

Burning Tree PTA Meeting Minutes – October 7, 2008 at 7 pm

The meeting was called to order by President Lisa Sanfuentes. The September 2, 2008 meeting minutes were approved.

**President's Report:** Thank you to Robin **Rosenblum (Lisa, is this her last name?)** and Nancy Samit for a great Back-to-School picnic. Thank you to Pam Janssen for Beautify Burning Tree. It was a beautiful day, a lot of people showed up and everyone did great work. Karen Van Loon and her small team did a great job in getting the school directory published in record time and I thank her profusely. If there is any incorrect or missing information in the directory, send a note to Karen and she will issue a monthly update sheet that you can insert right into your directory. Walk to School Day is tomorrow – please come. Help is needed in the school's office on Friday, the 24<sup>th</sup>, from 12 to 4 pm.

**Principal's Report:** Mrs. Erdrich reported we are making progress on our school floors. To date the main hallway up to the gym is being replaced. They pull up tiles and vacuum and our building services people vacuum again and put a cement skin so it keeps the dust out. They will put in standard MCPS white/off-white. We are always telling the kids to walk on the 3<sup>rd</sup> tile and thanks to the PTA we will have alternating blue and green tiles. It costs more money to do colored tiles. So we paid the extra money out of the PTA. Today we are looking into the school magnets – having the logo in our vestibule rendered in tile. That would look great. The logo was voted on by our students and rendered by a former 5<sup>th</sup> grade BTES student. The main part of the tile work will be done before International Night. Right near the KG doors, where the hall slopes we will have non-stick tiles. Our new first grade teacher and class is up and running. We also have a full-time para-educator to help us with the inclusion of our Learning Center students. Another upgrade to our school is a new thermostat for the APR. We have converted to heat as of today, so dress your kids in layers because it will get warm outside. Visiting Day for parents is from 9:15 to 10:30 am on Monday, Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>. The mock election is coming up on Oct. 30<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders are holding it. It will be a closed ballot election done on the computers. We will not advocate for any particular candidate; posters will focus on why you need to vote and why voting is important. 2<sup>nd</sup> graders will explain voting process to different classrooms and explain about the election. We also have SGA elections for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders. President and Vice-Presidents are 5<sup>th</sup> graders; Treasurer and Secretary are 4<sup>th</sup> graders. On Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>, my first principal's coffee will be held here at school. The focus is on "Secrets of Raising Smart Kids" based on an article I've read. LICE – yes, we have some lice. Most schools in Montgomery County have lice this time of year. Right now, we have 8 cases: 2 in KG, 1 in 1<sup>st</sup>, 3 in 2<sup>nd</sup>; 2 in 4<sup>th</sup>. The policy has changed because it used to be a no-nit policy; nits are the eggs. Last December, it changed that a child couldn't attend school if the nit is over ½ inch big (**Lisa, pls. make sure I have this change in policy correct**). We used to do a prophylactic screening, and it's no longer allowed by MCPS. It's not been proven to stop a lice epidemic and there is the confidentiality piece. What should a teacher do when a child scratching his/her head? Send the child to the health room. The health aide can do a head check and also check that child's sibling. There will be a rechecking when child returns to school to prevent lice from spreading. It's really up to the parent to be really vigilant. Kids don't get lice because their hair is dirty. We've talked and emailed the teachers about what they can do

to prevent lice from spreading: no sharing of combs, brushes, hats, and to keep coats separate. You can teach your kids on how to prevent this. We will look into whether the County will allow us to hire a professional service to check the kids for lice and/or admit permission slips from parents allowing school volunteers to check for lice. We had a Code Red/Code Blue day. The drills are required from MCPS (just like fire drills). Code Blue is that there is a problem in the area and we need to know where all the children are. Teachers send in attendance to the office. Code Red is a total lockdown; we cover the doors; keep kids away from doors and windows. And we talk about safety. If your kids didn't tell you this happened, it's a good sign. We didn't want to scare the kids. There are lots of terrific clubs the PTA is doing. Fitness Frogs is where the kids are doing laps around the field and there is healthy competition among the classes to see how many laps kids can do. We keep count by class by month. It keeps kids moving and promotes health. Ms. Loftus wants to do Basketball Drills.

**Katerina Papaioannou** - we have 310 members for the PTA out of 376 families. Only some 4<sup>th</sup> graders don't have directories yet because of a delay at the printers.

**Lisa Sanfuentes on behalf of Karen Van Loon (Lisa, isn't this right that you filled in for Karen?)** – International Night is on the 16<sup>th</sup> and there is still time to sign up to set up a booth, conduct a performance and participate in the parade.

**Lisa Norwalk** - we are in great shape financially because we've had a fabulous membership drive and the Fill our Pond campaign is going well. We are starting to pay for items that would help the school. Please contact me with any questions.

**Vicki Herson** – the UNICEF collection for Halloween is coming home in the backpacks. We have a date for the Fannie Mae Walk for the Homeless – Oct. 28th. This is where kids walk during recess to raise money and don't lose any school time.

**Darrin Hartzler** - the County's operating budget is very tight this year. I will bring up the lice issue (re. conducting lice checks in school) at the next meeting.

**Yvonne Van Lowe** – I am hosting a parent get together next Tuesday at 7 pm at my house for any parents of students with accommodations. I would love to see you all there.

**Mrs. Granof** – all of the teachers are very appreciative of the money we have received. We have a club for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders where we teach them how to build robots. Scientists are on hand, it's free and the club is full with 29 kids (members).

**Other Business** – please subscribe to BTNET. The Environmental Education Committee is up and running. See Ira Feldman if you would like to join. Delia Tetelman to look into tiles that can block sound in the APR to make the room less noisy, especially during lunch.