Middlebrook PTA Meeting

January 16 2013

1. Call to Order – Middlebrook School @ 9am
2. Approval of Dec 2013 Minutes
3. Principal’s Report – Maria Coleman
   1. 8th grade prep debate children have to research current events and evaluate pros/cons.
   2. Alex Koutsoukos won the Middlebrook World Geography Bee and will move onto the state prelims.
   3. Cafeteria is with working with Culinary arts class to see who wins the healthy choice meal that will be served as part of the menu.
   4. I-Stem- has new logo robotics program for grade 6th, from a grant that was requested.
   5. Grade 8 band concert was last Wednesday.
   6. Scott Driscoll with the PTA/WYC have a presentation next Wed.
   7. David Bernstein will present to parents at WHS for “Safe School Environment” and focus on the warning signs.
   8. Tools for schools (air quality) committee formed which includes parents, custodians, nurse, and student rep to regularly monitor the school and be in compliance with the program.
4. Teacher Representative – Luisa Nanos

**8Y**

* The students are engaged in The Great Debates with the other 8th grade teams
* In English class they have just finished Animal Farm, and they are still reading To Kill a Mockingbird in RWW
* Students enjoyed the frog dissection in Science class!

**8R**

* Conducting high school registration!
* Concluding the great debates series
* Participating in a mock congress during our independent Fairfield eng/ss unit
* Designing heart rate experiments

**8G**

* 8 Green English students are in the middle of studying Hiroshima by John Hersey. We are also viewing sections of a documentary on people who are still alive from that historic day.
* Students in science are enjoying doing the frog dissection and learning all about the comparative anatomy of many body systems.
* It's debate time in social studies! As a culmination to our unit on the Constitution and government, students researched a position on a controversial topic. They worked in small groups to construct arguments using the U.S. Constitution, federal court cases, common law, and statistics as evidence. This project pits team against team in a healthy academic competition.

**7Y**

* 7Y will be launching an interdisciplinary project concerning the Holocaust.
* Ongoing small service opportunities will continue to arise through the 7Y ARK group (Acts of Random Kindness).
* Students are preparing for their first Socratic Seminar presentation which will be a launching point for further presentations as the year progresses.

**7R**

* English: Students will begin to read ROLL OF THUNDER, HEAR MY CRY, which will help them build new understandings that the team will use as we begin our next interdisciplinary project.
* RWW: MACBETH will be at the center of our work as we study not just the play but Shakespeare and his world as well. Thanks to the PTA's generosity, “Shakesperience” will come to visit all RWW classes to help us better understand the play and its author.
* World Geography: The next focus will be the Middle East and in-depth current event studies to help us better understand the conflicts in that part of the world.
* Science: The study of Plate Tectonics continues and includes expanded studies of earthquakes and volcanoes. Students will also be doing some internet research in preparation for "informal debates" on the pros and cons of hydraulic fracking.
* Math7: Students are studying algebraic expressions.
* Advanced Math 7: Students are learning how to solve equations.
* Algebra: Students are learning how to solve systems of equations.
* World Language: Students are finishing a project on comparing their bedrooms with other rooms in the house, and they are also learning about commands and chores within the home.

**6Y**

* Gearing up for the team’s Mysteries of Egypt unit, beginning with a mummification lab in science
* Wrapping up the North to Freedom novel and enjoying the independent reading projects
* Participating in the math screening along with all other sixth grade teams to track progress
* Beginning the study of ancient civilizations in social studies, starting with Sumer in Mesopotamia

**6G**

* Six Green students have recently begun their journey along the banks of The Nile River in Egypt. We look forward to the culmination of our study of this ancient civilization when we open the tomb of the Pharaoh Tutankhamen. We expect to be open to the public during the third week in February. Stay tuned.
* Math: After studying the Fibonacci sequence, the students wrote fib poems in math class that followed the pattern of the Fibonacci sequence.
* Spanish: Students will learn how to describe direction words as well as items in the classroom. If your student comes home singing “La canción para las direcciones” (The direction song) feel free to join in! We will also be working on a project to end the Unit that is equivalent to those unforgettable books “Where’s Waldo?” rather this project is entitled “¿Dónde está Paquito?”
* Also, as Six Green reaches the midpoint of the year, the students will pause to reflect on how far they’ve come since entering Middlebrook and where they see their goals taking them for the rest of the year.

**6R**

* SS - Mr. Priest's classes have been learning about ancient Egypt and are getting ready to begin work on Egyptian mythology and a debate regarding unearthing tombs.
  + - * Language Arts - Mrs. Geisler is in the middle of READO unit where children are choosing their own genres of books and Mrs. Sedlak has begun her Author Expedition - students selecting an author and exploring their style.

Reminder: Middlebrook Yearbooks are still for sale online. Please visit the Yearbook [Edline](https://exchange.wiltonschools.org/owa/redir.aspx?C=c9mI2bMLWUqP7wonwx655ZzrX2X349AIa7gYt0kbJTzeJLFoG5zzyjnmqLrh4fzsej7TpIuTaxQ.&URL=https%3a%2f%2fwww.edline.net%2fpages%2fMiddlebrook_School%2fActivities%2fCo-Curricular%2fYearbook) page for details on how to order this vivid collection of memories from the school year.

1. President’s Report – Savet Constantine

* Scott Driscoll reminder Jan 22.
* Next Thursday Budget meeting with Dr. Richards 7pm Town Forum, PTA presentations at 9:30am-10:30am at Cider Mill. Increase of 4.66% over current budget, no major curriculum changes, mainly improvements.
* PTA’s can have position on budget if members vote to take a position. New state law prohibits school from using robo calls to remind parents to vote.
* Any member of public can attend a PTA meeting, but have to be a member. A reporter has to have permission to report PTA meeting info.
* Only members can vote.
* Pat Sesto, chair of the Norwalk River Valley Trail will present at next meeting.
* Turn Over shop gave 40k in donations sent out thank you for school district $10k/school.
* Newsletter thank you for parents to give to Turn over shop-money goes back to school
* We should create a committee for out healthy behavior for free time after lunch at Middlebrook. Need to set up meeting with kids involved. Maria will talk to student government.
* Commitment to PTA positions is Feb 1.

1. Officer Reports:

Vice President-Pam Hickey

* 3 new parent memberships. 5 down in staff.

Treasurer – Maria Wilcox

* Financials are out. Middlebrook doesn’t need 1099 form this year
* Cash/express 30k back 15k will be left.
* 8th grade we do mass mailing so we will have to go to Westport for mass mailing this is the closest location.
* $10,500 8th grade dance cost estimate. Tickets sales bring back around 8k.

Parent-At-Large – Stacy Crameri

* We have added 3 snow days so far. As of Thursday last day of school is June 12th.

1. Committee Reports:

Reflections

* 7 or 9 entries from Middlebrook
* 42 from the High School

Science Fair

* Less than 50 at Science Fair
* Science teachers should give extra credit for greater participation; kids are not motivated.
* February 4th Science Fair/ Snow day Feb 6th

Hospitality

* 6th – Fun night out Feb 7th need volunteers, $5/ child. DJ Jimmy Rominelly hosts and the hours are 7-9pm
* 7th –Fun night Feb 21st
* Special Ed- Planning Awareness Month “Small acts of kindness” April 1st

VIII. Adjournment