

Middletown Cooperative Preschool Parent Meeting  
**September 15, 2011 7:05 p.m.**

Present: Catherine O'Rourke (CO), Sarah LaRosa (SL), Gen Keoppen (GK), Marie McKenna (MM), Jean Barresi, Mary Godbout, Emily Archer, Billie Thong, Teri Erdman, Joe Filush, Christine Filush, Kathy LeDuc, Sherri O'Shea, Kelly Giuggio, Matthew Giuggio, Carol Grosso, Jody Grosso, Courtney Peltz, Missi Pepin, Cate Tsahalís

Catherine O'Rourke called the meeting to order and introduced the Board and teachers. (Catherine O'Rourke, President; Sarah LaRosa, Vice President; Gen Keoppen, Treasurer; Marie McKenna, Secretary; Jean Barresi Head Teacher; Mary Godbout, Assistant Teacher)

Marie McKenna asked everyone to share their name, children's names and town where they live.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Gen Keoppen reported that last year MCP ended the school year with a loss of approximately \$7,500. We are currently estimating to end the year with a deficit of about \$4,500. Enrollment, fundraisers, grants, and an alumni capital campaign are all ways to help make up the deficit.

GK reported that most families have opted to participate in fundraisers to help earn the Preschool \$150 or more. For those families who have chosen to contribute monthly or pay a lump sum, you are encouraged to still participate in fundraisers throughout the year.

GK reported that a couple of families still need to pay their registration fees. She reminded families that tuition is due on the first of each month for everyone who has chosen to pay monthly. There are still a number of people who need to pay September's tuition. Please contact Gen with any questions, the best way is via email.

GK reported that the checking account as of September 12, 2011 is \$7,623.31.

### **Teacher's Report**

Jean Barresi said that it was a great first week. It was fun and there were hardly any glitches. She's excited about the year.

### Classroom Helper Responsibilities

JB asked that classroom helpers answer the door in the morning, help with Circle Time, during the activity time they help the children while the teachers work on projects, for instance taking children to the potty. Please help with snack and cleanup and interact with the children.

### Snacks

JB and Mary Godbout have to display the snack menu a month at a time by law. They will put a snack on the calendar with the classroom helper assignment and ask the classroom helper to be responsible for bringing it in when they come.

JB invited anyone with a healthy snack idea to let her know about it and she will put it on the calendar for their day.

CO added that there is a calendar app to go with Google. She will share it via email.

A parent asked how much to bring. 6 apples was enough for the 4s class because they had apple cake too. MG said that it should be enough for a snack.

JB said there are no peanut allergies, but there are some other allergies. Those parents have been bringing snack for their children.

\*\*\* Families who are not signed up as Classroom Helpers will be asked to bring in paper goods for snacktime and snacks to be kept in the cupboard in case there is a problem (ie Goldfish, raisins.)

JB said there is a **field trip** for each class to **Lyman Orchards**, Tuesday September 27 and Wednesday September 28. The cost is \$10 per child, which will include pick your own apples and pumpkin, a snack and apple cider. Parents are encouraged to come, be drivers and chaperones. By law, no siblings are allowed on field trips.

JB said there is a walking **fieldtrip to the fire station** on Tuesday October 11 and Friday October 14. Chaperones are still needed.

JB asked that parents **please dress children for school** in a way that makes using the bathroom simple. Also, shoes for the playground, preferably **sneakers**, are requested.

JB said that on top of the cubbies outside the classroom there is a binder with blank paper. It is for leaving **notes for the teachers** in case there isn't a time to chat. JB said it is to try to keep lines of communication open.

JB asked that caregivers note that **Drop-Off is at 9:00 and Pick-Up is at 12:00**. Circle Time will start at 9:15 promptly so please have a timely drop-off and pick-up.

Mary Godbout reported that the **Lunch Club** was very successful last year for getting children ready for kindergarten by making them more independent with their lunches (opening packaging, using a napkin, etc.) She may start the Lunch Club for the 4s class in October, it will be a \$5 per day charge for the hour (12-1). There is a minimum requirement of 6 children. Please send a healthy lunch as much as possible. Peanut butter is allowed. Put the payment in the Lunch Club Envelopes that are in the basket on the cubbies. There were 8 children last year that participated regularly. The feedback from last year was good.

CO will send out a survey to families to ask how many days a week families would be interested in committing to for the Lunch Club.

### **Spirit of the Coop**

Marie McKenna noted some changes have been made to the **classroom helper calendar** as we settle in. The calendar will be set out several weeks ahead of time, but not for the whole year to accommodate any other changes. Families are responsible for swapping days once the calendar has been set and is rolling.

MM gave an "**invitation and inspiration**" to make the MCP the best we can through offering our time, effort, resources and connections as well as our best fundraising energy because this is how our children will get the best possible learning experience.

### **Committees and Sign-up**

CO reported that the committees are coming together based on families' input.

#### Enrollment Committee

The teacher is the first point of contact and JB was happy to head this up because it meant she could jump right in and understand the process. There needs to be one person from each class to be the

consistent person to help the teacher once a family is registered. The Publicity Committee will be involved in this too.

JB said she was grateful to those who helped with paperwork on the first day.

Maintenance Committee needs a chairperson from each class who will let families know when something needs to be taken care of.

The Fundraising Committee still needs a couple of people. The committee will plan the event, but everyone will be needed at the time of the event.

Housekeeping and Hospitality Committee still needs a couple of people. It will take care of events in the classroom and coordinating those events. Also, JB would like the plastic toys in the classroom to be taken home and washed regularly by a volunteer.

The Publicity Committee is about getting the word out on Facebook, Patch, the website and through fliers.

Scholastic Books needs only one person. We have the person already.

The Yearbook Committee is open. CO said we need to find a good web site for uploading photos to from each family to be used by the Yearbook Committee. CO said someone from the 4s will bring in their yearbook from last year to show as an example. CO also said that a class photo will be taken in the coming weeks.

Emily Archer offered that she is a writer and could help with grant applications.

CO asked that people sign up for committees after the meeting.

### **Fundraising**

Sarah LaRosa explained what fundraisers were held last year:

The Teacup Social is an evening in the spring with a raffle. Tickets were sold at 20 for \$5 with 100% profit going to the school. Families should start now soliciting donations.

2 catalog fundraisers were done last year- a Fairtrade catalog and soy-based candles at Christmas and Munson's chocolate at Easter.

A bake sale was done at Thanksgiving that earned \$1200 for the school.

JB talked about a Monthly Babysitting Night where the teachers would donate their time and bring their daughters Emma and Lauren who are newly-certified in babysitting. They will watch 20 children from 5:30-7:30 for \$10 per child. The first one will be Saturday September 24. There will be a sign up. The girls will make some money and the school will benefit, too. Families could pack a dinner for their children, feed them first or possibly a pizza delivery could be coordinated.

### **Housekeeping Items**

CO checked with parents that they are receiving communications ok.

CO noted that the handbook will hopefully be revamped this year.

Meetings- The only mandatory meetings for parents are in September and June, other board meetings will generally be the 3rd Thursday of the month at the school at 7:00 except for November and January

(to be announced).

MM reported that Jess White will be sending out an email to see if families are interested in some social events during the day or evenings.

### **More on Fundraising-**

Courtney Peltz suggested a carwash for a fundraiser.

Matthew Giuggio suggested a musical event. He has a band.

Cate Tsahalis clarified that catalog fundraisers net the school between 40 and 50% of what is sold. This percentage is what is applied toward individual fundraising obligations.

MM said that fundraisers will not always be counted toward the obligation.

JB asked if we could sometimes have a fundraiser toward the purchase of something specific rather than just per family.

Christine Filush asked if we could solicit donations from corporations on behalf of the school. GK said, "YES!"

There will be a flier to use for publicity or soliciting donations on Google Docs. CO will also make a spreadsheet of who has put fliers where so we don't duplicate.

JB requested the donation of a new computer for the school.

Meeting Adjourned 8:20 pm.