

PTO Meeting - 10/9/25

In Attendance: Alysun Kenney, Sarah Mackie, Lisa Bryant, Amanda Collison, Kate O'Malley, Jeff Parks, Josh Blagg, Courtney Cooper, Chris Cowan, Diana Lebeaux, Erica Thornton, Jess Frasier, Michelle Fudalik, Sok, Jackie Bombachi

Principal Update

Josh Blagg

- New hires - veteran teachers from other districts and brand new faces
- Focuses this year is restorative circles and conversations - work out differences, learn from mistakes, make amends (integrated into SEL, but also integrated into regular practices)
- Bionic project came in again - presentation followed by adaptive soccer; workshops w small groups - universal design, empathy & inclusion
- Clubs start next week - auditions for musical next week
- Rock, Paper, Scissors - 5 bracelets and challenge adults - if win, take bracelets - get to know each other and approach adults they don't know - community building
- Costumes for a Cause - week long fundraiser at end of October to raise money for Jimmy Fund; Halloween - awards at lunch for costumes

Jeff Parks

- Costumes for a Cause - to Chelmsford Food Bank
- Kevin Branco - new supervisor of students (in addition to Jen Crowley)
- 3 new math teachers - came from different districts; 2 8th, 1 7th
- Other new teachers - ELA, para, etc
- Introduce a Best Buddies program - Katie Simms, Jason Fredette & one other - conference at Devens; unified class & after school program
- Student Leadership - next week taking a dozen students to leadership conference at SNHU
 - New England League of Middle Schools - take kids to that
 - More opportunities to bring kids off campus / networking / bring back ideas
- Art Teacher - In-class Camera is the suggestion; Not use cell phones
 - School committee is debating cell phone use - state-wide bell to bell cell phone ban may be passed → Cell phone use will likely get stricter vs looser
 - Cameras from PTO recycle budget (plug right into the chrome books)
- High School is doing craft fair at McCarthy at end of November

School Committee Update - Diana Lebeaux

- Technology-related policies
 - Cell phone policy - waiting for what happens on at state level
 - What's needed for the ban - pouches, shoe rack, etc?
 - AI - when it is and isn't appropriate to use AI
 - Guidelines are put out in the technology use guidelines
 - Hiring a consultant to work on that issue / deep dive → constantly changing situation
 - Student data privacy, IP, Academic integrity
 - Other situations other districts have faced
- Design firm hired to work with town for new building project for Parker
 - Focus group meetings have occurred
 - First big public meeting on 10/22 at 7pm at Elks → one a month for next couple of months
 - Will open around 2030

- MCAS Results - looking closely at those & implications to district; no schools in need of state intervention / support → do we need to look at shifts in budget, etc
- MA Association of School Committees - debates resolutions for lobbying arm of group → whether or not to remove universal BMI screening from schools (Chelmsford voting in support of removing it given schools don't use info)
- Next meeting - looking into policy for all students at middle school level for academic options for high school level - introduce Nashoba at an earlier time in middle school career → what admissions policy is, etc; transparency about school selection process

Budget/Treasurer's Update - overview of financials for transparency

Minutes Approval for May / June - Minutes approved by Courtney motion; Erica Second

Parker Committee Update

- Scholastic Book Fair - 20-24 Oct
 - Emails, FB Posts
 - Middle of that week - family shopping night → Pizza, Paperbacks & Pumpkins - 22 Oct
 - Can order food ahead of time and pick up in cafeteria
 - Fun night - pumpkins displayed in courtyard
 - Volunteers to staff bookfair and shopping night - already started signups
 - Raffles / Awards for best pumpkins
 - Proceeds from fair are scholastic dollars to support library and book vending machine - restock vending machine at about \$1,300
 - Poll the kids at McCarthy - have ELA teachers ask the kids
- Parker Craft Fair - 07 Dec
 - Alysun to change facility request from 12/6 to 12/7
 - Consists of local and student vendors
 - Gingerbread house making competition
 - Raffles
 - Shadow Amy & Alysun as it's their last year doing it together

McCarthy Committee Update

- No Brainer Fundraiser (next week through Halloween)
 - Tough with 7th / 8th graders b/c don't want to sell, do or talk
 - Specific about what funds will be going to (write something clever)
 - Donate money that goes directly to 7th Grade Blacklight Dance, 8th Grade end of the year activities (was about \$75/kid with PTO) or choose to be given to both grades
 - Enter names in drawings for different items - just based on participation
 - Link to PayPal & Venmo
 - Nothing to lose - could be successful or not
- Enrichment: The Sober Truth - 06 Nov
 - Lisa & Jeff will connect
 - Just for 8th graders
- Recycle Day - 08 Nov - 8am - 12pm at Administration Building
 - Anything medal, electronics
 - All info will go home with volunteer link (HS volunteers mostly but would be nice to have more parents)
 - Joint with Center and McCarthy
 - Jeff Beard - already signed up
 - Volunteer link should be on Superintendents and McCarthy update
 - Bottle & Can Drive at McCarthy from 10-2 as well → Chelmsford Friends of Music

- Scholastic Book Fair - 08-12 Dec
 - Tried first one in 10 years last spring → accidentally sent elementary school kit
 - Brenda Desimone with Kristy (Librarian)
 - “Starbooks” - theme to get kids hooked (like Starbucks)
 - No ApplePay this year

Across Schools Discussion

- October Staff Appreciation - Oct & Nov
 - Pluck a Turkey
 - No Tricks, Just Treats
- Pride Wear Sales
 - Center Sports have a new owner - Glenn
 - Fundraiser
 - Online Store
- Kindness Day - 13 Nov (pick any day you want; coincide with spirit week)
 - Think of things to promote kindness
 - Be the I in Kind
 - Kindness spirit week at Parker - already done this year
 - Big bulletin board filled with post-its - take one
 - Do during SEL block
 - PTO supply post-it notes
 - Use bulletin board
 - Ask teachers to write things too
- UML Riverhawks - 28 Dec & 21 Feb
 - Fundraiser - go out and do things together
- Enrichment Ideas:
 - Hamilton via Swank streaming license (8th grade Foundations in Democracy?)
 - Jeff to ask Stephanie Quinn - stream in class
- Enrichment Ideas (con’t):
 - Chris Poulos - Bike trick guy speaking about bullying, respect, kindness
 - Check out / see how it’s adjusted for older kids
 - Sam Drazin - Kindness, inclusion, empathy, differences, etc (SR in Jan)
 - Brought in to South Row 2018/2019
 - Lives in CA / used to live in VT - physical disability similar to character in the book Wonder
 - Potentially bring him in for a Parent night - about \$1,000 so asking for PTOs to chip in
- New PTO calendar: <https://pto.chelmsfordschools.org/>

Looking Ahead in the 2025/2026 school year :

- Parker Science Fair/STEAM event
 - Josh interested again
- McCarthy Project 300 - kick off the week before Halloween (depends on when Mr Galliger is ready) and go to before Thanksgiving; Will explain the historical part of it and challenge kids to bring things in
- Other event dates already booked? See at-a-glance calendars
- Future PTO meeting platform - 14 May & 11 June must be in-person
 - Kate to reach out to Ginger to grab COCS zoom link for future meetings
- Need someone to spearhead updating By-laws for both PTOs - Kate O’Malley
- Need someone to update scholarship applications for both PTOs

Looking Ahead to the 2026/2027 school year:

- How to recruit new board members

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Parker Craft Fair (December 2025)
- Parker Pride Run (May 2026)

Our next PTO Meeting is **Thursday, November 13th @ 6:30 pm**

The next Council of Chelmsford Schools (CoCS) Meeting is **Thursday, October 16th @ 7:00 pm** in McCarthy library and virtual