

Burning Tree PTA Meeting Minutes – June 3, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by President Olivia Lai. The May 6, 2008 PTA meeting minutes were approved.

**President's Report:** Olivia Lai thanked everyone for coming. It has been an honor serving as your PTA President. It has been a great learning experience, a lot of hard work, but also fun and rewarding. I believe we accomplished many things this year. The kindergarten Family to Family program went well, the K playground is up, we've added climbing walls, the BT Website is up and running, and we have had some great speakers. Lisa Sanfuentes has been a joy to work with. She will be a wonderful PTA president next year. Dr. Chaset and Aaron Tark have been incredibly supportive, it is sad that Dr. Chaset will be leaving. Friday are the two farewell celebrations 4:30-6:30 here at the school, and in the evening there will be a party.

**Principal's Report:** Dr Chaset - This is the time of year when I share what the organization will look like. We were cut one position in the Learning Center and one teacher in 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> years. Dr. Stetson has asked us to submit an organizational plan. Based on projections for next year - Kindergarten will have three classes of 25, 24, 24 1<sup>st</sup> grade three classes of 26, 25, 22. 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will have three classes of 23, 23, 19, Grade 3 will have three classes of 23, 23, 20, Kindergarten LC one class of 10, Grade 4 will have four classes of 24, 24, 24, 21 and Grade 5 will have four classes of 24, 23, 23, 20. There will be 12 children in the first grade LC. There will be 13 children in the LC class for grades 2 and 3 and six children for LC grades 4/5. One teacher has been cut from the third grade section. Some staff this year wanted to change grade levels because they wanted to grow. Facility Report: the only activity in the building this summer is the Whitman cluster for a three week program. There is limited activity because hallway tiles will be replaced. We have 8 staff members at U of MD Arts Teaching Institute. They will learn more about the integrative arts - being more strategic with integrating arts classes and other classes

**Treasurer's Report:** Lisa Norwalk discussed the current and future budget. We will come in over budget with the school store. On the expense side, some money has not been spent in certain categories. The start up funds for next year are about \$20,000. We need to spend some of the extra money before the year ends or allocate it to the Wish List. There will be no fund raiser next year, but we will have a targeted campaign to raise the money. It was a tough decision to make, but we hope it will work out. We lowered our expectations for the Dine-Out income for the proposed budget. On the expense side, we cut a bit on a few items. We have several items on the Wish List. The Dye Cut Letters and tool in the copy room need to be replaced, as well as paper cutters. We would like to convert chalk boards to white boards for the classrooms. A parent e-mailed a request for better science equipment. The MSA has started testing in science in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades and eventually, elementary schools will ramp up their science programs. We would like to purchase 12 additional microscopes, 2 sets of slides, magnifying glasses for in-class observations, astronomy visual aids and maps, children information trade books in science. The total is about \$5000. For Assessment Tools we need about \$300.

On the Wish List we have a portable sound system for about \$1500. It is a very strong system and upgrade with a built in CD player. This allows for our performances to be taken outside, and there is an option to have a wireless mike system. We will have to pursue getting ceiling fans in the all purpose room. This will go through MCP. We need the back walkway to be more wheel chair accessible. It would also be nice to spruce up the lobby. We have lost over 100 balls in the back playground. Kids are not taking care of the equipment. We need to encourage the children to take more responsibility. One of the parents mentioned removing specific trees-arborists were reluctant to get rid of whole trees. We still owe landscaper \$2000. A request was made by Ira Feldman to enhance environmental studies in the school. He has a colleague who is an environmental educator who can give us ideas about enhancing our program. The Enhanced Environmental Curricula is a program which would cost \$5000-\$7500 to implement.. Does the school need county approval to introduce these new programs? We are voting on wish list items with money accumulated THIS year. Move that we create an environmental education committee. We need to allocate funds that are being carried over. Have we considered putting up security cameras by the doorways? Some schools have them that are near heavy pedestrian areas. The cost is high – about \$23,000. Ira will be chair of environmental committee. The motion to create a committee is approved. Laura Flicker, Helene Granof, and Mrs. Friedman would be interested in serving on the committee. Pop up tents are also on the wish list. In the 2007 Wish List, the Kindergarten Playground came out under budget. Gym improvements are still pending-waiting for the invoices. New dye cut letters After the Wish List, we have about \$2000 left - \$1000 for the lobby, \$200 for spring fair tents, and \$100 for basketball nets. A motion to approve \$14,000 on wish list items passed.

**Vice Presidents' Report:** Volunteers: Brenda Conroy reported that as of May 31, 4,400 volunteer hours were logged in. This is a gross underestimate because of all the work done at home. Thank you to everyone for a phenomenal effort. Next year there will be a reference check for the Ident-a-Kid kit. One school loves it, the other gave it a mixed review – they liked it for logging hours but not good for big events. If the problem is signing out, it would be possible to have people estimate how long they will be in the school when they log in. Some positions are vacant and they will be in Friday's Burning Issues. Thank you for people who chaired events this year. And thank you to Aaron Tark, we are still not sure if this will be his last PTA meeting. You have been so supportive. Fundraising: Cindy Campbell is not here but wanted to thank Ellie Abramowitz and all the others for their wonderful help with the Spring Fair. There will be a Ben and Jerry Dine Out on the last day of school. Motion to approve proposed budget. Approved.

**New business:** The start of the school year is on a Tuesday, August 26<sup>th</sup>. The open house will be on Monday, the 25<sup>th</sup> of August.

Following the PTA meeting, Aaron Tark will give a presentation on Classroom Meetings.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michele Zweig Greenberg, Recording Secretary