

March 9th, 2010 Citywide PTO

- Jim Halligan and Joan Ford Mongeau from the Melrose Chamber of Commerce spoke to us about the upcoming Melrose Gives Back fundraiser. The Chamber of Commerce Merchants Group will be holding a spring festival on May 1st. Downtown and other merchants will donate ten percent of sales to the PTOs. Some stores may offer refreshments, entertainment, etc. The schools are being asked to advertise and promote this event; the Chamber will promote the PTO fundraiser with signs, flyers and e-mails. Details of participating merchants, and a link to the information, will be coming soon.
- We discussed the best way for the Chamber of Commerce to divide the money raised by the upcoming fundraiser. It was suggested that it would be easier for merchants to donate money to Melrose PTO Inc., to be divided evenly amongst the schools. The money could be earmarked to pay for the schools yearly audit expenses. Another suggestion was for the money to help fund the cost of an anti-bullying program presented by MAAV. We also debated the best way for customers to participate...should vouchers be provided (on-line and in local newspapers) or could all sales that day qualify?
- Rebecca Mooney and Jackie Lavender Bird spoke to us regarding bullying prevention education in Melrose. With support from a federal Youth Violence Prevention

grant, MAAV launched the Melrose CARES Bullying Prevention Program at the Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School in 2004. The comprehensive, school-wide approach is modeled after the nationally recognized [Olweus Bullying Prevention Program](#) and the work of bullying prevention expert [Stan Davis](#). The program is based on the premise that adults are ultimately responsible for preventing bullying in schools, and that the reactions of bystanders to bullying can have even more impact than the harassment itself. The program includes components for staff, students, parents and the community at large, and is now being continued by middle school teachers, counselors and administrators. We discussed the new anti-bullying bill and how Melrose can pro-actively address some of requirements of the new legislation.

- We discussed a proposal for an anti-bullying program recommended by MAAV that would include workshops for parents, students, and training for staff. The program would be a whole school, environmental approach, not curriculum based. It uses a discipline rubric that could be replicated across the district. We discussed whether schools should develop their own rubrics. Should basic concepts be outlined, allowing schools to customize their approach based on their individual demographic?
- How would an anti-bullying program deal with SPED students who have serious behavioral/social/emotional problems? IEPs often dictate how these children's behaviors are managed, which may conflict with a

discipline rubric used for regular Ed students. How can staff adapt an anti-bullying discipline model to address the needs of these students?

- What staff should be involved in implementing an anti-bullying program? School psychologists should be involved in the training, as well as paras, specialists, phys-ed teachers, lunch room staff. We agreed that the program should be presented at a principals meeting, and perhaps at a Melrose Education Association meeting.
- How could an anti-bullying program be funded? MAAV has no specific grant money currently available to fund this. The cost for an hour and 1/2 parent workshop would be around \$400.00. The total cost for parents, students and staff for workshops/training at any given school would be approximately \$1000.00. We discussed the possibility of principals using their revolving account to partially fund some training, and of schools sharing the cost of parent workshops, (e.g., holding a Hoover/Winthrop PTO sponsored workshop), or even a district wide parent workshop. We also discussed the possibility of the district paying for teacher training as part of their professional development. Other ideas included earmarking money from the upcoming Chamber of Commerce fundraiser to help fund this program.
- Other programs offered by MAAV include teen dating violence prevention, the mentoring program for middle school students, and the breakfast club for high school

freshman.