



General Meeting Agenda

January 4, 2024, 7:30pm | Walt Whitman Elementary School

Our meeting was called to order at 7:33 **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 - December 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? NONE If not, the minutes stand as approved. Thank you.

II. Treasurer's Report – Sunita Hansraj

Opening Balance, 11/23/23	\$ 96,320.94
Income/Deposits	\$ 17,558.70
Expense/Cash Disbursements	\$ 9,598.85
<u>Checking Balance</u>	<u>\$ 104,280.79</u>
<u>TOTAL Cash on Hand as of 12/22/23</u>	<u>\$ 104,280.79</u>

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

III. Correspondence Secretary – read by Niki Gionis

Note from the staff thanking the PTA for all we do for the school community, looking forward to working with us in 2024 and wishing all a wonderful holiday season.

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

Hope everyone had a wonderful and relaxing break. Happy 2024. We have a few year end thank yous. Thank you to our class parents for providing holiday fun for our end of year class parties. It is an effort taking into consideration all possible allergies and planning for an absolute fun party - and they were all wonderful. Big thank you to Lauren Grams, Cindy Ho, and Erica Sutter for running the annual Holiday Boutique. The kids had an amazing time shopping for their families and friends. Thank you Jacqueline Braunstein for organizing Circus Week. All our Whitman students enjoyed different circus activities and our 5th graders put on a fantastic show. Thank you to Tracy Brown and Joanne Fang for organizing our winter toy drive. We collected a respectable amount of toys for the US Marine Corps Reserve. And finally a big thank you to our Whitman families for generously donating to our collective holiday gift for our office and custodial staff. They do so much for the building, it is phenomenal we are able to show appreciation to them in this way. Last year, we had our first Multicultural Week which was upgraded from a single International Day. This year, we are revamping it once again, trying to add in new and original ideas. Details to come from Jacqueline and Melissa. In collaboration with Parisa Osmanovic, we are establishing a NYS PTA committee named Family Engagement. This committee will adhere to the structure outlined by the NYS PTA and National PTA for Family Engagement, aiming to extend a warm welcome to ALL families at Walt Whitman, encouraging their participation in both the PTA and



General Meeting Agenda

January 4, 2024, 7:30pm | Walt Whitman Elementary School

school activities. If you wish to learn more or express interest in joining the committee, please reach out to us after tonight's meeting. PTA Awards committee formation - we are looking to form our amazing awards committee this year. Please reach out after tonight's meeting to us if you are interested in helping to highlight the amazing Whitman parents, teachers and staff at our last PTA meeting of the year. We do have a deadline for when awards must be submitted to National & NYS PTA so the committee should be formed this month. This committee will work on the organizing process, nomination process, and will be part of the recipient selection process as well. For anyone who is interested, some of us will be heading over to The Hilltop after tonight's meeting. We got together there for a drink after last month's meeting and it was lovely. We plan to make it a regular occurrence; thank you Melissa Wallentin for taking care of the logistics. Please join us!

V. Standing Committee Reports

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

January 17th - Bring your Family to School Kick off - Arts in Ed program James Bruchac - Native American Storytelling & History Presentation <http://jamesbruchac.com/programs/>
From animal lesson stories to trickster heroes & monster tales audiences of all ages will not only be amused but learn valuable lessons as well. Since most of the stories James shares have been passed down from generation to generation they also serve as great windows into Native culture. During Native storytellings, James may also include the use of Native Instruments such as drums, rattles, and flutes encouraging students to sing along with various songs and chants.

- B. 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 \$27.60 so far this year! So many products you buy are included, it is easy!

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

Our Toy Drive was a huge success, my car was filled, there were lots of kids getting toys. Thank you to Mr. Snyder and the co-presidents for working together to launch our on-going drive for clothing donations. We have collaborated with LI Coalition for the Homeless to collect seasonal clothing year-round. They run a boutique shopping experience where those in need can go 'shopping'. There will be a drop off box in the vestibule were you can drop clean, used clothes that are in good shape. We are only collecting for kids age 3-18. If you have any other clothing or items you are looking to donate, please reach out to me and Ill do my best to find the right resource.



General Meeting Agenda

January 4, 2024, 7:30pm | Walt Whitman Elementary School

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

We received the Savvy Award for November and won \$100 from NYS PTA. We were selected at random from a qualifying pool based on membership.

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

Friendly Reminder: 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. You don't have to be a resident to purchase. Thanks!

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

The candy bouquet fundraiser for our winter concert performers was a huge success. Thank you to everyone who purchased and a huge thank you to Jacqueline Braunstein who beautifully wrapped each individual bouquet. We will be offering them again for our spring concert so stay tuned! Chipotle will be sponsoring a 5th grade fundraiser next month -- 10% of all purchases will go to the 5th grade when mentioning walt whitman at payment. take the night off from cooking and support our 5th grade. The 5th grade will be having a movie night Wednesday, Feb. 28th in the gym for all 5th grade students. The 5th grade dance has been booked at Muttontown Country Club on June 20th -- this is the evening of graduation. More details will be available soon and will go out to all 5th grade families.

- G. Our **Fundraising Committee** report given by Tara Bensol and Michelle Bochner -

We have a number of fun and exciting fundraisers coming up! I wanted to start by reminding or explaining exactly what our fundraisers "fund" - at least some examples. The mission of the Walt Whitman PTA is to enrich the lives of our children through our more than 50 programs, including arts in education, book fair, earth day, fall festival, field day, fitness & nutrition, school store, international day, and many more. Valentine's Day - cookies and canvas. Decorate your own cookie kit - all kits are gluten, nut and egg free - but the SAME amazing taste! Each kit comes with love themed sugar cookies, decorating icing and decorative sprinkles! Kits are \$20 and proceeds are donated to the PTA! Orders must be received before January 31st and pickup is on February 13th from 2:45pm - 3:15pm by the walker door. Decorate a canvas! Two options of Valentines themed paint your own canvas kits come with a themed canvas, paints and a brush! A great and fun activity for the kids! Canvas' are \$20 each and orders must also be received before January 31st and pickup is on February 13th from 2:45pm - 3:15pm by the walker door. I have the flyers here and you can purchase right now just come over to me! You can see pictures of the cookie kits and canvases and place orders!



General Meeting Agenda

January 4, 2024, 7:30pm | Walt Whitman Elementary School

Parents night out is Thursday, Feb 1st and you'll hear more info about it! Our Flow Society fundraiser is coming back thanks to Heather Egert! Get ready for our new school spirit shorts designs as well as other new products! More info to follow! And finally, we are setting up a shopping event at Gold Coast Kids featuring Asher Shay Designs. More info to come!

- H. The **Multicultural Committee** report will be given by Jacqueline Braunstein, Melissa Forman, and Gabby Platz Mohammadi.

Our multicultural week is being redesigned and renamed this year in order to better represent and acknowledge our school's diverse community -- it will now be called Unity in Diversity - Celebrating the Rich Tapestry of Walt Whitman Elementary (Unity in Diversity for short). Unity in Diversity will take place the week of January 17th and is being kicked off by the arts and education assembly featuring Native American Storytelling and history. January 23rd is designated "International Day of Play" where games from various cultures will be shared and played in the classroom. On January 25th from 6:30 - 8:00 pm we will be having our second annual Multicultural Expo featuring food of all nations as well as live performances showcasing our Whitman families. Sign ups for both food contributions and performances are available online via sign up genius. The week of January 22nd we will be featuring our International Art Gallery in the halls of Walt Whitman where our students and their families can display submitted artwork that expresses or shares something about their culture. We will also be organizing an International Book Swap, details coming soon. There is still time to volunteer to join the Unity in Diversity committee and help plan these events. If you're interested or have questions, please reach out to Jacqueline, Gabby or me. Instead of International Day (one day of presentations during Multicultural week) there will be opportunities throughout the year for parents to come into the classrooms to give cultural presentations (to be approved by Mr. Snyder).

- I. Now here is a report of the **Parents Night Out** committee given by Tara Bensol and Niki Gionis

Book your sitters and join us for our biggest night of the year! Parents night out is taking place **Thursday, February 1st at Kashi** - food, premium open bar, music and our amazing raffles! We have some special surprises in store as well! Speaking of our raffles if anyone has anything to donate - sports tickets, theater tickets, services etc please let us know! And to give you an idea of some phenomenal things we will be raffling off - there's country club golf games, botox and wellness, organizers to come help you organize your house, private party chefs, teeth whitening, whole house water filtration services and so so much more including gift cards to many local stores and boutiques, restaurants and spas! If you want to join the committee you are always welcome so let us know! We need help gathering raffles, putting the baskets together etc! We are so excited for a fun night out! Guests are welcome! We have all of the information here and you can buy your tickets right now just come right up to us!



General Meeting Agenda

January 4, 2024, 7:30pm | Walt Whitman Elementary School

J. 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!

K. 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 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 Baylis. Order from Chipotle January 23rd from 5-9 for our SEPTA fundraiser.

L. An update from our **Someone Special Craft committee** - Melanie Eisenberg and Livia Kogan.

Week of February 12th. More details on sign ups coming soon.

M. 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.

Parent comment: Vaping is not common among 6th graders. Its happening in the classrooms and teachers are not even aware. The content of the presentation may not seem applicable now but better to get informed and be aware of the trends before they do become applicable.



General Meeting Agenda

January 4, 2024, 7:30pm | Walt Whitman Elementary School

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

The Scholarship Committee had a successful fundraiser at Taim on December 7. We are planning another fundraiser at Chipotle on January 16. Order in store or online (directly through Chipotle) from 4pm-8pm.

We also have another fundraiser at Fly Me to the Moon Cafe in Syosset. 10% of orders in the entire month of January will go back to the Scholarship Fund. Please remember to mention Syosset Scholarship Fund when ordering at both places and thank you for your support Thank you!

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**

VI. New Business: None

VII. Old Business

- PTA Events and Vendors** - We are waiting to hear back from the district about a revision to their facilities policy. This is the policy (policy 1500) that governs how the district manages the facilities for both the district and the community. Please review if you are interested. Once we hear back this month, we will let you know.
- Whitman Facilities** - We recommend that you all watch Board of Education meetings as they are discussing Whitman facilities. There are going to be public hearings about the bond that the district is putting forth. Please review carefully and attend so that when it comes time to vote in May you are informed and understand the impact of bond on your own personal taxes and the updates to our building.

VIII. 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 Tuesday, February 6, at 10am.

January 2024

1/8 - Board of Education Mtg, SW 8pm

1/15 - No School

1/16 - Chipotle Fundraiser

1/18 - School Store

1/22 - 26 - Multicultural Week

1/24 - Multicultural Evening Event

1/26 - End of Second Marking Period



General Meeting Agenda

January 4, 2024, 7:30pm | Walt Whitman Elementary School

1/29 - PTA Council Evening Program Virtual: How to
Navigate the District Website, 7:30pm
1/30 - SEPTA Mtg, Baylis 7:45pm

February

2/1 - School Store
2/1 - Parents Night Out [tentative]
2/6 - PTA Meeting, 10:00am

Thank you everyone once again. If there is no further business, the meeting will stand adjourned.
The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 pm..

Recording Secretary
Theresa Seedorf
Attached
Sign in Sheet