

Walt Whitman PTA Meeting Minutes

April 3, 2023

Meeting called to order. March meeting minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report – Sunita Hansraj

All cash received from events has been deposited resulting in a balance of \$123k.

Correspondence – Courtney Schlow

Nothing to report.

Presidents Report – Melissa Foreman & Inna Choi

Thank you to the book fair committee and all volunteers. We raised \$2.9k in profit in addition to scholastic dollars that will be spread out across the teachers.

The Wizards games were a lot of fun. Thank you to Tracey Meyer for your time spent at the high school contributing to a great day.

The school had its Bash the Trash assembly today which was interesting and informative.

5th grade committee applications are due by April 18th and will be announced at next months meeting.

The Fun Fair is on April 26th. Tshirt orders are due today. Raffle sales will remain open.

If you have any questions regarding the awards committee or would like to make a nomination please reach out to Jacqueline Braunstein.

Tonight we are voting on whether or not the Walt Whitman PTA as a unit supports the proposed Syosset 2023/2024 budget. As a unit the vote passed and our support will be communicated at the April council meeting.

May 19th is WW's staff recognition breakfast. The committed consists of Jacqueline Braunstein, Carly Laffie, Karen Ostrick, and Pam Bahiri. Please reach out if you are interested in joining the committee.

The cyber bullying presentation had been postponed. Rescheduling TBD.

May's meeting will be during the day. The exact time is TBD.

Mr. Snyder's Report

Letters for the upcoming ELAs for grades 3-5 were posted on Remind last week. Consider this a prompt to submit your opt-out letter if you are doing so. Im legally obligated to offer all children the test even if you submit a letter opting out and it will be coded as a refusal. In the past if a large number of students opted out they would be placed in the gym with a certified educator and kept busy with other activities until their class was finished taking the exam. As of now only a small number of students have opted out. If this is the case, they will remain in their classroom while their peers take the exam. The test is not timed. Any opt-out letter needs to be specific regarding the ELAs and/or the field tests to be administered in May.

A placement letter for next school year have also been posted on Remind. Any requests must be submitted by May 1st to be taken into consideration. No request should be considered a binding agreement. We should be teaching our kids resilience and believe now is a good time to do so.

Graduation will be in-doors this year as district is only allotting one day for graduation ceremonies with no rain date. Students receive 4 tickets. Additional tickets may be available upon request if space allows. This is standard across the district. More detailed about graduation will be communicated as the event gets closer.

Awards Committee – Jacqueline Braunstein

The awards committee will meet soon so please email jacquelinebraunstein@gmail.com to nominate someone!

Curriculum Enrichment – Karen Ostrick

Bash the Trash was founded in 1988 by husband and wife creative team John Bertles and Carina Piaggio. Their musical performance **Sustainable Sounds** uses musical instruments made from recycled and reused materials to explore concepts of sound, science and sustainability. The goal is to help students understand how they can become a positive force for environmental change, explore science concepts of sound, music and instruments and explore where trash comes from and where it goes. Check out www.bashthetrash.com and www.youtube.com/bashthetrash.

Cultural Unity Committee – Erica Schulman

The Celebration of Culture entries are due April 24th. Please check your email for details.

Fifth Grade Committee - Dana Kuropatkin, Courtney Schlow, Leslie Won

The fifth grade committee has been busy planning all of the upcoming exciting events. An email will be sent shortly with all of the important dates. Please remember to order your lawn signs- it's a great fundraiser to help pay for our events and will look awesome on your lawn in June! Thank you.

Fun Fair – Tara Bensol, Cara Kaplan, Niki Gionis, Michelle Landauer

Please join us for our annual Fun Fair on Wednesday, April 26th (rain date Friday, April 28th) from 6-8pm. This year we have combined our Fun Fair and Family Fun Night into one amazing event. Get excited for Walt Whitman Candyland - fun for the whole family! Playground athletes, blow up sports and carnival games, guessing jars, crafts, food trucks with plenty of options, amazing raffle baskets and of course CANDY!

Class parents sent out an email about donating to our raffle baskets - baskets are being finalized so if you plan to donate please do so asap!

T-Shirt and raffle order forms were sent out - the cutoff to order t-shirts is April 4th so please get your orders in! We have the link here today so you can order right now even.

If you have any questions please let Cara Kaplan, Tara Bensol, Niki Gionis or Michelle Landauer know.

Health, Nutrition and Safety – Erica Schulman

The zoom presentation with Officer Serrano about Cyber Bullying was cancelled because the officer was sick. They are working on rescheduling it.

Plant Sale – Michelle Kim

The Annual Plant Sale was a huge success and our sale this year will be on (insert date).

- Michelle will place the plant sale order by 4/15.

- Need volunteers on the event date for help.

- There is no pre-sale so please remind parents to send money with children on the day of the plant sale.

School Board Reporter - Tara Ginsburg & Carly Laffie

-Considering the challenges, we are facing currently with the levels of inflation, the main focus has been to maintain existing programs and adding mental health support to student's post-pandemic. Also in the plans are several facilities projects to help maintain our aging buildings.

April 18th is the next BOE meeting and will be discussing the final budget recommendations for the 23-24 school year.

May 3rd, Syosset Council of PTAs Know Your Candidate Forum, 7:30pm at South Woods Middle School, IN PERSON ONLY.

There are 3 seats open for election.

5/8, District Budget Hearing, 8pm Southwoods
5/16, Annual District Election and Budget Vote

-There was a presentation on Syosset Math & Business k-12, discuss the shift to common core, presentation is posted on the districts site
- BOCES Budget review was discussed, more details on the site as well

Audience to the Public:

Parent- discussed late start time and thought there should be more details in the dollar implication if we were to shift it. How this would affect our budget. Might change how people vote

3 Parents and Child- Requesting action to retire the Syosset team name and imagery. Curious why the issue was not on the agenda as a discussion item. Concern if we wait too long we can run the risk of state funding

Parent- Discusses more diligent process is needed like in our neighboring districts to verify residency for enrollment.

Rogers and Rotolo:

-Sub-committee has been formed in NY State releasing additional guidance on the topic of school mascots. This will be discussed at the next BOE meeting.
-On topic of outside leagues, the school district has no authority to regulate them only that the team gear or outside mascot wearing with this regulation cannot be worn on school grounds.

Discussion item- BOE member requested to make two meetings a month, one a working, this can break up the time of the once-a-month meeting and potentially accomplish more during a working session. BOE discussed this during their session. No decision made.

School Supplies – Pam Bahiri

We will be using 1st day school supplies again this year. Ordering is very easy and information will be sent out shortly. Ordering will be available until June 30th. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out. Thanks for your continued support!

Staff Rec – Jacqueline Braunstein, Carly Laffie, Karen Ostrick, Pam Bahiri

Our Staff Rec event is coming up on May 19. Please let Jacqueline, Karen, Pam or Carly know if you would like to join the committee or sign up on the sheet going around. We will keep the details private so it is a surprise for the staff but it will be great!!

Flow Society Fundraiser - Heather Egert and Tara Bensch

The flow society shorts fundraiser was a huge success. I have extra shorts if anyone is still interested in purchasing a pair. Please reach out to me or Tara.

Meeting adjourned at 7:59 pm.

Upcoming Dates:

April:

4/3 - PTA Meeting at 7:30pm

4/6 - 4/14 - NO SCHOOL Spring Recess

4/18 - Board of Education Meeting 8:00pm @ Southwoods

4/21 - NO SCHOOL Eid al Fitr

4/26 - Fun Fair 6-8pm (raindate 4/28)

4/27 - SCHOOL STORE

May:

5/2 - PTA Meeting (daytime, TBD)

5/8 - Board of Education Meeting 8:00pm @ Southwoods

5/11 - Kindergarten Orientation

5/12 - Plant Sale

5/16 - Planting Day

5/16 - Annual District Election and Budget Vote

5/18 - SCHOOL STORE

5/18 - Spring Concert

5/19 - Staff Recognition

5/28 - 5/29 - NO SCHOOL Memorial Day Break

Spirit Dates:

Every Friday