed a fantastic Birds of Prey assembly this past Wednesday. James Eyring, a professor from Pace University, visited and flew his raptor birds on our field, making connections to our science curriculum and thrilling the students at the same time. This assembly was made possible by money given to the teams by the PTA so once again we thank you for your generosity!

1. President’s Report – Savet Constantine

* Board of Ed has two open position and two people running so assumption is they will be elected.
* Superintendent search is ongoing. There will be two meetings for parent input and to voice their concerns. More info given by parent-at-large.

VI. Officer Reports:

1. Vice President – Pam Hickey- Donations from the line on the membership form is up but membership itself is down from last year, especially from teachers: 543 parents signed up as PTA members (+2 memberships vs yago), Teachers/Staff memberships are currently at 42 (- 9 vs yago). She informed us that teachers must be members of the PTA to apply for “Gifts and Grants”. Teacher Rep Luisa Nanos will let all the teachers know too.
2. Treasurer – Maria Wilcox

* 6 grade fun night made a profit.
* 7 grade fun night is set. Thank you to both Carol Kiss and Kathy Drake for volunteering, thus saving the 7 gr fun night.
* Financial statement handed out and reviewed. So far we are fine but will need better participation in the fund drive. We do have reserves for a rainy day but we need a successful fund drive if we are to carry out this year’s obligations and plans.

1. Parent-At-Large – Stacy Crameri

* Asked parents to please find the time to give our input at one of the superintendant search meetings or at least in the online survey on the BOE tab of Edline. Forums at MB on Oct29, 7pm or Trackside on Oct 30, 9:30am.
* The next BOE meeting is Oct30. Enrollment, Testing, and Budget will be discussed. Budget meetings start this early. Meetings are open and also broadcast on TV.

VII. Committee Reports:

1. 6th and 7th Grade Fun Nights: Majority of 6th graders participated and parking was difficult so one recommendation is carpooling for 7th grade fun night.
2. Science Fair-Victoria Madden. Extra Help Thursday and Monday to help students refine their projects (and weed out dangerous or cruel ones,ie. involving mice) Also mentioned the Science Olympiad and girls in science.
3. Spiritwear-Rest of inventory from open house donated to the school to be used as incentives by the teachers. We are starting fresh for next year. House shirts were unfortunately canceled because of lack of interest. Those that were ordered are being refunded.
4. Special Ed-Please Promote TIM club (Top inclusion models 2013) They are older teens available at events like the fun nights to help those who have social difficulty feel included in the fun. The advisors at the H. S. are Jeanie Kelly and Michael Walsh.
5. Photos –Retake Day coming up on November 20th during lunch.
6. Fundraising: Currently 13.3% participation, lower than last year. Discussed how to increase that. Decided to send out an email blast using specific numbers, percentages, by grade, and showing what activities it funds.
7. Wilton Youth Council-Red ribbon week discussed.

VIII. Adjournment