

*JR Briggs PTA Meeting Minutes*  
October 14, 2015

<i>President:</i>	Sarah Dorsey	<i>Vice President:</i>	Michelle Parkinson
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Myriah Zwicker	<i>Secretary:</i>	Cathryn Bebeau-Smith

**Welcome**

- Michelle Parkinson opened the meeting at 6:05; 12 members attended the meeting

**Principal's Report**

- The decreased number of teachers present for tonight's PTA meeting is due to *Parent-Teacher Conferences* that are beginning tomorrow, October 15<sup>th</sup>; typically, there is approximately a 90-95% parent attendance rate for the conferences; the 2<sup>nd</sup> *Parent-Teacher Conference* is next week, October 21<sup>st</sup>
- One of the two *Juvenile Officers* assigned to Ashburnham, Sgt. Chris Conrad, was present for the meeting; John Boucher is the second officer
- Mrs. McGrath acknowledged that the presence of the officers were critical in the success of *International Walk-to-School Day* occurring on October 7<sup>th</sup>; everyone was kept safe on the roads, it was a positive experience and it generated a lot of positive feedback
- As a reminder, please do not be alarmed when seeing a police cruiser on school grounds, it is the duty of the *Juvenile Officer* to be present with the cruiser; these officers are 'good guys', people the school can reach out to and coordinate efforts with for the benefit of the students and families
- Sgt. Chris Conrad, reiterated the role of the Officers and the importance of being able to share information with school administrators as well as provide daily coverage and support to the schools (in Ashburnham and Westminster); he added his role is also to get involved with school activities such as reading a story to the 1<sup>st</sup> grade class
- Mrs McGrath stated the funding for this program results from the police department's overtime budget; the benefit of the program will be evaluated at the end of the school year and if funding resources can be identified, there is hope that the program can continue next school year
- Ashburnham's 250<sup>th</sup> Parade* – efforts are underway to have the float from the parade assembled in the lobby for all to see
- Math-A-Thon – Superhero STEAM Night*, November 6<sup>th</sup>, is a community event when teachers plan games you can play; students are encouraged to wear a superhero costume; funds collected are designated for the purchase of a playground sun shade
- PARCC testing (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers)* – taken on-line, pros and cons were weighed; the resulting scores for the school will not be out until December of this year; math has been identified as an area of weakness, therefore, bins were created to assist in gaining more strength in this area; for example, there is a booklet in the bins that specifically target the area of need for vocabulary so words and terminology can be understood; resources will also be available on-line
- Dr. Mazzola will be at Briggs on October 20, 2015 at 8:30am in the library for anyone who wants to meet him; he is eager to talk to parents and hear their feedback; he has a *Strategic Plan* and a survey has been developed to assist him in gathering needed information; the survey focuses on two areas: one area addresses how effectively the school communicates with family and the second area is a list of five questions

**Secretary's Report**

- There are currently 80 PTA members; the *PTA Meeting Minutes* from September 16, 2015 were reviewed and a motion to accept the Minutes was unanimously approved

**Treasurer's Report**

- The *Bank Reconciliation Report* (end date of September 30, 2015) was handed out and reviewed; motion was made to approve the *Bank Reconciliation Report*, seconded and approved

- *Mini-grant Proposal*: the 4<sup>th</sup> grade is asking for \$105.00 to purchase decks of cards, dice and Ziploc bags; these items are to be used in games which will reinforce the skills students are learning and the students would even be able to keep them at home to use; a motion to approve this grant was unanimously agreed
- The *Box Top* deadline was met

### ***Housekeeping***

- The Bylaws were approved, however, the word “spirituality” cannot be removed since it is recognized as a National PTA term, therefore, it will remain in the document
- *Staff Appreciation Luncheon* is tomorrow, parents are assisting in providing the food
- A total of \$185.00 was earned in the BJ Fundraiser
- *Tea Collection* – an on-line shopping website, the school earns 15% of the total of all orders, shoppers also receive a discount
- Coupon Book – “Sample” book was passed around for all to view paying close attention to the expiration dates of the coupons in the book; general consensus was positive as long as the majority of the purchasers could have approximately one year to use the coupons
- *Bags to School* – pick up date will be November 4, 2015; there is hope that since people will be voting at the school on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, they will be reminded of the event and be able to drop off their donations by the next day; donations can include any fabric, stuffed animal, even sneakers!; the school receives \$200.00/ton for each textile; in the past, \$200-\$500 has been earned; please reach out to family, friends, neighbors etc. to maximize this ‘easy’ fundraiser!

### ***Discussion: Generating Parent Involvement***

- The PTA is trying to be proactive with increasing parent involvement; there is a draft of an *Event Volunteer Form* that will hopefully assist parents to be able to plan their volunteer time and efforts
- Some ideas generated:
  - ✓ display information during the *Book Fair* and *Parent-Teacher Conferences*
  - ✓ create a calendar so parents can see an overview of the events that occur throughout the school year
  - ✓ design a ‘recruiting’ poster stating, “*We Need You!*”
  - ✓ display a sign-up sheet entitled, *Looking for Volunteers*
  - ✓ remind parents that the *Guide to Chairing a PTA Event* is kept in a resource binder in the library for all to refer to
  - ✓ have a written outline specific to an event easily available so a parent can scan what is needed for the event in order to decide whether to chair the event or assist with parts of it
  - ✓ foster the connection between someone who has chaired the event in the past with a parent/volunteer who wants to chair a current event
  - ✓ adjust Facebook so that information can be posted by an authorized user but block any ability for viewers to be able to post a comment, therefore, creating a ‘bulletin board’ parents can use as reference
  - ✓ Mrs. McGrath discussed how she could send a text out as a reminder, an avenue that is new this year with the update in technology
  - ✓ Miss Lilley noted that in reviewing her volunteer forms that were filled out, there were parents that are looking specifically to be involved in PTA events

### ***Open Forum***

- Becky Pilsbury – *Schoolastic Book Fair* Oct 14 through 21<sup>st</sup>
- Mrs. McGrath noted that Tiffany Davis is not able to run *Movie Night* on December 4<sup>th</sup> but Tiffany can do the flyers; Paula can help with organizing the event and 2 parents, Tiffany MacGillivray and Emily Littlejohn, have offered to chair the event = thank you ladies!!; a variety of movie choices were discussed and, *The Polar Express* was unanimously approved for *Movie Night* (bells were suggested too as a possible gift for the students who attend)

- Logowear – current inventory has already been paid for, therefore, all purchases will be income added directly to capital funds; discussed displaying logowear within the school, perhaps a case outside the library; reviewed the past idea about using a “thermometer” as a visual aid for fundraising efforts so everyone can watch the progress; also discussed developing a list of what certain events costs so parents and PTA members are aware (for example, the helmets that were provided “free of charge” for participants of last year’s bike event costs \$40 *per helmet*); fundraising amounts could also be listed to increase awareness: *Box Tops* gained the school \$1,500.00 and *Bags to School* gained \$500.00; *Order Forms* or a web site is needed for ordering logowear

Meeting adjourned at 7:20p

***Next PTA Meeting is November 18<sup>th</sup> @ 6p in the library***