



To: Weston Public School Committee
From: Allison Abrams, WEEFC Chair
Date: June 15, 2020
Re: WEEFC Year-End Report 2019-2020

Despite Covid-19 abruptly ending our in person classes, WEEFC finished the year strong with a very successful online fundraiser and our biggest response to the Star Awards Program in history. We continued to shift our focus for the 2019-20 school year to target marketing of WEEFC funded programs. We used targeted donor letters while continuing to build community engagement. We worked with Dr. Kimo Carter and the building principals to encourage them and their staff to think about new grants and how WEEFC dollars could enrich their classrooms, their lives and their students' experiences. This was highlighted during our weeks of School from Home when we saw two grant recipients pivot and offer the program online, through Zoom, since meeting in person was not an option. We welcome more of this kind of innovative thinking in Fall 2020.

Even though our appeals did not manifest themselves in dollars raised as we fell a short of 2018-19 revenues, we were able to meet the needs of the schools with over thirty grants. We saw increased participation in WEEFC Stars, at the online fundraiser and an increased number of new donors. WEEFC remains committed to fundraising while increasing participation, volunteerism and knowledge about the programs funded through WEEFC dollars.

Fundraising January through June 2020

Due to Covid-19, WEEFC had to cancel our large Spring Fundraiser, the Weston Wingding. Last year, this event was a huge success. It raised about \$76,000 and brought over 200 people together to celebrate and support WEEFC. Therefore we knew that we had to do something to bring an event **to** the people's homes. We had our auction items secured, over 100 people bought tickets and we had about a dozen sponsors. We worked with our auction software to create an online platform where people could bid and/or donate to the event, appropriately named the Wireless Wingding. We had over a dozen items up for auction and we had a Fund a Need called Experts in Residence which would help fund all the experts in our schools; authors, illustrators, scientists, mathematicians & musicians, who come to work with the students. We reached out to those who had purchased tickets to offer them a return of funds or they had the option to roll their ticket purchases into our Fund a Need with a fully tax deductible donation. This provided us with a great starting point for the Fund a Need. We held the auction over four days, which included the Saturday when the event was originally scheduled at Weston Golf Club. With the tremendous support of our community, we raised almost \$60,000. I would like to thank my Board for pulling this together in

three short weeks and especially thank Board Member, Greg Augustine, for his help in setting up the online platform for our use.

To kick off Teacher Appreciation Week in early May, we launched the Star Awards Campaign. This campaign was a tremendous success raising over \$14,000. We emailed over 350 electronic certificates to faculty and staff. We offered Star Awards one more time this June to mark the end of the year. We are currently still running this campaign and to date, have awarded another 100 Star Awards for a total of \$16,895.00. Given that these are challenging times for many in our community, we decided against a Spring Appeal but will likely kick off the school year with a Fall Appeal as we did this past Fall.

Funds to Date:

Although overall donations ended lower than we had hoped for, WEEFC was still able to make a substantial contribution to every school and every grade in Weston. Through all fundraising efforts WEEFC collected a total of \$131,067.00. This is compared with \$179,246.46 in FY2019.

Nonetheless, WEEFC has continued to fund not only the core programming funded every year, but also a large number of new and creative programs within the schools. WEEFC continues to bolster efforts to communicate about WEEFC’s role in the schools, its mission, and more specific information about grants approved for each school. We are thrilled with the number of new donors and supporters of our Wireless Wingding. We are confident that as our younger and/or newer families become more engaged and understand how WEEFC dollars are spent, they will increase their donations and become long term supporters of WEEFC.

Fall Appeal	\$14,765.00
December Appeal:	\$36,345.00
Wireless Wingding	\$59,812.00
Principal for a Day:	\$3,250.00
Star Awards	\$16,895.00
Total (through 6/13):	\$131,067.00

Grants:

As of June 9, 2020, WEEFC awarded 33 grants. These grants totaled about \$83,800. This total awarded is less than last year’s total of \$155,683. More than half of these were new grants which is very exciting. Fifteen grants were awarded to the Elementary Schools, eight to the Middle School, nine to the High School and five benefitted all students in all of our schools. The number of new grants (twenty-three) exemplifies Weston teachers’ commitment to bringing new and innovative programming to our students. Two of the grants were submitted by students with faculty support. A few examples of the new grants are Materials for AP Psychology, an inspirational assembly and speech delivered by Travis Roy, Panels for the WPS Art Shows, a field trip to explore racial identity, Mamba Gaga Ball, a food allergy awareness assembly and an “archaeological dig” to name a few. WEEFC dollars continue to support recurring programs including author visits, grants supporting

the drama program, Creative Arts programming, Land's Sake programs, and Professional Development . A complete list of grants benefiting students this year is attached.

Goals and Looking Forward:

The Board: WEEFC welcomed new board member, Ashley Hanser this spring. This opening was created by two departures from the Board. Both Allyson Jaffe and myself will be rolling off the board. Kate Dickie will be the new Chair. Thank you to Kate for stepping in to take on this role. Thank you to Allyson for her many years as a WEEFC Board member.

Enhance Communication: Communication is key, and we are constantly searching for new ways to help parents understand WEEFC and its role in the schools. Messaging from WEEFC helps and we were delighted by the number of new grants and more importantly, by the amount of new donors. The response to our targeted emails, that is specific grants awarded to specific grades or schools, has been positive.

Weston Wingding: We will once again hold the Weston Wingding. What that event will look like is uncertain right now. The Board has talked about an online auction with a community building celebration to follow. We have held the date for a spring event on April 10, 2021. We will begin planning in the Fall for all scenarios.

Finally, I would like to also extend special thanks to our School Committee Liaison – John Henry and also to Kimo Carter, Janet Bohlin, Patty Ferguson, Anne Keyes, and Ben Wilkins for all of their help throughout the year. Thank you to School Committee and Dr. Connolly for their support as well.

Lastly, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to our Board for their incredible energy and commitment to WEEFC.

Respectfully Submitted on behalf of the WEEFC:

Allison Abrams, Chair