

## **February 9<sup>th</sup> 2010, Citywide PTO Minutes**

- *Guiding Good Choices is a research based workshop series proven to strengthen family bonds, foster better communication skills, and decrease the chances of risky behavior by our children. This program consists of 2 ½ hour workshops held once per week for five consecutive weeks. There is a \$10.00 materials fee for Melrose residents. Three separate sessions will begin March 1<sup>st</sup>; Monday evenings, Wednesday evenings, or Friday mornings. For more information, or to sign up, please contact Donna MacDonald at [dmacdonald52@comcast.net](mailto:dmacdonald52@comcast.net) , or call Kara Showers at 781-979-4128.*
- *Traffic safety issues at the MVMMS were addressed by Superintendent Casey. Crossing guards at the following locations will be changing their morning hours to 7:30 to 2:45....Franklin-Vinton, Franklin-Tremont, Tremont-Melrose, West Emerson-Tremont, Green-Fells.*
- *Feedback from the new on-line pre-registration process for Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade was overwhelmingly positive. The district hopes to offer on-line registration for early childhood programs sometime in the future.*
- *We discussed room parent guidelines for different schools. Some schools do not have a room parent coordinator or any written guidelines at all. We will be continuing our discussion next month, in the hopes of putting together some recommended guidelines for the district.*
- *We discussed school traditions and the impact on time and learning. Should PTO's occasionally revisit school traditions to see if parents actually support them? Are some traditions...like MCAS breakfast, interfering with*

*school performance (kids gorging on sugary treats before the test)? PTO's should encourage ongoing dialog with parents, teachers, and principals regarding school traditions to ensure that they are valued by parents and do not conflict with district policy.*

- *Is it feasible for elementary schools to rent out the MVMMS cafeteria for a fundraiser? The consensus was that it would be too costly.*
- *The Education Station program will continue into the summer, offering an extended day to the summer enrichment program. The summer enrichment program will continue to be held at the Roosevelt School. The summer enrichment program for middle school students will be four days a week, and will include field trips.*
- *We discussed the problems of bullying and the current state legislation being proposed. There are inconsistencies across the district at the elementary level with regard to how anti-social behavior is being addressed. Should an anti-bullying program be considered a curriculum issue, as part of the Health and Wellness curriculum? How can PTO's support efforts to promote pro-social behavior? (funding of enrichment programs, etc.) What classroom practices promote team building and co-operation? Is there any district wide anti-bullying program in place at the elementary level?*
- *Some middle school parents were upset over the lack of communication about the material presented at the Bullying Summit held at the middle school. The speakers discussed serious topics that some children were unprepared to deal with emotionally. (animal abuse, Columbine shootings) The material was so upsetting to*

*some students that the staff felt it appropriate to go for a short walk after the presentation to allow the children to regain their composure. Administrators must do a better job communicating with parents the highly emotional content of these presentations, so that parents may prepare children by discussing at home some of these issues in a safe, supportive setting.*

- *What is the best way for administrators to reach out to preschool parents with information regarding the public schools? Should principals contact families directly? We felt that a formal letter was the least intrusive way to contact families. The letter should come from the superintendent's office, as a letter from a specific principal may lead a family to believe that their child's placement in that school was guaranteed.*
- *There is still a great deal of confusion regarding how the district is meeting the needs of all learners at the middle school level. A greater effort should be made to clarify the process to parents.(G&T pullout group, MCAS prep, homogeneous grouping, etc)*