Tuesday, September 15, 2015

Judy Fallows attended the meeting to give an update on gardening.
Her position is a funded intern position; she has been trying to incorporate what students are studying in school with the garden. She is currently working on gathering an advisory group with all 3 elementary schools so that we can learn from each other and gather curriculum resources (like Seeds of Science).
She spoke with faculty at opening meetings and will be doing professional development programs. She is hoping this will become a school-funded part time position paid for by the town so that students will have authentic outdoor experiences.
There is a Watertown gardens Facebook page that shows gardens from all three schools. Judy updates this page and also visits faculty meetings, PTO meetings, enlists parent volunteers, and she also works with directly with children. Our students are seeing food from seed to plate on school grounds. Judy will also be running an afterschool program with kids in extended day.
She is looking to grow new gardeners in the school community. One of her hopes is to see the community service program at the middle school be involved with work in the garden, too.
Currently there is no budget for her program. All materials come from fundraising (like perennial plant sales, and from PTO. Long-term funding of the gardens is an issue. There are plans for a fall workday in the gardens.

Mena's Report
Hands-on experiences are the main goal for the year--91% of 5th grade scored proficiently on the part of MCAS that corresponded to their experiential learning unit on soil
The Square One art project is hanging in the library, it will change with the seasons (three times per year); it was made with all students (PK-5)
Open House date is Tuesday, October 6 (PTO will have a table at this event in place of a meeting)
School Photo Day is Friday, October 9
Project Adventure (for 5th grade) is September 30
A project-based friendly competition for the year is in the works for participating in a project using the new Maker space (with 3-D printer) at the High School. Thinking about a contest for a new sign for the Cunniff Cove that would be printed in this lab; the hope is that each grade and class would create a collaborative design; the current thought would be to post each design and have the community vote
Space at school is very tight--ELL services and special education services have increased; current enrollment is 304 (last year was 309); there are very large 3rd(24)4th (25),5th (23)grades. Currently these larger grades have co-teachers who are watching and re-teaching concepts in class and in the co-teaching rooms
There are still air conditioners in windows of rooms that were used for the summer program, they will remain in place until October 1; there is talk of adding air conditioners to the second floor; the PTO will work on this project

Treasurer's report
if you need reimbursements, find the paperwork in the Treasurer's (Tina Brisson) box near Mena's office
$3500 is our current balance; there is also $2500 for the gardens (the remainder of the grant from Lowe's)
We can no longer use Eastern Bus Transportation; we are currently using Locomotion with whom we need to pay in advance; we are also in need of a new Bus representative, please contact Elaina Griffith if you are interested
PTO will continue to pay for one field trip per grade (there are typically two per year); PTO also funds in-house activities and traveling enrichment activities (tide pools, museums, magicians, Young Audiences); we hope to keep the shows equitable so that all grades are benefitting from PTO funds

The sound system is still unreliable, some funds will be used for a new one
Hopefully Laura Gately will continue with box tops, Stop N' Shop, and Target; we are waiting on confirmation from her
We also need Kindergarten grade reps --grade reps are the point people for gifts, activities (like Halloween, Comedy Night, etc.). If you are interested in volunteering, contact Elaina Griffith (elaina.griffith@gmail.com)

Color Run is October 4, the 2nd Annual Kick ball Tournament is the same day at 1:30. Last year we earned $600.00. Volunteers are needed.

An appeal letter to support Cunniff PTO will go home this week.

Meadow Farms will happen again this year; This is a profitable fundraiser for the PTO. Please consider purchasing a few items. Purchases can be made online and checks will also be accepted. Information will go home in children's folders soon.

We need a volunteer to build a Haunted House for our annual Halloween celebration (Friday, October, 30). If you have any ideas or contacts, email Elaina at elaina.griffith@gmail.com.

Elaina will be in touch with about a Book Sponsorship (Parents donating books to the library from a Wish List written by the Cunniff librarians.

Other ideas:
Family Skate? Launch?

We will not be selling pies this year and there will not be a Winter Wonderland