

## **Willard SAC Meeting Minutes for October 17, 2016 (Approved)**

(Prepared by Rebecca Comjean)

**Present:** Pat Fernandes, Rachel Morris, Katie Kerr, Kate Mullen, Rudd Coffey, Rebecca Comjean, Carolyn Ferraioli, and Anne Kilroy

**Absent:** Liz Berk

### **Classroom News:**

**Kindergarten (presented by Rachel Morris):** The Kindergartener's went on a 5 senses field trip to Lands Sake Farm at the end of September. The students are learning how to be a student, good listener, following routines of the classroom, and making new friends. In Literacy the students started Telian lively letters, which involves learning the letters and what sounds they make. Students are enjoying big books and choral read alouds and learning new songs. In Math the Kindergartener's are learning EM4 math, which includes counting with 1:1 correspondence, number ID, understanding the number 5 and they are beginning to understand combinations of 5 using 5 frames. In Science, the students are studying trees, leaves, and comparing and contrasting different trees.

**First Grade (presented by Rachel Morris):** In Math, first graders are trying to get comfortable with the EM4 curriculum. In Science, they are finishing up the Air unit. In Literacy, most first graders have completed practice activities regarding the first few lowercase letters in the HWT book. The students just went on a field trip to the Franklin Park Zoo. In Math, Captain Zero visited the students on the 30th day of school. It is a tradition for Captain Zero to visit first grade on days ending in zero and to leave small tokens.

**Second Grade (presented by Rachel Morris):** In Math, second graders are getting used to EM4. In Social Studies the students are learning about Long Ago. In literacy the students are working on sentence writing and had a visit from Suzy Kline Author of the 'Horrible Harry' series.

**Third Grade (presented by Katie Kerr):** In Math, the students are finishing up Unit 1 which focuses on multiplication strategies for 2s, 5s, & 10s. Once Unit 1 is complete the students will start Unit 2, which is where they make sense of 1 and 2 step number stories using all four operations. This unit emphasizes how to show solutions using diagrams, arrays, word, number models, etc. In Literacy and Reading, each class is reading various novels during their reading group time, with a focus on text-to-text connections. They are starting to work on Junior Great Books, which focuses on shared inquiry-answering complex questions using the text as evidence. In Writing, the students are working on Expository writing, revisiting grammar skills, and reviewing parts of speech. In Science, the students are learning about water and climate- the main sources of water, and how conservation is necessary. In Social Studies, students are being introduced to History and Archaeology. The Concord Museum will be coming in on October 21<sup>st</sup> for an in-class archeological dig.

**Fourth Grade (presented by Katie Kerr):** In Math, the students are on Unit 2, which is multiplication, using area, arrays, symmetry, multiples and factors. They are playing many math games to reinforce concepts. In Literacy, the students are working on realistic fiction/animal fantasy reading unit and focusing on comprehension strategies and making connections. In Writing, students are working on personal narratives-choosing a small moment, with a focus on craft and mechanics such as using strong verbs and including dialogue. In Science, students are learning about FOSS Soils, Rocks and Landforms. They are observing soil and exploring how the weathering of rocks provides ingredients for soil. They will study slow and fast changes in the Earth and talk about natural resources. In Social Studies, students are learning about map skills-hemisphere, longitude, and latitude. They are working on an Enrichment project called “around the world in 180 days”- focusing on a region each month where students are able to do additional research and projects to earn stamps.

**Fifth Grade (presented by Katie Kerr):** In Math students are on Unit 2 which is an introduction to the U.S. traditional algorithm and base 10 exponents, partial quotient division. In Reading, the students are working in small groups, which include various reading activities depending on the class. They are also working on a Nancy Boyles close reading Leadership unit using new trade books purchased with district funds. In Writing, the students are being Introduced to Brain Frames (a type of graphic organizer) and working on how to respond to text using evidence. In Science, students will begin the new FOSS Earth and Sun unit. In Social Studies, students are learning about early native people.

**Physical Education (presented by Kate Mullen):** Grade 3-5 students are in the midst of a flag football unit. This week they are playing Ultimate Football, which is similar to Ultimate Frisbee but using a football. The K-2 students are in the midst of a kicking skills unit. Kindergarten is playing a game called Box Soccer and grades 1 and 2 are playing Lane Soccer. These units will continue into next week and then K-2 will be moving onto first Tee golf and grades 3-5 have a 1/2 mile / mile run the last week in October.

**Library (presented by Kate Mullen):** This month in library classes the Kindergarteners are learning to use their shelf markers and learning library vocabulary such as check out, renew, hold, author, illustrator, fiction and nonfiction. In Grades 1 and 2 students are practicing alphabetical order. From this skill, they will transition to library organization. In Grade 3 the students are learning about how books are organized in the library. They will be spending a lot of time this year learning how to find books on the shelves and using the online catalog. In Grade 4 they are beginning a unit on Digital Citizenship. In this unit, they will talk about how to keep private information safe online, online manners, copyright issues, and what to do about cyber bullies. In Grade 5, students are working on two projects. The students are well underway with their MCBA reading challenge. They have also begun their campaigns for library president. They will be filming short persuasive videos this month. Third, fourth and fifth graders will watch the videos and vote for this year’s library president.

**Music (presented by Kate Mullen):** All students will learn about the composer, Camille Saint-Saens and a few of his pieces, Danse Macabre, Carnival of the Animals, and the Finale section of his great Organ Symphony. In Kindergarten, students are exploring their voices: ghost, opera, calling, whispering, siren, cowboy, talking, animal sounds. They will explore some instruments such as wood blocks and tambourines. In first grade, students will experience the difference between the beat of songs and the words to songs. They may spend some time drumming in a circle. In second grade students are reviewing what they learned last year: Quarter and eighth notes, quarter rests, the high and low sounds that the students call "So and Mi". They are now getting ready to learn the new higher note, "La" and a new rhythm, which has 4 sounds to a beat. They will be dancing to Yankee Doodle and Fjaskern (Swedish). In third grade, students have been reviewing what they learned last year. They are learning the melodic pattern, Mi , Re, Do, since they just learned the new note between Mi and Do, "Re". They will further explore the pattern, Do Re Mi and Re Mi Do. This preparation will help students prepare for playing recorders, which will happen around the end of October. They have done the dance, Limbo Rock and will do Bannielou Lambaol. They will also sing and play: Great Big House, Tideo, Rocky Mountain, and John Kanaka. In fourth grader students are reviewing what they learned last year. They are remembering how to conduct and how to hear the strong beat of a measure in recorded music. They will be reviewing the pentatonic scale, playing on xylophones as well as recorders, and learning a new syncopated rhythm. They will learn the Russian dance, Troika. In fifth grade, students have been reviewing what they learned last year. They are studying early rock n' roll music and artists such as Elvis, Little Richard, and Chuck Berry. Students will sing Old Joe Clark and Ghost of John. They will be singing some song phrases and writing them down (Firefly and Farmer Jacob). They are dancing: Mayim (Israeli) and Joe Clark Mixer.

**Art (presented by Kate Mullen):** All grades have been working on Collage during the past few weeks and the themes and skills they explored varied by grade. In Kindergarten, students worked on cutting, gluing and arranging shapes and making pictures out of shapes. "A little bit of glue will do! Dot, dot, not a lot!" In first grade the students worked on cutting, gluing and arranging shapes and practicing strategies for making circles and round shapes. They are making big collage self-portraits. In second grade, the students reviewed collage cutting and gluing skills. They worked on collages about vehicles, favorite foods, how to make people, and a fall fun group mural. In third grade, the students are reviewing collage cutting and gluing skills. They are practicing tearing the paper instead of using scissors as another way of working. Working on collages about activities with family and friends, animals and habitats, and making very small collages. In fourth grade the students are observing collage self-portraits, observing collages of toy cars and where they could be going, and small collages with frames. In fifth grade, the students are doing pop-out collages of places: creating textures through tearing, crumpling, folding the paper as well as making parts of the collage pop out. They are also making small collages with frames, and small self-portrait collages

**Principal's Report (presented by Pat Fernandes):**

Ms. Fernandes began the meeting by explaining the history and purpose of SAC to the new members, Rachel Morris and Carolyn Ferraioli. Ms. Fernandes informed the council that there are 447 students at Willard. Ms. Fernandes spoke about several upcoming events at Willard. Wednesday October 19 there will be an information session on the new Math program at Willard, Everyday Math 4 (EM4). Laurie Penny, the Math specialist, will run this session. The feedback so far for the new program has been positive. Last year Kindergarteners and Fifth graders piloted the program. In addition, two second grade teachers piloted the program as well. This year all students are using EM4. On October 26 there will be an opportunity for parents to come to Willard to learn more about the special education program. Some of the topics that the parents will learn about are the programs available to children through RTI, the service delivery models for children with special needs, and how the Individual Education Plan works. Ms. Fernandes also spoke about the PARCC results. Despite high performance on PARCC in general, Willard is a Level 2 school again for the 2015 – 2016 year. This designation was given to Willard because certain subgroups of students (High Needs & Special Ed) did not meet their improvement targets. Ms. Fernandes reported that there was a 20-point increase within the subgroups from the prior year. Willard is only 7 points below the target, which Ms. Fernandes believes can be achieved this school year. Ms. Fernandes also spoke about a mindfulness presentation being put on by the PTG on 11/2. Ms. Fernandes spoke about the author visits happening at Willard. Each grade will have an author come to present to students as a large group in the auditorium or in their classrooms. First grade through 5<sup>th</sup> will have visits in the fall and the Kindergarten visit will happen in the spring. Ms. Fernandes spoke about the parent survey that was conducted at Willard last spring. Most of the feedback was very positive. One area that is an issue for parents involved the amount of homework the children are given as well as the quality of the homework assigned. This issue has been discussed by the faculty and is being investigated at by Ms. Fernandes and the Willard Leadership Team.

**Other items:**

Pat invited Rudd Coffee to share with SAC the ideas that he discussed with Pat in July. Rudd indicated that he has discussed poor field conditions at Willard with other parents. He would like to work with interested SAC members to collect parent input regarding field conditions and possible improvements to the grounds. Pat informed SAC members that the superintendent has made a commitment to a plan to request irrigation for Willard playing fields as a Capital Expense in the FY'18 Budget since this is a safety issue. Pat cautioned Rudd and SAC members that while any feedback would be given to the Superintendent and the Deputy Superintendent for their consideration, there is no guarantee that the suggestions provided would be acted on in the upcoming budget but could be considered for long term planning.

Rebecca Comjean was selected as co-chair of the Student Advisory Council for this coming school year.

Rudd Coffey spoke about wanting to set up a group of parents and or teachers who will meet to strategize about ways of improving the outside of the Willard School. Mainly

this would involve the playground, paths, fields and the landscaping. Ms. Fernandes backs the idea.

**Adjournment:**

The October meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM The next Willard SAC meeting will be November 7th at 6:00 p.m. in the Willard library.