

Falmouth Middle School PTO Meeting
Tuesday, May 11, 2010
Falmouth MS Library

In Attendance: Sue Palfrey, Danielle Tracy, Wendy Morrissette, Betsy Perron, Amy Kuhn, Terri St. Angelo, Barb Skop, Liz Hutcheon, Pat Wright, Dawn Girsh, Rachel Reed, Meredith Charest, Patty Walsh, Donna Lewis, Shawn Towle, Sally Bennett.

Welcome, Introduction and Call to Order (Terri St. Angelo, President)

- Terri called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.
- Guidance will give us a pulse of school and what this age group is up to. We are a casual setting/group for discussion.
- Everyone introduced themselves and ages of students at MS. Terri introduced Sue Palfrey.
- Business update – voting process; wrapping up the school year; planning for next year. Thanked everyone for volunteering. Reviewed dates to remember.
 - May 12th, 12 noon – MS Drop-in Parents group with Nancy Dix
 - May 19th, 2:30 – 4 – 6th grade Maui Madness
 - May 20th-23rd – 7th grade Quebec Trip
 - Tuesday, June 1st – 5th grade orientation – PTO – 4th grade parents' meeting, MS cafeteria
 - Monday, June 7-10 – 8th grade Discovery Week
 - Tuesday, June 8, 6:30 -7:30pm – 6th grade parent step-up, Kieve for 5th grade parents
 - Thursday, June 10th, 5:00 pm – 8th grade Farewell
 - Friday, June 11-16 – 6th grade Greek Week
 - Wednesday, June 16 – BBQ Lunch
 - Wednesday, June 16 – 6th grade Olympics and Awards Ceremony
 - Thursday, June 17th – Last day of School – half day
- BBQ lunch - new and old board members serve the students.
- We've created binders to pass on to the new Board
- Voting – inform; reviewed description of PTO board positions
 - Nomination for President – Wendy Morrissette – accepted
 - Nomination for President–Elect- Tina Baker – accepted
 - Nomination for Secretary – Danielle Tracy – accepted
 - Nomination for Treasurer – Donna Lewis – accepted
 - Nomination for Enrichment Coordinator – Meredith Charest – accepted
 - Nomination for Communications Coordinator – Patty Walsh – accepted
 - Nomination for Volunteer Coordinator – Betsy Perron – accepted
- Last day of school is the transition of the new board. The new & old board will have a transition meeting sometime this month.
- Treasurer's Report Update.
- Terri introduced the guidance department.
- Thanked everyone for attending.

Treasurer's Report (Liz Hutcheon)

- Reviewed the budget. We are close to hitting our budget. We have been very fiscally responsible this year. Need to still review custodian/bus driver appreciation day.
- Taxes were filed.

Principal's Update (Sue Palfrey)

- Being a Writer – a writing program that has been piloted to this year at the 5th grade level, will be extended to 6th grade. Teachers are feeling really good about it. Each 6th grade teacher will teach 30-40 minutes per day with this new program. They were able to purchase this program through the generous support of a FEF grant.
- Scheduling process is a huge focus for the next few weeks. With the technology we have, we strive to have a good mix of students for each teacher. Guidance and Sue review the list. Sue reviewed in more detail how the upcoming classrooms are put together.
- A transition committee has been formed which currently consists of teachers. The committee has been put together as we look at team structures for a 6th – 8th MS. They will be looking at adding about 5 parents to the committee
- Behavioral response – advisory, social skills,
- Looking to grow – advisory groups school wide
- Sue addressed a parents concern for the recent comment she made in the Principal's Notes regarding an adult who is using Face book to find contact information on FMS students. They have spoke to a lawyer which is common practice. They (the MS) are reviewing tightening up rules for computer use.
- They will be providing summer academy again this year, however they will charge a \$35 fee for the week.
- Diversity day – the day had a great feeling. It is a real powerful message.
- 7th grade NECAP scores were the highest in the state for reading.

To do:

- Follow up regarding playground equipment

Guidance (Dawn Girsh)

- It's a busy time of year. Dawn works with the 6th & 7th graders and Pat works with the 5th & 8th. They each have about 340 students. At the beginning of the year, they go to the classrooms and introduce who they are, where they are, and what they can do to help the students. This year for the 5th graders they discussed bullying & respect. For the 6th graders a big topic of concern was the playground and more recently on stress. They have had low key discussions with the 6th graders on the transition to 7th grade. The current 7th graders felt it went well. Dawn has continued conversations with the 6th graders on keeping stress levels down. Teachers are keyed into it.
- Guidance can also help students from classroom work to small group's discussions to having open lunch in their office on certain days.
- Even though they have designate grades to support, they overlap with all students.
- Both teach a rock class – careers, personal interest, etc.
- MEA's – 5th & 8th grade
- Teachers are great at referring students.

- Support the whole child.
- Teachers feel it's been better to not give grades in 6th grade.
- A parent suggested having a Parents' computer awareness class.

Diversity Day Update (Dawn Girsh)

- 5th & 6th grade
 - Brandon Baldwin, from ME Attorney General's office – It was a very powerful presentation.
 - Cromwell Center spoke on disabilities.
 - Reza Jalali read from one of his books & discussed. They also watched a Ruby Bridges movie.
- 7th grade
 - Brandon Baldwin
 - The Color of Community – students from SMMC spoke of their experiences and countries of origin.
 - Jacqueline Littlefield, Holocaust & Human Rights Museum of Maine – Discussion on everyday choices & how we interact with people around us.
- 8th grade
 - Brandon Baldwin
 - Students rotated through about 11 different classrooms. Each devoted to a country, ethnic heritage, and culture or learning exceptionality. Exploring how we are each unique and celebrate our differences.
- The feedback was positive and the day was positive. Students were great at helping out. They learned a lot and hope to continue this in future.

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,
Barb Skop, Recording Secretary