

**Muraco Elementary School Parents Association
Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2012**

Approvals: Treasurer's report 07/01/12 to 10/24/12.

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

Winchester Got Lunch / ABC House:

Jennifer Regentz shared that 125 children in Winchester were served through the Winchester Got Lunch summer program. This program provides summer meals to children who receive subsidized meals during the academic school year. This is a non-profit program serving local youth. You can learn more about this program at WinchesterGotLunch.org.

Jennifer also spoke about A Better Chance (ABC). It began 41 years ago when four families were angered after the Town rejected the concept of busing in Winchester. These families banded together and began the Winchester chapter of ABC program. The mission of the program is to provide underprivileged but academically motivated young men with a different opportunity. Today the entirely volunteer and community based program is one of twenty-six in existence. The program is totally free and family-based (verses private institutions). Currently there are eight participants; 3 freshman, 3 sophomores, 1 junior and 1 senior.

The annual operating cost of ABC is \$175,000, all of which is privately funded through donations and fundraisers. This year Cummings Properties has committed to matching \$100,000. Approximately 80 volunteers provide various supports and services to the recipients. In addition to the volunteers, there is a live-in Resident Advisor and his wife. Other supports and services include, but are not limited to; host families, a Resident Tutor, specialty tutors, and medical & dental services.

The Board of ABC meets monthly and has on-going opportunities for us (the community) to get involved. A few of the sub groups include; facilities, transportation, student selection, college admission group, summer programming, fundraising, finance, publicity, nominating and advisory services (legal, financial and medical).

Interested Muraco families can reach out to Jennifer at Jenn.Regentz@abc.com.

Discussion about MCAS:

Laurie Kirby highlighted the upcoming changes to MCAS. MCAS ensures that curriculum is aligned with MA frameworks. In the 2013-2014 academic year the MCAS will be replaced with Common Core measured by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers (PARCC). The results of MCAS or PARCC testing guide funding from State and Federal government and inform teachers regarding potential teaching needs. The results also provide a snapshot of students' performance.

In addition to the above mentioned changes the PARCC will also look to increase effective writing skills for example by taking the 4th grade writing prompt beyond just a narrative. And, the testing will include a World Class Instructional Design and Assessment tool (WIDA) for ELL students. This assessment tool will assess reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

Quick Budget Update:

The budget was submitted and approved. Jon Carlisle, Treasurer, reviewed the budget with attendees.

During the budget review it was noted that the 5th grade committee, which is part of MESPA, currently has an overage of \$4752.55. Two thousand four hundred fifty six dollars and sixty-one cents is from 2012. These monies were the result of fund raising and the reimbursement of the Project Adventure trip that was cut short due to inclement weather. The remaining \$2,295.94 was left from two years ago. This class had intended to purchase a podium as their legacy gift, however to date this had not occurred.

Two questions were put forth: (1) what to do? (2) How to prevent this in the future? Recommendations for the 2011 monies were to purchase the podium and a plaque noting the gift from the class of 2011.

School Committee Update:

Chris Nixon provided information and updates regarding the matter of Redistricting and the High School Feasibility Study. More information regarding these topics can be found at the respective websites: www.winchesterredistricting.com and www.winchester.us and clicking on Winchester High School Feasibility Study

Committee has been reviewing the community proposed plans, as well as assessing the Map based system for redistricting. It appears that the K

Flex plan or Map 1 or 2 is the Superintendent's recommendation. There is one more Public Hearing set for 10/30 @ 7 p.m. for questions/comments.

In terms of the K Flex plan it does not move the necessary number of children to reach the previously determined "target number," however it does give the District flexibility. The outstanding issue is the rules associated with enrollment. For example, do siblings have priority or do transportation/busing issues determine assignment?

The Map based systems allows each school to achieve "target" number, however maps are fixed.

Important dates relating to the Redistricting are as follows:

- October 30th – Public hearing (location to be announced)
- November 5th – VOTE on Redistricting Plan

In regards to the High School, a feasibility study was conducted on 9 potential sites. Currently there are two locations being considered. The first is the existing site and the second is Skillings Field. The design plan is being based on an enrollment of 1340.

Timeline for decision making related to High School:

- November 2012 – Preferred Option identified
- December 2012 – Submit Preferred Option to the State for review
- Jan/Feb 2013 – Anticipated Feedback from State
- Fall 2013 – Debt Exclusion Over-ride to off set the cost. MSPA will be providing approximately 33% of the funding.

In the process of conducting the Feasibility study it appears that the cost to renovate/rebuild the school has doubled. While this is true, the Committee wants the community to understand that the dollar previously set did not account for inflation/time lapse. In addition, a renovation/rebuild option would require the need for swing space.

The preliminary design program needs to be submitted to MSBA in 2 weeks. The Committee expects a response by December 2012/January 2013.

The time is now for the Community to provide input into the design; for example a community pool and a theater space. Please visit the web sites, attend the meetings, or watch meetings on Win Cam at www.wincam.org.

Committee Updates and Volunteer Opportunities:
Curriculum Enhancement Committee: Amanda Lewis

We are in the process of updating the 1st letter to be sent to the teachers/staff. Have been in communication with John the treasurer to confirm this year's budget and have a copy sent to me to include with letter. Aiming to have letter to staff via constant contact by beginning of November.

UNICEF: Laura Moloney

Waiting for 500 Unicef boxes to be delivered. Should be delivered the end of this week.

Publicity: Sue Howland

We expect a photo of the Multicultural Fair to run in the Winchester Star on Thursday. And there are a group of photos that I posted on Patch.com. Here is the link:

<http://patch.com/N-fsnt>

If people have events coming up they would like to see promoted in the paper, please have them contact me.

Annual Appeal Drive: Dee McCurry

MESPA's Annual Appeal drive is going strong! We stand at \$15,430 so far donated which is less than \$5,000 away from our goal. Thank you to all who have generously donated. Don't worry if you haven't had an opportunity to do so yet. Log on to the MESPA website and donate today (http://www.muracoparents.com/?page_id=83).

Picture Day: Deanna Bonnett

Picture Day went very smoothly! Coffee Pond provided four photographers and that, combined with our four parent volunteers, allowed for a very comfortable pace of the morning and we comfortably finished all the classes in the time allotted.

Pictures are expected to be delivered within the next two weeks and retakes will be done on Wednesday, November 14th. A signed contract was sent to Coffee Pond to secure our 2013 Picture Day date which will be Tuesday, September 24th. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Upcoming Events:

Thursday November 1	Staff Appreciation Breakfast
Friday November 25	Flu Clinic
Tuesday November 6	No School (Professional Development)
Wednesday November 7	School Council Meeting 4-5 p.m.
Monday November 12	No School (Veterans Day)
Friday November 16	Muraco Fall Festival 6-8 p.m.

Wednesday November 21 Early Release
Thursday November 22 No School/Thanksgiving Day
Friday November 23 No School/Thanksgiving holiday
Wednesday December 5 School Council Meeting
Wednesday December 12 12/12/12 Day
Monday December 24-Tuesday January 1st No School (Holiday break)

Upcoming MESPA meetings:

Thursday, December 13 8:45am at Muraco School

Websites:

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