

WILLARD SAC MEETING NOTES (APPROVED) FOR JANUARY 9, 2017

Present:

Liz Berk, Rudd Coffey, Rebecca Comjean, Pat Fernandes, Carolyn Ferraioli, Katie Kerr, Anne Kilroy, Rachael Morris, Kate Mullen

Absent: All Present

CLASSROOM NEWS

Kindergarten - by Rachael Morris

- Gingerbread house unit was great
- All Kindergarten gathered together and built candy houses
- Still learning letter sounds
- Beginning Writing Workshop
- Blending and segmenting sound
- Getting ready for the 100th day

First Grade - by Rachael Morris

- Learning about Martin Luther King, Jr. – whole grade will watch special story together
- Captain Zero came on 80th day - pineapple ring sundaes
- Lower case letter writing
- Persuasive writing
- Measurement in math
- Social Studies maps/geography

Second Grade - by Rachael Morris

- Persuasive Writing
- Soil, Sand & Silt
- Social Studies maps/geography
- Mid-Year reading assessments
- Mid-Year math assessment

Third Grade - by Katie Kerr

- Math- addition and subtraction of larger numbers, as well as multiplication and division; working on geometry and vocabulary like quadrilaterals, angles, and parallel lines.
- Reading- finished reading *Because of Winn Dixie*, biography unit on MLK
- Writing- Ready Test A to Z- answering text questions and typing response to text
- Science- water, a lot of experiments, making thermometers, how water changes in different temperatures

Fourth Grade - by Katie Kerr

- Multiplication unit in math
- Opening assembly for our Ancient China unit with our poet-in-residence - Steven Ratiner (he will return for the next 4 weeks to work with students in their classroom)
- Reading - looking at non-fiction text structures
- Science - studying volcanoes, making topographic and profile maps of mountains

Fifth Grade - by Katie Kerr

- Math - finishing Unit 4 on decimal place value, addition, & subtraction. Also coordinate grids.
- Science - We are all at different places with our new Earth & Sun unit. Students have been enjoying lots of hands on activities and opportunities to model scientific concepts.
- Social Studies - Age of Exploration, encounters & relationships with Native Americans.
- Language Arts - Explorer Biographies (Kim), City of Ember (Kate), expert group reading for Native American cultural regions (Katie & Sharon)

Art - with Kristin Saunders (reported By Kate Mullen)

- Grades K and 1: Painting begins! We will use watercolors and crayon resist first, then on to tempera paint.
- Grade 2: We are working on observation drawings. Coming up: printmaking.
- Grade 3: Painting portfolios were sent home the week before vacation. New this week: the students will be creating paper sculptures - supporting tall shapes, building 3D forms such as cylinders, rectangular prisms, cones and cubes
- Grade 4: Painting portfolios were sent home the week before vacation. Next, we'll be working on printmaking and paper sculpture
- Grade 5: Fifth graders are building paper-sculptures: amusement parks with moveable parts, 3D favorite places built into boxes.

Physical Education - with Mike Germond (reported by Kate Mullen)

- We are in the midst of a 3-week unit on ball skills and basketball for grades K-5.
- In a couple of weeks we will be moving on to a volleying skills unit for these grade levels as well.

Music - with Charlyn Bethell (reported by Kate Mullen)

- All students will be singing some songs to go with MLK day: We Shall Overcome, Walk a Mile.
- K classes will be singing some songs by Raffi: Tingalayo, Baby Beluga and others. We will also be singing some songs from other countries. We will be reinforcing moving to the beats of our songs and we will be exploring general space in the music room.
- First graders will be reading rhythms with quarter and eighth notes. We will be getting ready to learn about quarter rests.
- Second graders will continue to practice the notes SO, MI, and LA. We will be singing some new songs by reading their notes. We should be learning sixteenth notes this month.
- Third graders are learning to self-correct on their recorders when they play on their home instruments. We will be singing, I Live in City.
- Fourth graders will be studying the musical form, Rondo and reviewing the 2-beat rhythm that we call: sy-CO-pa.
- Fifth graders are learning about I and V chords so that we can play and enjoy 12- bar blues.
- Our chorus is singing three songs for the town wide MLK celebration at the Fenn School on Jan. 11th at 7 pm. All are invited to attend.

Library - with Erica Josselyn (reported by Kate Mullen)

- Kindergarteners are practicing their listening skills and practicing library vocabulary.
- First graders are continuing to practice library organization skills.

- Second graders are learning about parts of nonfiction books, including the title page, table of contents, glossary and index, and text features such as captions and headings.
- Third graders are continuing to learn how to use the online catalog to find books independently in the library.
- Fourth graders are beginning a unit on literary genres.
- Fifth graders are beginning a second unit on Digital Citizenship and online research skills.

Willard Grounds Revitalization - Reported by Rudd Coffey

Rudd reported that not much has changed since the December meeting due to the winter break. Next steps are currently being discussed including obtaining parent and staff input via a survey. Rudd has secured digital files of the land survey that will be helpful in the planning. Rudd attended the district budget meeting. He confirmed that the allotted \$200,000 in the capital budget would potentially cover costs to test soil, amend soil, and add topsoil. It may also include funding a well and that option, as well as other ideas, will be explored. There is a need to have further discussions to get more information. For comparison, Rudd noted that the STEM LAB currently underway at the Ripley Buidling has a \$300,000 budget.

WILLARD NEWS - Reported by Pat Fernandes

Retirement

Pat shared further information about the decision to retire at the end of the 2016-2017 school year. She made note of what a special place Willard is for the building, but more importantly because of the people. She is confident that the principal position is highly desirable and that a quality candidate will be found.

HIRING PROCESS FOR NEW PRINCIPAL

Diana Rigby, Superintendent, and Kelly McCausland, Director of Human Resources, came to the Willard faculty meeting today. The ad for a new principal has been posted on the CPS District website, School Spring and appeared in the Sunday, January 8th Boston Globe. Candidates can apply until February 15. A survey will soon go out from the school district to faculty and parents asking what is desired in a principal. Representatives from the faculty, district personnel, and parents will be on the interview team. March 2nd is the current target date for interviews. Finalists will go through the process with the district and the new principal is scheduled to be announced this spring. Pat will work to guarantee a smooth transition for the school community.

Progress Reports

The 90th day of school is coming and school progress reports are being prepared. January 27th is the date for mailing out progress reports to families (unless there are any snow days.) The progress report is an opportunity to see where children fall on the state standards. These standards are end of year outcomes for the entire school year. Pat Fernandes emphasized that most kids won't have reached the outcomes goals as this is only the halfway point in the year.

Half Way Day

This will be celebrated at Willard on January 20th. Children may donate 50 cents (half of a dollar) to Open Table. The Willard community is encouraged to dress up "half way" to participate.

Hour of Code

December 9th marked the first time Willard has been involved in "Hour of Code." Each teacher committed one hour dedicated to coding in their classroom. Third graders launched the event at an

assembly. Pat visited all of the classes and felt it was a success and that it was exciting for the students and staff.

National Association of Educational Progress

Fourth grade students are selected randomly to participate in a national testing program. Schools are selected to participate and it is mandatory. There are 62 Willard children that have been randomly selected to participate by the state. Parents were notified by Pat Fernandes. NAEP will come in and monitor the testing of the children. Willard staff does not administer but will play support roles with the children. Willard does not get any results - neither school or individual. Because testing is on a tablet, the kids will be exposed to tablets prior to the NAEP test to be held in March.

Steven Ratiner - Poet in Residence

This is a 4th grade tradition at Willard made possible by Massachusetts Cultural Council.

5th Grade Chorus

The 5th Grade Chorus will be performing at Fenn School in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 11.

Geography Quest

Students are bringing home packets to work on geography skills. This is an optional enrichment activity.

Bingo Night

This PTG sponsored event will be held in the gym on Friday, January 20th and is always a big success.

Superintendent Search

The Superintendent search is currently underway and nearing completion. The finalists will be announced soon and the the School Committee will be conducting public interviews later this month. The public is invited to attend and participate. Details will be announced.

Foreign Language Program

With the approval of the new Foreign Language Program for Fall 2017 in the works, Pat invited all staff to think of ideas and options for scheduling. She asked grade level teams to think about it together. Staff discussed it in groups comprised of all grades at today's staff meeting. The ideas will go to the administrative team for consideration. The School Committee has approved budget for three elementary teachers and a Latin teacher at middle school. It will go to Town Meeting in April.

Acton Community Loss

We discussed the importance of mental health at Willard School in relation to a recent loss of a 5th grade child in Acton who reportedly took his own life. We emphasized how lucky we are to have both a full-time school psychologist and school counselor. The importance of Open Circle as a tool was reiterated.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Ferraioli