

**Meriwether Lewis Elementary School
PTO Meeting
September 7, 2011**

In Attendance: Mary Chinn, Jenny Commins, Kim Cousins, Skye O'Donnell, Susan Park, Debbie Parmelee, Nancy Paulson, Brandi Piccirilli, Mistei Roebuck, Clark Smith, Jerilyn Teahan, Olivia Wilson, James Younger, Jennie Bowen

I. Approval of July 14, 2011 Minutes

II. Principals Report

A. Intervention Prevention Funding.

Ms. Cousins requested funding from the PTO for the "intervention prevention" program. These funds are used to support students that need additional instruction and support during regular school hours. Jennie Bowen is one of the specialists that works with MLS students receiving "intervention" services. Eighty-four MLS students received services last school year. For several years, the MLS PTO has funded the gap between when school begins and the intervention funds are received from the county (November). The county has provided over \$15,000 (\$15,824) to MLS for these efforts; the additional \$3923.82 is requested from the PTO.

The PTO Board voted unanimously to approve this funding request.

B. Start of School

Ms. Cousins reported a successful start to the school year. Student numbers at the 10-day mark were at 446 students. There are many new families from out-of-state as well as from other countries. Some of our students will be receiving language intervention from our ESL specialist.

C. Building Use Form

Ms. Cousins reminded the PTO to be sure to use the Building Use Form when reserving space (such as the library) for PTO Board meetings, committee meetings, and events. Please see Terri in the front office for the form.

III. Presidents' Report

A. Funding Request Form

Skye O'Donnell reminded staff/faculty that budget requests should be submitted on the "funding request form" 2 weeks prior to the meeting.

B. Agenda Items

Please let Skye or Clark know in advance if an item is to be added to the agenda. The agenda will be published 1 week prior to the meeting and will be posted on the bulletin board.

C. Attendance at PTO Meetings

All meetings are open to any MLS community member (teacher, staff, parent) who would like to attend. PTO Officers, Executive Committee members and Directors should be in attendance. The committee chairs are encouraged to attend if they are presenting a report. However, they are not required to

attend. Reports of committee chairs should be submitted to and presented by the Directors if the chair cannot attend.

D. Back-to-School Night, September 13

Skye previewed the slide show that will be presented to parents on Back-to-School Night. Board members noted where corrections and/or clarifications were needed. Skye asked for an additional pie chart of expenditures from Rick Emery.

E. Gym Floor Committee

Clark reported that 8 people had expressed interest in the committee so far. He plans to make one more appeal for volunteers and then convene the committee.

IV. Vice Presidents Report

A. Volunteers of the Month

Jenny Commins and Susan Park reported that volunteers Sue Miller and Bridget Baylin were selected as Volunteers of the Month of August for their work with the Newcomers' Network.

V. Volunteer Coordinator's Report

Mary Chinn reported that the volunteer forms have been coming in and she is cataloging them and distributing names of volunteers directly to the event chairs.

VI. Treasurer's Report

Rick reviewed the proposed budget for 2011-12. Rick answered questions from Board members and updated numbers. There was discussion about how to account for the "carry forward" from the previous year. Additionally, there was a request to change and condense some of the budget categories including the expenditure line currently labeled "Year-end Gift to MLS." This expenditure line encompasses all the purchases and expenditure made for the betterment of MLS (in 2010-11 this included purchases of the new microphones, computer mice, electronics, etc.). There were also questions about how to make the current budget reflect the PTO priorities and budget requests versus simply populating the budget line items with the totals from the previous year's budget. One problem this caused is showing a deficit budget projection. Rick offered to adjust the "year-end gift" line to show a projected balanced budget. Rick will forward an updated budget to the Board prior to the Back-to-School Night.

VII. Director's Reports

A. Fundraising Committee

1.) Fun Fair – Susan Park reported some of her concerns about the quickly approaching date of the Fun Fair. Susan indicated she did not have a co-chair yet and had only recently been given a list of volunteers (many of which are new parents to the school). The Board discussed at length whether to keep the October 21st date for the Fun Fair. Mary Chinn reminded the Board that the date was moved thoughtfully to the fall. Volunteers tended to become overwhelmed with both the Fun Fair and the Silent Auction occurring in the spring. Additionally, the Freaky Friday event in the fall of 2010 had grown in scope and was beginning to resemble the traditional Spring Fun Fair. The Board discussed many different options and concerns. Ultimately, the Board decided to keep the Fall Fun Fair on

October 21 and to empower Susan to scale the event to the level of volunteer help she has. Board members also offered their personal assistance to enable the success of the event. Susan's first meeting with her committee was scheduled for the next day (9/8/11) and she will keep the Board updated on the progress. Additionally, James Younger expressed concern that there is no all-community event in the spring. The Board welcomed the idea of adding a smaller scale family event (such as an outdoor movie night on the field). This idea will be discussed at a future PTO meeting.

2.) Original Works – Mary Chinn reported that original date selected for Original Works was too close to the Silent Auction. New date will be earlier in the spring semester, likely around February 1st. They are considering doing the artwork through the Art Print program. But, they need to talk to Mr. Sherogan about his interest in continuing the management of the art work first.

3.) Innisbrook Wrapping Paper – Skye reported that information on the wrapping paper sales would be distributed starting October 21.

4.) Silent Auction – no report

5.) Enrichment Zone – Flyer for registration will be in backpack mail this week. Online registration opens on Friday, September 9.

6.) Box Tops – no report

7.) Grocery Receipts – no report

8.) Kroger Gift Cards – no report.

9.) MLS Sportswear – By earlier email vote the Board approved the purchase and printing of 72 new Meriwether t-shirts to be sold at back-to-school night. The shirts will be navy or pink and have a printed white logo on the back. Reporting back on the Board's request to see if "teachers would like a MLS t-shirt or polo shirt as a PTO gift this year," Ms. Parmelee reported that in her informal survey of teachers, most teachers liked the idea of a t-shirt. There were a few that preferred the "polo-style" shirt as well.

B. Community Events

1.) Bingo Night – no report

2.) Skate Night – Loretta reported the flyer is going in student backpacks on Tuesday. First Skate Night is scheduled for September 16.

3.) Fun Run – no report

4.) Kids Market – no report

5.) Kids Night Out – Ms. Parmelee reported that flyers are going out early next week. The date is September 23 and registration is available on-line as well as by sending in the form and payment to school. [Val Newcomb submitted a report by email that was inadvertently not received until after the meeting. Her report is listed at the end of these minutes*. Board members discussed her report via email and will continue/report the discussion at the next meeting.]

6.) Newcomer's Network – Mistei Roebuck reported that approximately 45 new families were at the MLS Open House. Additionally, the back-to-school coffee was a big success with over 30 people in attendance. It was noted that next year the chair/committee need to know how to request space and set-up for the event – especially since it is right at the start of school. Also, they thought they should include juice, water and/or fruit since there were a number of young children attending the coffee with parents.

C. Staff/School Support

- 1.) Birthdays Book Club – Book Club flyer to be distributed this week.
- 2.) Art Print – no report
- 3.) Copy Center – Still Need a Coordinator!
- 4.) Fifth Grade Coordinators – Nancy Inman and Cameron Sipe are the new chair people.
- 5.) Book Fair – no report
- 6.) Hospitality/ Staff Appreciation – Kenna Boyd is the new chairperson of this committee.
- 7.) Landscaping – no report
- 8.) Marquee – no report

D. Communications

- 1.) Bulletin Board – no report
- 2.) Wethervane Newsletter – Jerilyn Teahan reminded PTO Board members that articles are due to her on September 15th, per her email message.
- 3.) MLS Matters -Jerilyn Reported 311 subscribers to the MLS Matters page and a 36%-53% open rate. She intends to add the archive feature to our Constant Contact service.
- 4.) School Directory – Laurie Strucko has requested individual pictures of the PTO Board members for the School Directory.
- 5.) Yearbook – Skye requested the topic of “personalized yearbook” move to the next meeting
- 6.) Parent Council – no report
- 7.) Website – no report

VIII. Lousia County School

Jenny Commins proposed to offer some sort of support to the PTO of the Lousia County Elementary School (Thomas Jefferson Elementary) that was closed due to the effect of the earthquake. Board members were interested in the idea of making a PTO to PTO contribution. Jenny will research options and report back to the Board.

IX. Miscellaneous

A. Menu of Catering Items – Ms. Tichner

Skye asked if the PTO could get a list of items and associated pricing for items Ms. Tichner might want to provide for PTO events. Ms. Cousins volunteers to ask Ms. Tichner for a list and to report back as to how the PTO pays for Ms. Tichner’s catering services and time.

B. Care packages to Mr. Jordan

Nancy Paulson reported that a basket of items from Foods of All Nations had been purchased and delivered to Mr. Jordan and his wife to acknowledge their recent loss. Jenny Commins noted an additional gift basket from Mona Lisa was to be purchased from the PTO on behalf of the MLS teachers.

C. Open Chair Positions

Skye reported that Kenna Boyd had accepted as one of the co-chairs for the Hospitality/Staff Appreciation Chair. Open positions include: Copy Center Chair, Co-Chair Hospitality, and Co-Chair Kids Market.

X. New Business

All new business was moved to the next meeting due to time constraints. Items to be added to the new agenda are:

- 1.) Snakes Alive Assembly
- 2.) Personalized year books

XI. Next Meeting – Wednesday, October 12, 6:30 p.m. in the MLS Library

*** Report Submitted the Kids Night Out (KNO) Committee, Val Newcomb (chair)**

1. The teachers would coordinate KNO have proposed viewing "PG" movies because they feel the selection of "G" only movies has really been a challenge for a couple of reasons: 1) There are very few "G" movies these days (sadly) and 2) The teachers feel it will broaden the appeal of KNO, because they often have kids asking "what's the movie" and kids have seen all of the recent ones and especially all of the G movies (and they skew much younger) and kids may be more inclined to sign up for KNO if they haven't heard of the movie and Debbie can vouch and if it's perceived as a 'cooler' movie. PG movies are approved by Albemarle County Schools for in-school viewing. For the first KNO event, Debbie Parmelee has been researching appropriate, family-friendly PG titles and has ordered a few from Amazon.com for previewing. She has proposed "Slappy and the Stinkers" for the event on 9/23.

2. Popcorn won't be served 9/23 and instead a parent has donated "free water and snack". The popcorn has proven to be a mess to clean up after the movie and after the last spring event when bagged snacks were served (leftover from last year's Fall Fest) clean up was very easy. This will be a test to see if kids like it and the clean up moves along more quickly. If we are better than break even we'll plan to reimburse this snack/water expense in future, otherwise we will ensure it is donated.

3. The updated flyer was sent to Kim/Brandi for approval and will be going into back pack mail Thursday. We will not mention the new movie policy specifically, but will include a generic mention to go to MLSPTO.org for details on which movie will be shown.

4. KNO Budget: We plan on 8 teachers and have a goal of 100 kids per session. This keeps the teacher/kid ratio low and allows for a break even event including the continued gift cards for our two custodians who help after ours with clean up. Last year we started off planning on 6 teachers and it really goes much more smoothly with 8.