



## Bishop PTO Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: March 24, 2010

In Attendance:

Laura Fairbanks, Jessica Baxter, Steve Carme, and Tess Hartwell-Neuman, Amy Speare, Teacher Rep- Justine Viveros, Enrichment- Alison Vaishnaw, Special Guest- Tom Quintal

Meeting Open: 7:00

Introductions/Welcome- Laura Fairbanks, Minutes approved from last meeting.

Treasurer's Report- Michelle is out but sent updated budget. Very close to meeting annual drive goal. Menotomy liquor funds up 6x what they were. Not many new expenses, some hospitality costs for incoming K parents. Wrapping paper internet sales payment came in finally and the PTO has decided to give Coffee Pond one more chance for next year.

Fundraising Update- Jess Baxter: Chocolate sale did really well. SCRIP has not done that well, so it may be something to only pull out during holidays. Stop & Shop program is about to come to close for year and brought in about \$500. The Bear Fair is the next big fundraiser. Mr. Carme will donate \$100 gift card and shopping trip to winning kids if 100 families sign up for Stop & Shop. This will be used as a silent auction item for the Bear Fair. There are many promotional programs under the S&S points program to benefit families just for signing out. This is free money for the school without doing anything but signing up and shopping for the groceries you already shop for. Jess will be at town day to promote this further.

Enrichment Update- Alison Vaishnaw: Alison is out but sent an update.

Principals Update- Steve Carme: 5 of 7 schools have heard back about accreditation. Bishop did receive the accreditation. Kathy Bodie was offered and accepted the full time Superintendent position. One parent who bought the daffodils for daffodil day also got a bear with the purchase, but didn't want it. The bear will be used in the Bear Fair as a prize or auction item. The MCAS started yesterday. As usual they received a prompt to write about something. This year they were asked about what they would do if they had a day off. On April 6 & they will have the ELA test. The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade test ELA is tomorrow and Friday. Previous years were three days long, now only 2. In May, the Math MCAS will take place.

School Spirit Week went well. The time capsule will be placed somewhere in house to be viewed for 5 years and then a decision will be made what to do with it. The lockdown team are still final planning the lockdown. This will be carried out soon (practice).

The deficit is down to about \$3.5M. It looks like 11-12 classroom positions will be eliminated. Bishop will probably absorb two of those. The current 1<sup>st</sup> grade has 4 classes but could be reduced to 3 and the class size would only be about 24 students. The other cut can potentially be carried out as the combining of grades in a multi-age classroom. As the budget is finalized we'll know more. Bishop only has one non-professional status teacher (Ms. Dooly). It is expected that non-professional status teachers throughout the district will be "pink slipped" and rehired next year. Mr. Carme noted that this added to the "yes" column in terms of whether to retire or not. Teachers and parents will form a committee (elected) as well as some system staff, will probably be chaired by the assistant superintendent. Candidates for Principal will be interviewed by this



committee. It is expected that the new principal will be decided before the end of the year. During the assembly today there were many funny questions such as "will the rules change?" "Will the new principal change the mascot/logo?" April 2<sup>nd</sup> no school The 12<sup>th</sup> is the next advisory counsel meeting. See school calendar for other upcoming dates.

Amy noted that there should be a change made to last meeting notes- "Possibly 12-13 classes could be cut at Bishop," actually should've stated "district wide," not at Bishop.

Art, Music and phys ed teachers will be cut, but it is expected that these programs will be reduced not eliminated. Mr. Carme noted that it is already a cycling program where an instructor covers more than one school. Some of the K assistant teachers could provide some of the K programs for the teachers. A parent emailed Mr. Carme about (Gabriel Lawrence) organizing volunteer parents to provide instruction. Years ago, art was pulled from the district, but Bishop had volunteers keep the program going. Bishop has looked at keeping the program the same for grades 1-5 and reducing the program for K, but possibly using the assistant teachers to augment. Principals don't want to sacrifice these programs, but when the budget cuts are drastic sometimes this is looked at as a possible option. The library program is looked at being cut at all levels in the district. The multi-grade possibility will require further discussion with parents and others before this were to happen. Parents will be asked if they would be willing to have their kids in this class, then planning, review, and additional discussions will happen. Years ago Mr Carme went to a conference about multi-age group classrooms. This would require having an assistant in the classroom. Certain curriculum would be handled by separating the group and having the assistant provide some of the teaching. At the Dallin two separate curricula were taught by same teacher. Is this the approach? In some cases, there is overlap, in other curriculum, the groups would probably be separated for math and social studies. Depending on curriculum and grade levels, things would be handled differently. We will plan it out together and make the decisions in discussion with teachers and parents. Before renovation at Bishop, there was previously a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade combined in the gym.

Justine provided update from the teachers- Thank you again for the teacher grants.

Alison Vaishnaw- Enrichment Update:

Whole school assembly with Boston Ballet, \$100 of which cost was covered a discount that we got because of switching to the new school photographer Coffee Pond

Otherwise mostly workshops for different grades in support of their curriculum:

K Habitat Frogs and Toads March 17th, class workshops

1 New England Aquarium "Tidepool experience" March 19th, class workshops

2 Japanese story teller Motoko returned for a full day - an assembly and class workshops March 5th

3 Wampanoag educator from Plimoth plantation, Feb 3rd, class workshops

4 Mad Science Rocks and Minerals Feb 24th, class workshops

5 Hands on History, Revolutionary War, Mar 3rd, grade level assembly

Upcoming:

April 15th Bay Colony Educators for G3 and G5

April 29th and 30th, Habitat "Soil" program for G1

May 6th Kidstock theater workshops for G3

May 7th Museum of Science "States of Matter" for G5

May 28th "Tillie lays and Egg" author for K and G1

Working on an "Art Residency" with a visiting art teacher for each class during the week June 7th-11<sup>th</sup>. In the past this has been done in gym or other classes.



Town animal control officer and animal inspector, Tom Quintal. Mr. Quintal talked about being asked to come in tonight to address parents' issues with dogs. All the information provided is available online. "Basic stuff"- (handout), fear of separation, baths, loud noises, the dark, and dogs kids may be afraid of your dog.

Realize this in talking to other parents addressing dog issues in respect to children's fears.

Trainer handout- "A dog is a dog, not a child," In 2006 3 recorded dog bites in Arlington. In 2007, 20 recorded dog bites, 2008 18, 2009, 20. A bite requires a quarantining process. Mr. Quintal spoke about the inconvenience and issues this raises such as vaccinations which cost \$750 (rabies) every time someone is bitten. He offers people rules required to get your dog license so that people understand, rather than immediately give them a ticket. During warm weather there are many dogs out. There are now over 1500 dogs on the books, many more are probably not registered. Very important to keep dogs vaccinated. Cat bites are also documented. Cats are also required to have rabies vaccinations by law. Handout- Preventing dog bites against children- It is best to prevent as once it has happened, this causes trauma for dogs and humans. The dog may lose its home or be euthanized. Teach children not to touch pets, chase or run at pets. They are at the same height raising the threat. The dog wants to play and doesn't sense that they can easily hurt the child.

The Rules:

Primary goal is safety. In MA the rabies tag must be on the dog at all times. If there is no record, a dog is held for 10 days, which if rabies infected would die. If there is no record, rabies shots will start for human bite victims immediately. Locally we have raccoons, skunk, foxes, possums, turkeys, red tailed hawks, and coyotes. Animal problems are seasonal. Currently domestic animals are not an issue, wild animals are the seasonal problem. If a raccoon bites a cat (for example), and the cat does not have a record of rabies vaccinations, the cat must be quarantined for 10 days.

A leash is required in town.

People must pick up after their pets- even during snow/weather. Compared to some areas, however, citizens of Arlington do a pretty good job of cleaning up after their pets.

Dogs are not allowed on school property during school hours, before or after they must be on a leash of no longer than 6 feet.

Issues can be resolved in a legal manner or between individuals as adults. The law is limited and it is better to communicate with the owners in question. 'Basic Stuff.' Handout on golden retriever who jumped up and ate child's sandwich. Hopefully the information provided will assist parents in persuading others to leave their dogs at home or negotiate the situation. Handout- "All I really need to Know I learned in Kindergarten."

If there continue to be problems, Mr. Quintal will do his best to alleviate the situation but asks parents to also try to work on the problem.

The School requests that parents don't walk their dogs to school. The school does not allow dogs on the property itself. When spring comes, there is concern that this will become an issue again.

A parent raises concern over her son's fear of dogs and the problems this raises if dogs are walked to school as it becomes a daily concern. This also causes issues where kids have to walk in the street to go around the parents congregating on the sidewalk. Another parent expressed her own continuing fear about dogs. Tom states that this will hopefully be a proactive approach to dealing with the issue. Mr. Carme will send out another reminder.

Owners have expressed unhappiness with the no leash rule, but as there are dog issues and other people have issues with dogs, therefore this rule is important. Knowing your dog is important, knowing what could trigger them and avoiding those situations. Hope this is enough information to avoid these kinds of problems. Remind children to stay away from the raccoons



and other wildlife. A parent asked about geese attacks. Tom said there are not, but gets called for injured swans. Most wild rabies cases are raccoons, skunks, and bats. Out of the last 5 bats sent out last year, 2 had rabies. Share the handouts with other parents!

Amy Speare gave an update on Spirit Week- went well, three more dates on Fridays until June. The kids really enjoyed giving the announcements. T-shirts were ordered. Fun stuff for Bear Fair were ordered. On Earth day they'd like to do something to promote the day. The 5<sup>th</sup> graders are learning about erosion so this could be worked in. Also, it would be possible to have students do a field cleanup (in preparation for Bear Fair). Wilson farms was going to donate a shrub, but we didn't have enough to make that happen. Possibly biospheres or other growing projects- Amy will speak to Ms. Hess Mahan. The tote bags that are planned for Town Day, could be ordered and used, but need lead time to order and perhaps wouldn't be ready in time.

Meeting closed 8:28.