

## The Foote School PTC Minutes

November 9, 2016

3:15 p.m.

**Attendees:** Amy Sudmyer (Co-President), Christine Pakutka (Secretary), Candace Franz (Treasurer), Rosa Holler, Janice Dreier, Sandra Curren, Michael Lake, Laurel Pisani, Jeannie Myer, Susan Wildridge, Elise Hergan, David Hergan, Sumiya Khan, Donna Santomasso, Trevor Rosenthal, Pam Fortin, Kossouth Bradford

**Welcome/Attendance:** Meeting called to order at 3:15 by Amy

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion made and seconded to approve October 5, 2016 minutes.

**Treasurer's report:** Current PTC checking account balance is \$ 8,600. This is the total following a large order for Stop and Shop gift cards which are available at the front desk and have been selling well.

### Recent Events Wrap-Up

**Vision/Hearing Screening:** Initial screenings for vision and hearing were done for all students in grades K-3 as well as grade 6 and all new students. Follow up tests and retests were needed for 20 students and 8 letters were sent home to parents recommending a professional follow-up exam. New equipment was purchased and used this year for the screenings.

**Student Photo Day:** 80 percent of Foote school students purchased a package. Foote is currently waiting to receive packages back from the photographer. Parents will then have a week to review and decide whether they would like a retake. Retakes will be scheduled and all packages will be completed by the holidays.

**Grandparent's Day:** Amy reported this as one of the most successful Grandparent's days with a record number (470) grandparents and special friends attending.

### New Business-Calendar

**Book Fair:** The book fair will take place, November 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> in the Twichell Room. Bill Harley, storyteller, musician and author will be doing a special performance in the Hosley Gym on Thursday evening, November 17<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:00. Ice cream and pizza will be served by the 9<sup>th</sup> graders. Parents will be asked to sit with their children during the show. An invitation was also extended to students that attended the Horizons program.

**All School Social:** The Walker Rink that was used last year for Foote on Ice is under renovation for the winter. James Jones, Yale Men's basketball coach, has offered to run a basketball fundraiser on Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:00. Members of Yale men's and women's basketball teams will be there. Attendees discussed scheduling Foote on Ice at Northford Pavilion as an additional community building activity, rather than as a fundraiser.

**Auction:** The Foote Auction is scheduled for April 22, 2017. Sustainability will be this year's theme as the event falls on Earth Day. Donations are needed for auction items in addition to items that will be put together into themed baskets/packages to be auctioned off. Each grade will be assigned a theme. The Auction Committee will be looking for a volunteer to oversee the organization of each grade's basket donations.

Additionally, volunteers are needed for the procurement committee. The auction committee is looking for one or two people to be in charge of the following cities/towns: Branford, Guilford, New Haven, Hamden, North Haven, Wallingford and Woodbridge. Food will be provided by Miya's sushi, (including a sushi making demo), and The Stand in Branford will be there with the BBQ truck. Earth oriented décor and colors will be used.

### Guest Speakers

#### **“Cyber Safety” by Pam Fortin, Director of Technology and Kossouth Bradford, School Counselor**

Pam and Kossouth facilitated a discussion about the use of technology among our children. Currently kids are using technology of different sorts (phones, iPads, computers, video games) many hours daily on average that has an addictive quality to it. Studies show technology effects areas of the brain similarly to other addictions such as gambling. Research is being conducted to determine how exposure alters the brain during and after use as well as how it affects long term brain development in children. Currently we do not know the long term ramifications of this level of usage. Additionally, video games are so stimulating that it is often hard for users to then transition to a reality that is not so visually intense.

Discussion topics included challenges parents have encountered attempting to keep up with ever changing modern technology and social media, as well as setting limits and managing children's usage. Pam and Kossouth distributed a handout with websites aimed at helping parents figure out how to keep kids safe online, know what is appropriate for kids as well as what amount of time is appropriate. The Common Sense Media website has a guide to help educate parents on the latest social media, video games and movies.

Pam described some user friendly hardware that is now available to manage Internet content and usage instead of software you load onto your computer. These devices work at the Internet router level, allow parents to add kids' devices and then enables them to pause the Internet or set limits on time spent on any particular site or app. “Torch” is an actual router that works in conjunction with apps on a parent's phone where they can monitor activity or set the limits. Some devices create a log for parents to see what their kids have been doing and for what amount of time.

Some suggestions for parents were to keep technology usage in common spaces in the home, rather than allowing kids to use it in bedrooms behind closed doors. Set rules such as requiring permission to download any new app or obtain a new social media account. Sit with your children and have them show you how to use all the apps, sites or games they are currently using and regularly sit with them to go through their activity. Talk to you children about how to handle any inappropriate content and encourage them to have an open dialogue with you when they happen upon it.

### Reports

**Lower School Report:** The 4<sup>th</sup> grade studied the Day of the Dead. Kindergarten classes are working on their All About Me unit. Each child will have their own week to share about themselves with the class. Each student created their own “body map” using poster board. A community building “Fall feast” will take place at the end of the month in the Kindergarten. 1X and 2X researched a plant or animal that can be found in Connecticut ponds. Jim Adams' class used Chromebooks to make movies.

**Middle School Report:** Trevor reported the student council is helping out with “Service Learning Day” which will be April 27<sup>th</sup>, in addition to assisting in the collecting and counting of UNICEF money. EAD club is hosting a movie afternoon for grades 6-9. Fall sports ended and winter sports will begin after

Thanksgiving. They include swimming, basketball and squash. 6<sup>th</sup> grade is running the food drive for St. Ann's Soup kitchen. Weekly 3 students go to St. Ann's and serve lunch at lunch time. Foote is currently participating in the food drive to create meal bags for Thanksgiving. Each grade has been assigned an item to contribute and 150 bags will be packed up by 6<sup>th</sup> graders. In math the 6<sup>th</sup> grade has been working on bar and circle graphs. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade has been busy preparing their Early America Day projects to present to the younger grades the day before Thanksgiving break. In Math the 7<sup>th</sup> graders are working on statistics projects and will participate in the American Math Competition next week. 8<sup>th</sup> grade just had a field trip and crepe making workshop.

Meeting adjourned at 4:33

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

Christine Pakutka, PTC Secretary