

**Muraco Elementary School Parents Association
Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2013**

Welcome & Introductions of and from Shawn Macannuco, MESPA Chair and Kristen Bellaire, MESPA Vice Chair.

School Committee Announcement: Susan Verdicchio

Former Muraco parent, Susan Verdicchio introduced herself and her candidacy for the School Committee. The School Committee is an elected body that sets policy and goals for the Winchester School System. This year, 2013, there are two open seats, with three (3) candidates seeking election.

March 26th is Election Day. A debate between the candidates is set for Sunday, March 17th. You can attend, or watch on Win Cam, the debate set @ 2pm Winchester High School. And/or to get to know Susan better you can visit her website at www.susanvforwinchesterschools.com.

Parent to Parent:

Is a community based, nonprofit organization which has provided education, support, and networking opportunities to Winchester parents since 1982. All events are free and open to the public. More information can be found at www.parenttoparentwinchester.org or by e-mailing info@parenttoparentwinchester.org.

Upcoming programming includes:

The Gift of Confidence, Resilience and Competence (So you can watch them handle the world) Tuesday, February 26, 7:00-9:00pm, First Congregational Church.

Successful Transitions to High School Monday, March 4, 7:45pm at Winchester High School.

Managing Change: Creating Smooth Transitions in Childhood Monday, March 18, 7:00-9:00pm at Lincoln School.

Duct Tape Parenting: A Less is More Approach to Raising Respectful, Responsible, and Resilient Kids Tuesday, April 30, 7:00pm – refreshments, 7:30-9:00pm – presentation, McCall Auditorium.

Please visit the website for additional information on the upcoming seminars.

Lynch PTO Welcome:

Paige Bertocci and Chloe Durant were present to welcome families in transition from Muraco to Lynch as a result of recent redistricting. An orientation for parents is scheduled for February 27th for those interested. Parents are welcome to contact Paige or Chloe directly with questions/concerns.

Muraco PTO Budget Update:

Jon Carlisle distributed and reviewed the Treasurer's Report to date. Please refer to his report.

The Student Council would like to access funds for new nets for the basketball stands on the playground. The Skating activity raised approximately \$800.00.

We are still looking into a new sound system. J. Dinizzio provided information for the contractor who completed similar work at Vincent Owen. The estimated cost is roughly \$2000.00 with surplus being used from the 5th Grade committee.

The Suzanne Callahan fund is contributing to and assists with MASP.

School Committee Update:

Chris Nixon provided information and updates regarding a possible Capital Improvement project for Muraco's backyard blacktop. The current blacktop is in need of repair, with concerns focused on the toxic nature of the decaying material. The estimated cost of repair is \$30-35 thousand dollars.

In addition, Chris referenced the 10-year ADA plan includes installing a ramp from the back of the building to the blacktop/playground area. Currently the school does not afford handicap accessibility to the outside area. The cost of this ramp is estimated to be 6 figures. An engineer team is looking at the possibility of raising the blacktop 6 inches, which would result in a shorter ramp and decreased cost.

In 2000/2001 parents raised money to fund the purchasing of playground equipment. Chris posed the question, "Can we do that again" in referencing the possibility of off setting the cost of the repair to the blacktop.

In addition, Chris shared information regarding the District Budget. The School Committee recommended a 4.82% increase for FY 2014. Included in this recommendation were level services, a Director of Personnel, and a Director of Technology. This increase did not include an annual wage adjustment for staff.

The Town Manager countered with a 3.34% increase inclusive of an annual wage adjustment for teaching staff. Chris indicated that by including the annual wage adjustment in the budget it removed, what he felt were important, negotiating opportunities. Additionally, it would be a struggle to meet level services and potentially result in letting go of some staff.

The Finance Committee was currently reviewing the Town's budget as a whole with a final release date set for February 15, 2013. FYI the deadline for proposing an override would be February 19, 2013.

Committee Updates and Volunteer Opportunities:

Curriculum Enhancement Committee: Amanda Lewis

Curriculum Enhancement Update: To date \$1395.24 of the total \$5454.00 budget has been spent, leaving \$4054.76 remaining. A second round of letters will be sent to the Muraco teachers/staff via Constant Contact this month.

Mentor Committee: Michele Kimpton

Mentor program is underway. We had 117 kids sign up in 4th and 5th grade. We have made matches for all of them with the exception of kids requesting Policeman, Baker and Cartoonist. We hope to have these resolved by the end of the week. The children will meet 1-3 times with their mentors between now and April 1st. The night of sharing, where the kids discuss and present their experience is scheduled for April 4th, 6:30-8pm at Muraco gym. If you have good connections with a Baker, Policeman or Cartoonist please email me ASAP. Working on several options but none has panned out yet.

Publicity Committee: Sue Howland

Please remind folks to let me know about upcoming events/activities that are PR-worthy that would be great! My email is svhowland@yahoo.com and cell is 617-285-1713.

Upcoming Events:

Thursday February 14

100th Day of School

Saturday February 6-	February Vacation
Sunday February 21	Winter Concert Gr. 3-5 - 6:30pm @ Muraco
Thursday February 28	Science Fair K-2 4pm
Wednesday March 6	Science Fair 3-5 4pm
Thursday March 7	MCAS
March 18- April 5	Mentor Night 6:30pm
Thursday April 4	Authorfest
Tuesday April 9	K-2 Winter Concert - 6:30pm @ McCall
Thursday April 25	

Upcoming MESPA meetings:

Thursday, April 11th @ 8:45a.m. Muraco School

Websites:

MESPA	http://www.muracoparents.com
Muraco	http://www.edline.net/pages/Muraco_Elementary_School