

Walt Whitman PTA Meeting Minutes
October 6, 2022

Meeting called to order. September meeting minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Nothing new to report. Please remember to submit the check request and revenue collection forms which can be found on the PTA website.

Correspondence: Nothing new to report.

Presidents Report:

Melissa: September was a very successful month. Thank you to everyone for attending the Welcome Back Picnic, the first one since pre-COVID. Special thank you to Jaqueline Braunstein, Rachel Levenson, Carla Goodman, Tara Bensol and Pam Bahiri for organizing the event.

Thank you to the 5th grade committee and everyone who contributed to the car wash and Danny's fundraiser.

Thank you to the Gofman family for hosting the newcomer social. A good time was had by all.

Spiritwear is still available although some items have sold out already. Contact Lauren Cremer (who will speak later) who may be able to order more sizes.

Discount cards are ready to purchase. Thank you to Pam Bahiri, Cindy Ho and Dana Kuropatkin.

October and November will be busy months so stay tuned. We are excited to bring back the Thanksgiving Feast on November 21st with senior citizens. This is a great event. The kids and our guests all have a great day.

Be active and join the PTA so you can volunteer. Reach out to committee chairs and get involved.

Later we will be voting on resolutions and bylaws.

Parking lot safety is very important. Please be mindful of others and don't pass other cars or the buses.

Inna: Please attend meetings and stay up to date by signing up for weekly emails and checking our website. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram. The agenda is always posted before meetings. Become active, encourage family members. You must be a paid member to be a parent volunteer. Everything is private within the Walt Whitman community. You must have children current enrolled to be active. Please respect the privacy of the community and so not disseminate any information, especially Directory Spot. Reach out with any questions.

Mr. Snyder's Report: the children have all completed the NWEA benchmark assessment. Results will be shared with the public shortly. The assessment is used to make instructional decisions especially for our learning center which starts next week. We use the data to help place students for reading writing and math. As required by state law, 3-4 graders who scored lower than 3 in a particular subject will participate in the learning center. Calls have already been

made to those who will be participating this year.

COGATS for grades 3-5 have also taken place and are waiting to be processed to determine placement in Project Beyond. We will begin making calls soon for placement in that program. The criteria is set by the district and is very strict. Once a student is in the program they do not need to score again to continue in future years.

Participation in early morning rehearsals for band, orchestra and chorus have been great. Thank you for supporting these programs. The winter concert will take place in mid-December. We are looking for alternative spaces. South Woods proved to be too small for last year's spring concert as had to ask the 3rd grade parents to leave after their performance to make room for the 4th and 5th graders. We have requested HBT or the high school.

Parent question – What is the expected capacity and if we have connections to use an off-campus venue would that be entertained?

Mr. Snyder- About 400 and yes, I will entertain other options.

Before school closures for any observance, I have been communicating to the student about the observance to better understand why they are getting a day off. The goal is to foster a sense of community and appreciation of what others are celebrating. I am trying to work with the district to have a unified message across all schools and observances and ask that you reinforce these messages at home.

Parent question: Will there be a message tomorrow regarding Monday's closure.

Mr. Snyder: Yes, my message will cover a wide net regarding what the day represents to cover all bases.

Thank you for your attendance at the Board of Ed meetings in September and October. It was great to see you come together as a community and thoughtfully express your concerns for the students and building now and in the future. The head of maintenance has already reached out about installing carpets in some of the rooms. Some teachers have elected to have rugs back in the classrooms and others have chosen foam discs for the kids to sit on that are portable. All because of your attendance and speaking at these meetings. It does make a difference so thank you. Council was also impressed with how Whitman presented as a community.

Bylaws and Resolutions:

We will now be voting on PTA Resolutions and Proposed Bylaw Amendments. Resolutions will become official NYS PTA positions, and PTA units and councils draw on these positions to shape their support of proposed legislation, policies or regulations. Resolutions remain part of NYS PTA's "Where We Stand" until they become law or are shown to be no longer needed. In addition, this year we will be voting on the NYS PTA proposed bylaws. Bylaws are the framework of our organization. The results of our voting will be taken to the NYS PTA convention in November.

The proposed resolutions were sent out by email for you to review prior to this meeting. I hope everyone had time to look over the resolutions. As a reminder, only paid members can vote.

To save time we will be taking a block vote. We will take a vote on all the retentions first, then all the rescissions, then all the updates, and finally the new resolutions. Remember you can only vote if you are a paid member.

I would like to ask for a motion to use block voting for the proposed resolutions and amendments. Motion has been seconded. No Objections.

There being no objections, the motion to vote on proposed resolutions and amendments by block

vote passes by acclamation.

I would also like to ask for a motion to forego reading read each resolution/bylaw amendment, retentions, rescissions, updates, and new resolutions.

Motion has been seconded. No Objections.

There being no objections, the motion to forego individual reading passes by acclamation.

Let's start with retentions. A retention is something that NYS PTA would like to keep as is. The resolution is relevant and should remain the same. Are there any questions? If there are no questions, then are there any objections to supporting the retentions? As there are no objections, the vote on retentions passes by acclamation

Moving on to rescissions. A rescission is a resolution that is obsolete, for reasons described in the resolution's statement. Are there any questions? If there are no questions, then are there any objections to supporting the rescissions? As there are no objections, the vote on rescissions passes by acclamation

"At this time, I would like to ask if anyone objects to the new updates? As there are no objections, the vote has passed by acclamation."

Moving on to updates. Updates are adopted resolutions that are being revised in some small way to maintain their accuracy or relevance. Are there any questions? If there are no questions, then are there any objections to supporting the updates? As there are no objections, the vote on updates passes by acclamation.

There are no new resolutions this year.

We will now vote on the Bylaws. Quorum has been reached as we have at least 15 paid PTA members in attendance. We need 2/3 to approve the Bylaws. There are 2 proposed amendments to be adopted by the PTA. With 27 votes the amendments have been accepted. Thank you for voting.

Book Fair:

We are so excited to have our book fair outside and in person on Thursday, October 13th and Friday, October 14th weather permitting. Some classes will attend Thursday and some classes will attend on Friday. A flyer was sent home tomorrow with a letter attached explaining a lot of important information. Please attach a post it note if there is a specific book or series you would like your child to purchase. We will be using ewallet again this year- the link to sign up for that is on the letter sent home- we will also blast it out. Ewallet allows your child to use your credit card to pay. Of course we will be accepting cash and checks as usual. Please make checks payable to Walt Whitman PTA. This year we will be pre selling the new Diary of a Wimpy Kid book called Diper Overload. The info was blasted out a few days ago and is on our website. That will be available for sale until October 20th and the books will be sent home once Scholastic sends them to us. We are looking forward to an amazing sale! Please reach out if you have any questions.

Discount Card:

The discount card is back by popular demand and we are selling them fast so don't forget to order before we run out!! We ordered a limited amount. Cards are \$25 each and valid for one year. You do not need to be a Whitman family to purchase a card so feel free to share with local family and friends! Cards are available to purchase on the pta website!! If you have already placed an order, they will be delivered within the week or come stop by to see us wherever we are selling. Thanks so much for your continued support!

Directory Spot:

Directory Spot – Michelle Kim will be handling the online directory this year. Feel free to send any questions or requests to her email (michki21@gmail.com).

1. The DirectorySpot is an online directory that you can access on the web or phone through an app.
2. You must be a paid pta member to access the directory. Please go to the memberhub and purchase your annual pta membership.
3. For new families only, please go to the pta website and click on the link under DirectorySpot to fill out the form.
4. Please keep in mind that if your contact information is already on the directory spot, you do not have to resubmit your information. If you have changes or updates, for example you have a younger child who is a kindergartner or your child is missing their teacher info, feel free to contact me I will sort it out for you.

Encourage parents to join and to include their contact information. Spread the word to those who are new to WW that may not know what the directory spot is or how to submit their info.

Encourage class moms to include a request for contact information in the class dues flyers. It is a great tool but please also respect others privacy if they choose not to share their information as well as the privacy of those who do that it will be kept within the WW community.

Fall Festival:

The fall festival will take place on Halloween, Monday, Oct 31st during school hours. The kids can wear costumes to school that day. Its outdoors on the field where we hire a DJ and set up various stations for the kids to play games and have activities such as pumpkin decorating, relay races, dance party, etc. It is a really fun event for the kids. We are trying to bring back the costume parade for K-2. Each grade will have 1 hour outside. The schedule is in signup genius. We could use help, so if you want to be a part of the committee please let Cara, Tara or Marina know. If there is bad weather the activities will be held indoor. Parent volunteers will still be able to attend.

Mr. Snyder: I will be sending a letter home discouraging group costumes and candy being brought into the school. Whether intentional or not, I do not want any kids to feel excluded in any way. Parents please be cognizant of this when planning your children's costumes. The letter will also cover our mask and other accessory policy. Mask are ok for the parade but should not be worn for the entirety of the day. Teachers can help the younger grades with their costumes before the parage if they are unable to wear them for the whole day.

Family Fun Night:

Save the date for family fun night - Thursday, November 17th in the evening - time TBD. Exact details will be coming soon but all are welcome and it will be super fun!! Be on the lookout for more info!

Fifth Grade Committee:

The car wash was a huge success. Thank you to everyone who supported the fifth graders by coming to get your cash washed! Our next event is tomorrow night- Friday Night lights. The fifth graders will be playing sports, hanging with cheerleaders and hanging out at the park with parent volunteers. There will be raffles prizes as well so please sign up your fifth grader!! Another fifth grade fundraiser is the new Walt Whitman Wolverines car magnets. They are five dollars each. Please let us know if you would like to purchase one! Fifth grade parents there will be info coming your way shortly about the yearbook and legacy tiles. Thanks!

Fifth grade parents, you'll be getting an email next week from the yearbook committee, but just a head's up. All 5th grade parents will need to submit 17 pictures for the yearbook - including a baby pic, a strike-a-pose pic, and 15 other pics THAT MUST BE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS over the years. You'll also be asked if you want to purchase small boosters of congratulations to your children in the yearbook. The pics and boosters will be due by mid-November - so it's time to start

going through all your old pics and picking the cutest ones for submission for the yearbook! Look for the letter next week, but any questions you can send to Dana Kralstein, Tracy Brown, Cindy Ho, or Jenn Palaganas.

PARP: Pick a reading partner intending to foster a love of reading with the kids. PARP encourages reading at least 15 minutes a day. Each year we have a different theme. We invite students to join our pumpkin patch this year. The beginning ceremony will be October 17th and we encourage the students to dress up for the event in their farm friendly best. Prior to the 17th a project packet will be send home including decorations for each student to individualize to be used to decorate the school. Activities will include a pajama day and other outdoor celebrations. Please remember to log your child's reading each night in the google form for which a link will be sent out. Reach out to Mollie Newman with questions.

Pie Sale: Please support the PTA by purchasing pies and other treats from White Post Farms. There are new products being offered this year. A link to purchase through memberhub will be provided. The deadline to order will be November 10th with pickup on the 22nd.

Reflections:

This year's deadline is November 4th. The flyer has been circulated in the weekly emails as well as my contact information. Only a few please have reached out so far with interest in the competition so please encourage your children to participate. Mr. Snyder will be issuing a free homework pass to all students to enter. As a reminder this year's theme is Show Your Voice. There are multiple categories you can choose from to participate in including dance, film, music, and photography. Similar to last year all submissions will be made virtually and need to be submitted through me to please reach out ASAP to get started. For those of you that have reached out I have forwarded the program rules as well as an entry from that needs to be completed along with your entry. There are category specific rules as well so once you determine the category you wish to participate in let me know and I will forward. Please reach out with any questions. Ms. Beach will promote the contest but will not be able help the students with their creations.

Scholarship:

Since 1958, the Syosset Council of PTAs and the Syosset Teachers' Association have jointly sponsored the Syosset Scholarship Fund, giving more than 450 scholarships. Each year, scholarships are awarded to qualifying graduating SHS seniors to help defray the costs of higher education. Recipients are chosen primarily on the basis of financial need, in addition to academics and community service. Whitman makes an annual donation to the fund as well.

Last year, three students were awarded scholarships of \$3,000 each.

We hope the community will continue to support the Syosset Scholarship Fund. Donations can be made via check (payable to Syosset Scholarship Fund, Inc. - P.O. Box 732, Syosset, NY 11791) or via Paypal ([paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1348484](https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1348484)), and can be made "In Memory Of" or "In Honor Of."



SYOSSET
SCHOLARSHIP FUND-

School Store:

For those new to the school, the school store is a PTA run fundraising store that sells fun school related supplies that your child can buy during their lunch period on select Thursdays this year. Parents can volunteer to work a shift on the PTA website. The shifts are by grade and our next school store will be on Thursday, October 20th!

The school store teaches your children to count money and understand its value with inexpensive, fun supplies to choose from such as scented pens, emoji sharpeners, smart phone shaped memo pads, lots of pencil case options and so much more. The cost of these items range from \$.25 to \$5. We will also be selling water bottles, insulated lunch bags, excuse pads and school magnets. New products are ordered every 2 weeks. The mini football helmets have been discontinued. We only accept cash. Don't forget to volunteer on the PTA website - there are still some spots left! It's a fun way to see your kids and help raise some money for the PTA!! Always feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions!

Mr. Snyder: We do encourage the kids to eat before going to the store but they do get excited. We may move the timing of the store to run during recess time instead of lunch time during the colder months.

School Board of Ed Report:

Two meetings occurred between both PTA meetings so there are two meetings to report on briefly.

9/12 BOE meeting

School Social Work Presentation which is very detailed -it posted on the district website to review. Some quick highlights- our Social work program has grown slowly over the past several years. They have added more staff to the team which has been tremendous for our district. One piece of work they have done in addition to working with the students is training recess monitor staff. Very exciting!

The Board made mention that they did a facilities tour over the summer and the buildings are over 70 years old and need maintenance and repair. There was a comparison of a HS classroom from 1950 that looked the same as a current social studies room!

Audience to the Public:

Parent- Discussed the issue of space and lack thereof for WW, services on stage etc. Kids need to move around and get a break.

Parent- Commends district- for helping his children enter the district seamlessly

Parent- Berry Hill- Issue important to the district- requesting more social workers for the elementary schools and they should not be shared between the elementary schools. Recommended Ratio for NY state social worker association 1 per every 250 students.

Parent- Spoke on behalf of several parents that couldn't be there today- requesting updates. Districts expanding faster than our buildings can support.

Parent- Discussing Bus Route not safe, Bus almost at max capacity- Bus #3

Parent- OT is on a stage- Hardly hear when speaking to the teacher how can her child not be distracted by this service. Busing issue. Para or lunch aid should help during recess games etc.

Parent- reiterating when the process will get started? We need space-

10/3 BOE meeting

Superintendent's Report

Advance educational program- last couple years have been a pause but gave the district the opportunity on how technology works in the classroom. Aiming at a point in time to present what classrooms will look like in the future. HS has about 100 rooms they will be upgrading.

Update- Changes in dismissal patterns, accommodate on the bus to being a walker. Change going to a different bus is still an issue. They are piloting new software, to see where each child's dismissal will be. Tracking. Turf lights are working. Friday night lights occurred and students were thrilled to be a part of the first lit up event.

Updates on Stillwell- Rogers has no update on Stillwell. The previous county executive was into it, not sure what the new county executive perspective will be. Rogers was open to reaching out to the new county executive.

Audience to the Public

-Parent- Requests follow up on what our Public was asking about last month with no mention of update for the WW school facility update.

End School Board meeting.

Parent: Answers from the Board may be confusing at times and the slow progress is frustrating but we need to keep the pressure on so the Board continues to activity address our concerns. We should come together to form an official stance on a particular issue and brainstorm solutions both for the long term and short term until those long-term solutions can be completed (i.e., until actual infrastructure changes can be completed).

Tara: I propose forming a committee to draft a position letter to present to the Board addressing the lack of space in WW. Motion has been seconded. No objections. Majority have voted in favor and the motion has passed.

Parent question: Are the busses tracked?

Mr. Snyder: Huntington Coach has GPS monitoring on all of their busses but we (Syosset Transportation) do not have access. I do not know if other districts have that kind of access as it is contract specific. If a problem arises, we have to contact Huntington Coach to determine the location of a particular bus. Overall, the timing of the bus routes has improved. Students are still not allowed to go home on a different bus for a play date. This comes in to play especially as students are starting to bring instruments on the bus which makes them more crowded.

Spiritwear: Please go to the PTA website to order your spirit wear as there is still inventory left. Spirit day is every Friday so stock up. Thank you for your support. All blankets have now been sent home for those who did not receive them last month.

Don't forget the Thanksgiving Feast is November 21st. See Cincy Ho, Rachel Levenson and Karen Ostrich.

At 8:57 the meeting was adjourned.

Upcoming Dates:

October:

10/10 - NO SCHOOL Columbus Day
10/13 - 10/14 - Scholastic Book Fair
10/14 - Mixology Shopping Fundraiser
10/17 - 10/28 - PARP
10/20 - School Store
10/24 - NO SCHOOL Diwali

10/25 - SEPTA General Meeting 7:45pm

10/31 - Fall Festival (in school)

November:

11/2 - WW PTA Meeting 7:30pm

11/9 - Parent-Teacher Conferences

11/9 - Picture Retake Day

11/11 - NO SCHOOL Veteran's Day

11/17 - Fall Family Fun Night

11/22 - SEPTA General Meeting 7:45pm

11/24 - 11/25 - NO SCHOOL Thanksgiving Recess

Spirit Dates:

Every Friday.