



General Meeting Agenda
December 5, 2023 at 7:30pm | Walt Whitman Elementary School

Good evening, everyone.

Our meeting is called to order at 7:35 pm with a quorum present. Attendance will be taken by sign in sheet. Please make sure you sign the sheet on the tables.

I. Approve minutes - November 2023

We sent out the minutes from our last PTA meeting for review via email and have some copies on the tables today. Does anyone have comments, changes, or questions? If not, the minutes stand as approved. Thank you.

II. Treasurer's Report – Sunita Hansraj

Opening Balance, 10/23/23	\$ 99,525.31
Income/Deposits	\$ 4,259.04
Expense/Cash Disbursements	\$ 7,463.41
<u>Checking Balance</u>	<u>\$ 96,320.94</u>

TOTAL Cash on Hand as of 11/20/23 \$ 96,320.94

“All balances were reconciled to the bank statements. The books were reviewed and found to be in order by Erica Schulman. Thank you Erica.”

III. Correspondence Secretary – read by Niki Gionis

None

IV. Principal's Report – Mr. Snyder

Our student council has been busy since the elections starting with World Kindness Day. There were fun events all week including 'chalk day' when the students write messages of kindness around the school.

Dr. Rogers also held his cabinet meeting with students from elementary through high school to discuss likes and dislikes. Jake Meyer and Kavita Hansraj were the WW reps.

The PTA recently hosted their Thanksgiving luncheon which was a huge success. Guests were entertained with several performances and left with full stomachs and giveaways including picture frames and necklaces.

V. President's Report - read by Inna Choi and Karen Ostrick

As always, thank you Mr. Snyder.

We would like to give a big shout out to our amazing chairs Tara Bensol, Rachel Levenson, Theresa Seedorf, Amanda Cohen, VP Pam Bahiri, and volunteers for the incredible Thanksgiving Luncheon held for our local senior citizens. Thank you to all your planning and coordination also to Mr Snyder, our music teachers, and all the Whitman staff who helped make it a truly wonderful event. The seniors, children, staff and us parents all enjoyed it so much and loved doing it.



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We had an amazing free Family Night Out at Bounce! - it was an amazing event to end our year and a fun way to hang out with each other. Niki Gionis, Tara Bensol, Heather Egert and VP Pam Bahiri really pulled off a fantastic event for our school. We hope you all enjoyed it with your children.

Welcome to the season of giving! Our holiday boutique is coming up and we have multiple ways to donate items for charity programs too. The chairs will provide more detail later on.

We posted a complete list of teachers and staff from Whitman on our Facebook page for use during the holiday season. We are collecting only for office and custodial staff. They help put together and take down our PTA events, in addition to the vital work they do for our students every day. As for other staff members in our building, we feel they would benefit more from receiving individual gifts rather than a collective group gift so please use the list as a reference.

As a reminder we will be creating our Awards committee. Our awards committee will be selecting from our amazing staff and our incredible parent volunteers for the 2023-24 school year to provide recognition for their work in the PTA. We will be asking for volunteers by the next meeting, so please reach out if you are interested.

And of course later tonight, we will finish finalizing our Nominating Committee. We already voted in three people from the Executive Board. Tonight we will vote on our remaining (2) two non-Executive Board members and an alternate.

VI. Standing Committee Reports

A. We will hear the report of the **Arts in Education / Curriculum Enrichment** committee given by Jacqueline Braunstein

The National Circus Project - December 11-15. <https://nationalcircusproject.com/>

B. Now we will hear the report of the **Board of Education Reporter** given by Carly Laffie/Tara Ginsburg.

BOE meeting 11.06.23 - Dr Rogers opened with a discussion on recent current events happening inside of our schools. The school district has recognized in recent events that they must take immediate action because their current one has proven inadequate. The school district must ensure that our students recognize and understand symbols of hate and their history as well as the distinctions between free speech, hate speech and disruptive speech. The goal will be to reinforce what constitutes forbidden conduct and what consequences will follow. The school district follows their code of conduct and follows what the law requires there after.

Dr Rogers and President Cheng met with 3 leaders (the co chairs of the interfaith council of clergy, Rabbi Jamie Shalhevet, Pastor Rebecca Sheridan, as well as Dr Usma Sayed a Muslim community leader). They showed that they came together as a unified community and that they all value our diverse community despite their differences and all value harmony. Together they will be offering their services to help teach our kids to make the world a more peaceful place.



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[There was a facilities update which has been posted on the website which you can reference for more information](#), but a quick update for our school: they developed a plan to build new modular classrooms and delay the demolition of existing portables at BH and WW to serve as “swing space” during the enrollment bubble.

Woodbury School:

- Dr Rogers wants to postpone rehabilitation to the school as it is not cost effective
- He would rather use the money where students will be instead of moving administration around

Superintendent's report:

Residency: Syosset School Districts **Policy 5150** states that the district requires that families:

- Appear in person to finalize registration
- Submit original residency documents
- Re-verify residency and submit updated documentation
 - o 5th and 8th grade transition
 - o At the expiration of a lease
 - o Upon a home sale/ subsequent purchase within the district
- For more details please see the presentation that was posted on the district website

Audience to the public

- 2 people came to the podium in regards to residency verification and brought up some good points to the board
 - o People put their homes addresses up to rent out to people
 - o Students are coming in from queens on the LIRR to attend our school district
 - o People are using the same surname to pretend they are related when they are not
 - o These students are affecting the size of our school
 - o We need to continue to brainstorm to have non resident students not be able to attend Syosset High School
- Multiple people came to the podium to speak about antisemitism within our school district. Please reference the livestream to view.

BOE meeting 11.20.23 - Superintendent's Report

Facilities Update: added bathrooms per code to the new gym space at the HS, identified value - engineering opportunity for the HS library by location outside of the courtside to save construction costs.

Project overview:

Portable replacements (for WW, village, Baylis and BH)

Safety: HBT vestibule, HS bus loop

HBT track, New playground for south grove, willets and robins lane

- enrollment growth for south woods - looking to relocate the business offices and convert those offices into classrooms
- HS relocate the library and convert that to classrooms
- construct the additional gym space
- consolidate guidance and mental health services along with expanding robotics



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- at the last meeting Dr Rogers mentioned with some additional money we can also add air conditions for all main gyms at the elementary and middle school levels

Next steps:

- the portables will take 18 months to replace
- the plan for WW is to receive 4 classrooms with the new portable
- Dr Rogers addresses enrollment growth - for more information please view the district website for the presentation
- BOE wanted to discuss an opportunity that Dr Rogers mentioned that hasn't been mentioned before. There is a potential opportunity with The Woodbury School. Syosset library approached the district about making this location a satellite location. They mentioned they would share renovation costs and would jointly seek grants. Uses would include: student tutoring space, outdoor programming, seed garden, community meeting room, adult education, staff professional development

The Anti Bullying Prevention Program and Program Enhancements were discussed. Dr Rogers discusses putting together the anti bias task force. The board had a lengthy discussion about it and they decided they need to discuss the size of the task force and who will be in charge of it first. The board gives their individual opinions on the size of this task force and who should be running it. The board set up a meeting after this to further discuss and solidify the anti bias task force co chairs and size of the task force itself.

BOE Special Meeting 11/27 - BOE appointed the Anti Biased Task Force Co-Chairs - -Dr. Uzma Sayed, Pastor Rebecca Sheraton, Jaimee Shalhevet

BOE Meeting 12/4

- Facilities Work- Facility plans is on the website, there will be a process to have community feedback on the draft plan
- There will be explanatory meetings that will be held on zoom since they feel they will receive the most attendance for the feedback.
- Dr. Rogers met with the Anti-Biased Co-Chairs, discussed how to address bias head on, co chairs plans to meet with experts and groups of students, forums for the public for thoughts and suggestions
- Dr. Rogers also discussed that everything that does get reported does get investigated

Dr. Rogers thanked the co-chairs of the Anti-Bias Task Force for their calming influence, and expressed that he believes they are the right people to take on this task.

- He agrees with the speakers who believe that Syosset is a great school District, but everyone has a role to play in ensuring the school's culture remains special.
- The District is rigorously committed to viewpoint neutrality.
- Any incident of hate is addressed with vigor.
- Parents need to be our partners because we cannot reach beyond the school walls. Students also define the school's culture and can help to change it.
- Syosset is a community where we recognize and embrace diversity.
- We've all been hard at work to get through this difficult time, we are making progress and will continue to



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be a community partner.

C. We will now hear the report of the **BoxTops** given by Carly Orlansky.

It is the easiest way to raise money for the school! Simply download the app, scan your receipts or forward them if you buy online to the email address provided! We have raised \$25.10 so far this year! So many products you buy are included, it is easy!

D. Now we will hear the report of the **Community Kindness committee** given by Tracy Brown and/or Joanne Fang

Our school is collecting toys for underprivileged kids. You can help by sending NEW, UNOPENED & UNWRAPPED toys. Drop off boxes will be in the school vestibule from: Dec 1- 19. Toys For Tots is run by the United States Marine Corps Reserves who distributes toys to children whose parents are unable to afford to buy them gifts for the holidays. Every child deserves a little holiday! Thank you for your kindness and generosity! Questions? Contact: Tracy Brown - tracyjill923@aol.com or Joanne Fang - Juan81_2000@yahoo.com

E. Now we will hear the report of the **Directory Spot and Membership** given by Michelle Kim -

We have 304 parent members. Our goal is 296. We have 16 teachers.

F. Now we will hear the report of the **Discount Card Fundraiser Committee** given by Cindy Ho.

The WW discount card can now be purchased at a reduced rate of \$20 each. You can order by going to our PTA website. Please contact Cindy Ho if you have not received a card you ordered. Thanks!

G. Now we will hear the report of the **Fifth Grade Committee** given by Melissa Forman and Jacqueline Braunstein.

The fifth grade committee sponsored two fundraisers in the past month — one with Danny's Chinese Kitchen and the other was a 5th grade hibachi night.

The 5th grade circus performance will be December 15th at 1:30. Each child will receive 2 tickets for family members. A letter has been backpacked with all necessary information as well as a form to submit the names of the two individuals who will be attending.

H. Our **Family Fun Night Committee** report given by Tara Bensol, Niki Gionis, Pam Bahiril and Heather Egert -

Bounce was a huge success. Thank you everyone for coming.

I. Our **Holiday Boutique** report given by Cindy Ho, Erica Sutter and Lauren Grams

We are excited to be hosting Holiday Boutique on the stage this year on Thursday, December 7th for all grades and Friday December 8th for students who were absent or forgot money on the 7th. We will be selling items for the children to purchase for the holidays for family members/friends ranging in price from \$0.75 to \$12 from our



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traditional vendor, Little Shoppers. Please send your children in with cash or check that day. We have also sent home a shopping list for parents to fill out with their children to help streamline the shopping given the short time frame the students have to shop. In the past, we have also provided for students who may not have the economic means to shop at Holiday Boutique with the help of Mr. Snyder. If you would like to contribute, please let us know and we will provide the money to Mr. Snyder so he can provide it to the students in advance of the sale. If you are a family in need of any assistance, please let Mr. Snyder know. We would love for all of the children to be able to buy gifts for their loved ones. Please contact myself, Cindy Ho or Erica Sutter for any questions.

J. The **Multicultural Committee** report will be given by Jacqueline Braunstein, Melissa Forman or Gabby Mohammadi.

The committee will be meeting to work on the programs soon and sign ups will go out after the winter break.

K. Here is a report of the **Pie Sale Committee** given by Carly Goodman and/or Allison Mayer

The White Post Farms fundraising for this 2023 Thanksgiving was a success. Thanks to everyone who ordered. We hope everyone enjoyed what they ordered. I have to say I was very impressed with the apple crumb pie!! Hopefully next year we do see a bit more ordering from the teachers and more parents overall.

L. Rachel Levenson, Tara Bensol, Theresa Seedorf or Ashley Cohen from the **Thanksgiving Luncheon Committee** will now give their report.

We had a great turnout. Thank you to everyone who donated and contributed to making it a wonderful day.

M. Heather Egert will speak on behalf of the **School Store Committee**

Thank you to all of those who had volunteered and I'm looking forward to meeting those who are signed up for the upcoming school store. Please be mindful to just walk to and from the stage when volunteering for School Store and to not wander the halls. Also, please make sure you are not signed up for more than 3 per child and that you are a paid pta member. If you are unable to attend a School Store that you have signed up for, please let me know ASAP. Also, if you need to switch with somebody, please let me know so that we can make the appropriate changes with Security. You can always check back the day before to see if there are any openings and I'm going to try and do my best to post on Facebook if there are as well. Also, even though it's so cute to see your kids shopping, photos are not allowed. We have a dedicated photographer who will be taking some for the yearbook. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions. And if you see any fun school supplies send them my way!

N. Which leads us to the report from the **Spirit Wear Committee** given by Samantha Lebenhart and/or Niki Gionis

All merchandise has been delivered. Please reach out if you still wish to place an order. We will try to sell more merchandise in conjunction with school events.

O. Another important report from **SEPTA** given by Erica Shulman & Danielle Sandjaby

SEPTA: SEPTA is a district wide PTA whose primary role is to promote acceptance and inclusion of all by providing resources and support to parents, teachers and children who receive special education services through an IEP, 504 Plan, related support services such as resource room, counseling, speech, occupational or physical therapy and students who are twice exceptional or gifted. SEPTA number one fundraiser is our



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membership anyone can join (please print out the attached flyers and bring them to your meeting - thank you). Please explain what SEPTA is below in the summary you can read. Any questions please reach out to our Membership Chair Jennifer Poitrimol jenpo3012@gmail.com. Next meeting is **January 30, 2023** at Bayis.

P. Now we will hear Syosset Council of PTAs Committee reports.

1. Lauren Grams from our **Health Nutrition and Safety Committee** will provide a report now.

The Health, Nutrition & Safety committee will host a virtual presentation from LICADD (Long Island Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence) on February 28th at 7:30pm which will be focused on new trends in substance abuse among youth.

2. Now we will hear a report about the **PTA/STA Scholarship** program shared by Lauren Creamer.

The Syosset Scholarship Fund is kicking off their annual fundraising drive. Each year, scholarships are awarded to qualifying graduating 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. To continue providing these scholarships, we are asking for your support. Please see the weekly newsletter for the flyer.

3. The **Parent Resource committee** report will be given by Allison Soren.

The Parent Resource Group will host three presentations by SCSD administrators. They will be virtual presentations and will take place at 7:30 p.m. The dates and topics are as follows:

- Monday, January 29: How to Navigate the District Website

4. **Scholarship mailing committee** will be presented by Lauren Cremer.

The Scholarship Committee has 2 fundraisers planned to benefit the Scholarship Fund. The first one will be **December 7 at Taim**, where 25% of all orders will go to the Scholarship Fund from 3pm - 10pm when you mention the Syosset Scholarship Fund. Valid on in-store orders only. On **January 16 there will be a fundraiser at Chipotle** from 4pm - 8pm. Chipotle will donate 33% of all orders made in-store when you show the flyer or mention the Scholarship Fund. Orders can also be made via the Chipotle app using our unique code for pick-up. Flyer will be sent out next week.

5. And our final report will be from the **School and Community committee** given by Jacqueline Braunstein.

The Syosset Council of PTAs School & Community Committee asks for your help in donating much needed supplies to benefit our own community members at The Center for Developmental Disabilities. We are running this drive from **December 1st- 15th**. Donating has been made easy via Amazon wish list or by dropping items off right in your school's lobby. Please see the attached flyer for details and links. Thank you for your support of this incredible local organization!

VII. New Business

A. Nominations Committee finalization.



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Exec Board Members - Danielle Sandjaby, Cindy Ho, and Sunita Hansraj

Block vote: From General Membership to be voted on - Jen Crecco, Jun Xuan and Trupti Bahl

We move to vote on the Nomination committee, general membership volunteers. The volunteers are Jen Crecco, Jun Xuan, Trupti Bahl. Is there any discussion? If there is no discussion we will take a block vote. All in favor of the general members named, participating in the nomination committee raise their hands. Opposed? None
Thank you to Jen Crecco, Jun Xuan, and Trupti Bahl. The next step will be electing your committee chair and alternate. You join Danielle Sandjaby, Cindy Ho, and Sunita Hansraj who were elected by the executive board previously. We will send out an email with instructions to all elected members over the next week or so, so please be on the lookout for it.

B. Student Activities - Recess Activities / Games

With the temperature getting colder in mind, the PTA purchased some board games and crafts for inclement weather recess. We waited until Black Friday to make the purchases and saved over \$600 from our budget. Students in grades 3-5 will be seeing them in the coming few weeks. We look forward to hearing from Mr. Snyder how the program goes and from our children - how much fun they have with it. The gym cannot be used for indoor recess as gym classes are being held at that time. The school can only have a certain number of clubs per year. This includes the student council. The remaining slots are allocated according to availability of space, time and activity leaders/volunteers. Something such as a chess club in the morning is difficult as it conflicts with early morning extra help.

C. Special Committee - Race Hub

Starts December 14th. Spots are still available if students are interested. Please see Laurent Grams or Sunita Hansraj.

D. Special Committee - Facilities Update - Jacqueline Braunstein and Karen Ostrick

We will be attending a meeting with the administration on Wednesday 12/6 about the proposed facilities and Bond for our district. We will update you at the next PTA meeting.

E. Is there any new business from the floor?

A parent proposed a new committee to focus on welcoming new parents at all grades as well as reach out to existing parents and encourage them to come to events and get involved. The focus would be to make all students feel included, especially if we can work together and help when parents may not have the time to attend certain events. Next steps would be to work with the Presidents to form a committee by the next meeting.

VIII. Old Business

A. PTA Events and Vendors - No update yet. This will stay on our agenda until we have an update and the item is closed.



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B. If not updated, ask Mr. Snyder for an update on facilities. - We recommend that you all watch Board of Education meetings as they are discussing Whitman facilities. Request was made to add additional security during pick up since we are having parking issues with pick up.

C. Dismissal procedures - Will students be able to go on other buses than assigned for play dates? No due to limited space on buses. Please use the QR code at the door for pickup to help the office. Please make sure any babysitters who will be picking up are in Infinite Campus as an emergency contact.

IX.Dates to Remember

Finally, we are up to our dates to remember. Please keep an eye on our dates to remember in our weekly updates and our website. Also, every Friday is our "Show your School Spirit" Day! Our next meeting will be Thursday, January 4th at 7:30pm.

December

- 7-8 - Holiday Boutique
11-15 - AinE - National Circus Project
11 - PTA Council General Meeting, Village 7:45pm [Delegates]
12 - Winter Concerts
14 - School Store
15 - 5th Grade Circus Show for Parents

25-29 - No School

January 2024

- 1 - No School
4 - PTA Meeting, 7:30pm

- 4 - Form Awards Committee [Placeholder]
4 - School Store
8 - Board of Education Mtg, SW 8pm
15 - No School
18 - School Store
22 - 26 - Multicultural Week/International Day
24 - Multicultural Evening Event
26 - End of Second Marking Period
29 - PTA Council Evening Program Virtual: How to Navigate the District Website
30 - SEPTA Mtg, Baylis 7:45pm

Thank you everyone once again. If there is no further business, the meeting will stand adjourned. We would also like to wish everyone a happy holiday season. We hope you enjoy the time off with your family and friends. We look forward to seeing you again at our next meeting in January.

The meeting is adjourned at 8:56 pm.

Recording Secretary
Theresa Seedorf

Attached
Sign in Sheet