

FISKE PTO GENERAL MEETING 2009-2010
Meeting Minutes: Thursday December 3, 2009
Fiske Library at 7:15 p.m.

Board Members: Jenn M., Kerri K., Laura H., Kathy V., Ann K. and Julie B.

Others Present: Elaine H., Robert A., Robert E., Adrienne F., Kate W., Mary G., Brian S., Alison G., Christina D., Amanda Z., Robin S., Jennifer N., Fern W., Karen G., Tanya C., Abbie G., Amy V.W., Laura K., Susan F., Christine H., Diane M., Sue M., Linnea O.

Proceedings:

President's Report

Welcome & Introductions- Jenn M. welcomed everyone to the meeting. A special welcome was made to Mr. Robert Allison, who is the husband of the belated and loved Mrs. Cheryl Allison. He is present to accept a gift in the memory of Mrs. Allison. In addition, Jenn M. welcomed guest speaker Dr. Robert Evans, who will discuss raising healthy children in challenging times.

Approval of November 6, 2009 PTO Meeting Minutes and Motion to Accept- A motion to approve the November 2009 PTO Meeting Minutes was made, and it was unanimously approved.

Presentation of Gift in Memory of Mrs. Cheryl Allison

Jenn M. gave a poignant speech and presented a framed picture of Beatrix Potter's characters and a plaque to Mr. Allison. The plaque reads: "In loving memory of Cheryl Dunston Allison- "Mrs. A". Mrs. A was a devoted teacher for 40 years in the Town of Wellesley. She will always be remembered for her generous spirit, and her love of reading and nature. Mrs. A's students will forever have a special appreciation for Beatrix Potter." Mr. Allison was very appreciative and grateful for the gesture.

Principal's Report

Elaine H. informed the audience that the H1N1 Clinic was held at Fiske today and approximately 70 children received the vaccine.

The Fiske Family Bulletin continues to be distributed via e-mail every Friday. Anyone not receiving the bulletin via e-mail can receive a hard copy of the bulletin, please inform the office if you need a hard copy. Room Parents should follow up with their classes to ensure all families are receiving the important information.

Fiske will be a polling location for the Special Senate Seat vote on Tuesday January 19, 2010. In addition to the usual District E voters, District F voters will also vote at Fiske because construction is taking place at the Wellesley High School, which is their usual voting location.

The Wellesley Education Foundation awarded to fund the sound systems and installation of two ceiling mounted projectors at Fiske. Ceiling mounted projectors are important tools in the efficient delivery of high quality educational instruction. The goal is to have Fiske on par with the other Wellesley elementary schools in terms of technology. The fundraising that the PTO provides is essential in achieving this goal. The Auction is the next big fundraiser; please support the event as much as possible.

In the continued effort to reduce germs in the school, 2 new hand sanitizer stands will be strategically placed in the school.

Presenter Dr. Robert Evans, Human Relations Service

Dr. Evans works for the Human Relations Service (HRS, www.HRSHelps.org) which is a private, non-profit community mental health service agency serving Wellesley, Weston and Wayland. Dr. Evans has been counseling

families/schools for over 35 years. He has always enjoyed speaking at Fiske because of the strong sense of community at the school.

Dr. Evans believes it is the most challenging time to be raising children in the United States. The reason for this is because of the advancements in technology and communication. In comparison, parents raising children in a 3rd world country although challenging offers a more simplified life without all of the advances.

There are 3 core areas in raising a child:

1. Nurture
2. Structure
3. Latitude

In the case of **nurture** everyone needs just enough.

In creating **structure** with our children envision a box; and the child can do everything in the box, but he/she is not allowed to do anything outside of that box. We succeed as parents when the box is very CLEAR for our child/ren.

Latitude is when a child learns from experience. The child will learn more, when he/she is experiencing something gone wrong. It is important that this exposure takes place in a safe manner.

It is very important to spend a large amount of time with children. Dr. Evans said a "vast quantity of low quality time." Always being there for your children, day in and out is valuable.

Dr. Evans also thinks that there is too much negotiation taking place between parent and child. Parents are relying on the teachers and schools to teach latitude. Parents need to be clear and be strong and respect and support the school policies and rules. When there is no discipline children begin to lose self esteem. Protecting children from consequences is counterproductive. Parents need to hold the line on the big stuff or the non-negotiable.

All parents need to more confident in their parenting skills. Dr. Evans wants people to stop reading the books giving advice on how to be a better parent. Everyone should think more simplistically, simple in terms of more basic and fundamental skills. Be the best of who you are and do not try to be something else. He asked everyone to do an exercise at home. Make a list of all of the things that you are good at as a parent, and post the list up on the refrigerator. Everyday focus on it! One day your child/ren will ask about the list, and you can tell him/her it is all of the things that you are good at as a parent. Then you can ask the child if he/she has anything to add to the list.

In closing, Dr. Evans informed everyone to remember that children are resilient and not fragile. He always keeps Mr. Rogers closing words in his mind, "He loves you just the way you are!"

Board Updates

Wild West Co-Chairs 2010: The PTO is still in the process of identifying people to co-chair the Wild West 2010.

Anyone who is interested please inform Jenn M. or Kerri K.

Art Appreciation: Tanya C. informed everyone about the Art Appreciation initiatives. She stated that all volunteers have been selected and the training session has been completed. The art that will be reviewed with the classrooms is the Aboriginal Art. In the spring they will present at different type of art and the training session for that will be in February.

Fiske Scrip Holiday Fund: Jenn M. informed everyone that the deadline for the Holiday Scrip program is December 11, 2010.

Family Programs: Jenn Noxon and Robin Steinberg reviewed the Bingo Night plans and asked for volunteers for the fun event.

Upcoming Events- Volunteers needed and welcome!

- a. Garden Clean Up- Kerri K. reminded everyone that tomorrow (12/4) is the gardens clean up; please bring a rake and clippers. It is also walk to school day.

- b. Bingo Night- January 8, 2010, 6:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. at Babson College
- c. Multicultural Night- February 3, 2010, 5:30 p.m.- 7:30 p.m. at Wellesley Middle School
- d. Auction- April 9, 2010, 6:30 p.m.- 11:00 p.m. at the Wellesley Country Club

Jenn M. informed everyone that Fiske wearables are available in the back of the room for purchase. If anyone needs holiday gifts this would be a great gift for Fiske students.

One final note, Jenn M. asked if anyone is available to help with car line during the Special Senate Election please inform her or Kerri K. Thank you.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. Next meeting is Friday February 5, 2010 at 8:30 a.m. in the Fiske Library.
Respectfully submitted, Julie B., PTO Communications Coordinator