



General Meeting Proposed Agenda
April 4, 2024, 10am | Walt Whitman Elementary School

Good morning, everyone.

Our meeting is called to order at 10:03am with a quorum present. Attendance will be taken by sign in sheet. Please make sure you sign the sheet on the tables. There are also copies of the minutes, agenda and our budget.

I. Approve minutes - March 2024

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 as of	2/23/2024	\$ 84,887.56
Income/Deposits		\$ 14,009.03
Expense/Cash Disbursements		\$ 11,783.20
Checking Balance:		\$ 87,113.39
6mth CD Balance @4.4430%		\$ 35,000.00
Total Cash on Hand as of	3/22/2024	\$122,133.39

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

III. Correspondence Secretary – read by Niki Gionis

None

IV. Principals Report - Mr. Snyder

- Spring break is 4/22 - 4/30.
- Glasses will be distributed for the solar eclipse. Many parents are picking up before it begins at 2:12pm. We do not have the resources to have attendants on the bus to ensure students are wearing their glasses during the ride home even if this is at peak time (3:26m)
- The science fair is tonight at 6-7pm. Participants will present to their peers during school hours today.
- State test assessments will be the 11th and 12th. The opt out list this year is low. 5th graders will be taking a computer based test.



General Meeting Proposed Agenda
April 4, 2024, 10am | Walt Whitman Elementary School

- The Faculty has been meeting with Dr Imbrogno (social worker) regarding Neuro Diversity which discusses the impact of different learners similar to cultural diversity.

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

Thank you Mr Snyder. Hope you enjoyed the long weekend and happy spring.

We'll start off with a big thank you to our Family Fun chairs, Heather Egert, Niki Gionis, and VP Pam Bahiri for bringing back movie night. Our kids loved the 2 movie nights in pjs with superabundant snacks. Thank you Mr Snyder and Mrs Falck; the large projection screen is awesome.

Thank you to our Book Fair Committee chairs, Cindy Ho, Jacqueline Braunstein, Sam Lebenhart, and Rachel Levenson, VP Tara Bensol, along with all the parents who volunteered to make our book fair a success. We made \$2,445.24 and \$260 in Scholastic Dollars.

Applications for next year's 5th Grade Committee are up and due Mon, April 15. Our regular committee applications will be sent out in May - keep your eyes out for those as well. We have also formed our Awards Committee. Thank you to Pam Bahiri, Tracey Meyer, Danielle Sandjaby, Michelle Kim, Rachel Levenson, and Tara Bensol for serving on this important committee. A form will be going out shortly; please reach out to them to nominate a deserving PTA parent, teacher, or staff member for an award.

Later this meeting, our membership will take a vote on supporting the proposed Syosset District 2024-25 budget.

Finally, we'll cover the talking points we presented on behalf of the Walt Whitman PTA during the last Board of Education meeting in March. We'll share what we discussed about the facilities at Walt Whitman and how YOU can help support our school.

VI. Standing Committee Reports

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

The 3-5 graders had an assembly last month with Rohan Murphy. Rohan was a big hit with the kids - they learned about how he overcame having no legs, learned how to wrestle and ultimately made the Penn state wrestling team. Yesterday, all of the students kicked off our science fair with a visit from mad science. They learned about fire and ice and had a great time.

B. Carly Laffie or Tara Ginsburg, our **Board of Education reporters**, will update us now.

Our presidents did an outstanding job presenting to the board advocating for more space at WW. You can view it online now. Youtube, March 11th meeting 1hr:18min. We need everyone to advocate for us even if you don't have kids at WW anymore as it affects the whole community.



General Meeting Proposed Agenda
April 4, 2024, 10am | Walt Whitman Elementary School

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

We are at \$75.40 for the year. As a reminder this is super quick and easy to do whether you shop in store or online you can simply scan your receipts or forward them to the box top email located on the app. This is the easiest way for our kids to get money! Covered products include Lysol!! If you have questions or need any help feel free to reach out.

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

Thank you all for your generous clothing donations. There is still a donation box in the vestibule. For any questions please contact Joanne Fang or Tracy Brown. They are now accepting spring clothing.

E. **Earth Day / Planting Day** report will be given by Melissa Wallentin or Joanne Fang.

5th graders will plant red flowers in a WW in the circle outside the front entrance as well as a dedication tree. Kindergarteners will paint rocks with their 5th grade buddies. Parent suggestion - it would be great if we could have a presentation or something education available for the students to keep them occupied after they have planted their flowers so they do not become restless.

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

The 5th grade has a lot of end of year events coming up. This Friday, 4/5, Whitman is hosting a roller skating event open to 5th graders at all Syosset elementary schools at United Skates of America from 4:30-6:30. Sign up via the form sent out and included in our newsletter.

Our car wash is rescheduled for May 18th weather permitting. If you prepaid in the fall you are all set -- we will send more information about dates, times sign ups and payment as it becomes available. Legacy tiles are for sale! Each 5th grader has designed their own wall tile to be displayed in our upper class wing hallway. Tile orders are due April 19th and are \$30 each. An email has been sent with the order link.

Once again, we are selling graduation lawn signs. These are being ordered by the High School PTA so we have a firm deadline of April 17th at midnight; no late orders will be accepted. **Important dates** for June: 5th grade picnic at school June 10th (rain date June 14th) 5th grade dance is June 20th at 6:30pm at Muttontown Country Club 5th grade breakfast is June 21st at Walt Whitman. **Friendly reminder:** 5th grade parents - make sure your information is up to date in the directoryspot app so that when you move over to HBT the information is correct. Also, please check out the School Supplies fundraiser ordering link to get your 6th grade school supplies in advance.



General Meeting Proposed Agenda
April 4, 2024, 10am | Walt Whitman Elementary School

G. The **Field Day Event** report will be given by Cindy Ho, Jacqueline Braunstein, Courtney Schlow, Melanie Eisenberg, Elana Gofman or Melissa Forman.

Field Day will be on June 11th (rain date June 14th). Once again, we will be providing lunch, free of charge, for every student during our field day activities. We are working on the details but will be asking for parent volunteers to help with serving lunch. There will be a sign-up genius distributed closer to the event. If anyone wants to join the committee, please reach out to Melanie Eisenberg, Melissa Forman or Elana Gofman.

H. The **Fun Fair Event** report by Tara Bensol, Cara Kaplan or Niki Gionis

Fun Fair 2024 or "Coachella Walt Whitman 2024" will take place on Friday, May 3rd (May 8th rain date). Mark your calendars and get ready for a fun-filled PTA sponsored Coachella Fair for the whole family! If you are interested in joining the committee to help plan, please contact Tara, Cara, Cindy or Niki.

Your Class Parents should have sent you the list for your class to donate to the raffle baskets. If not, please reach out for details. In the meantime, [here is the list by class](#).

I. Our **Fundraising** report given by Tara Bensol and Michelle Bochner

Stay tuned for our Syosset GOAT fundraiser! Our Syosset GOAT shirts will go on sale soon! Stay tuned for upcoming shopping events at Gold Coast Kids and Mixology. A portion of all sales will be donated back to us. If you are interested in assisting or have any questions please reach out to Michelle Bochner or Tara Bensol.

J. The **Fun Run / Color Run** Event update will be given by Sunita Hansraj and Gunika Singh. We are looking into running the event this year. If you are interested in helping please contact us.

K. Michelle Kim, Allison Soren and Ashley Cohen will update us on the **Plant Sale Fundraiser**.

The Plant Sale fundraising event date is set for Thurs, May 9, 2024. Plants are being ordered from White Post Farms and will be delivered on the 8th at 4:00pm. The Plant Sale committee will be placing the finalized order by April 19. In the meantime, please mark your calendar for the sale. There is no presale so send money with your children on the day of the sale. We will need volunteers on the day of the sale. Please sign up to volunteer on SignUp Genius when it is set up. The committee has ideas on incorporating learning for students who have completed purchasing flowers or is on standby. Tables with crayons or markers with a coloring sheet, i.e. lifecycle of a flower.

L. Pam Bahiri & Heather Egert will update us with the **School Supplies** for this coming year.

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



General Meeting Proposed Agenda
April 4, 2024, 10am | Walt Whitman Elementary School

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

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.

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

SEPTA Awards Nomination Extension: Deadline to submit nominations extended to April 10th. Nominations can be sent directly via email to Jen Poitrimol at jenpo3012@gmail.com or Danielle Sandjaby at daniellesandjaby@gmail.com. Coinciding with our SEPTA meeting, we are hosting a **Paint Night** at Berry Hill Elementary School. It's a fantastic opportunity for your child to enjoy painting while you attend the SEPTA meeting. The cost is **\$20 per child**, and it's important to note that this is not a drop-off event. Attendance at the SEPTA meeting or participation in the Paint Event is required for your child's involvement. Next SEPTA Meeting - Time Change & Presentation Topic: Please note a time change for our next SEPTA meeting, now starting at 6:45 PM on April 17th at Berry Hill Elementary School. The meeting will have an informative presentation focusing on Occupational and Physical Therapy and exploring Assistive Techno.

O. Here is the update on our **Staff Recognition Event** from our chairs - Tara Bensol, Ashley Cohen, Amanda Fickler, and Carly Goodman.

Welcome to Walt WhitmanWood - This year we have planned an entire week of showing our appreciation ending with our annual staff appreciation breakfast. If you are interested in baking for our sweets day or would like to donate some supplies - all is greatly appreciated - please sign up in the sign up genius that has been sent and posted on Facebook as well. If you are interested in joining the committee please let Tara, Carly, Amanda or Ashley know. This is one of the most rewarding and special events we host to thank the staff who cares, teaches and loves our children all year.

Mr Snyder - This event is so special to the teachers and they look forward to it every year. PTA does an amazing job.

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

1. Carly Laffie will provide information on the **Annual Election and Budget Vote Committee**.

Some future dates to be aware of:



General Meeting Proposed Agenda
April 4, 2024, 10am | Walt Whitman Elementary School

Tuesday, April 16 – Budget Information Session #3 – 8 pm – SW

Monday, May 13 – Budget Hearing – 8 pm SW

Tuesday, May 21 – Annual District Election & Budget Vote – 6:00 am -9 pm

Scheduled Voter Registration Dates:

Friday, May 3, 2024 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Syosset High School

Monday, May 13, 2024 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. South Woods Middle School

The voter registration form can be found on the district website. The Syosset Council of PTAs will no longer be coordinating or hosting the Know Your Candidate event. In addition, all School Board candidates will distribute their own biographical information to the community.

2. Alban Jeune will discuss the **Cultural Unity** program.

The Cultural Unity Committee is accepting entries for the Celebration of Culture showcase which will take place on **May 30th at 7pm at SHS**. We invite students to submit a piece of literature, art, digital art, photography or dance/music composition that answers one or all of the following: What does culture mean to you? How is culture celebrated in your home? What has culture taught you? Or anything that defines culture to you!

Entries will be divided into the following categories: K-2, 3-5, Middle School, and High School. Each participant will be entered into a raffle for a chance to win a \$50 gift card. Multiple winners will be picked randomly from each category. The flyer is in the weekly newsletter.

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

In the last newsletter we sent out the link to provide feedback and ideas on parent presentations from the Syosset Council of PTAs. Please review that google form and submit your feedback as soon as possible.

VII. Special Committees

Awards committee - Given by Pam Bahiri - Please make nominations for parents, teachers and staff.

Audit committee - still looking for volunteers

VIII. New Business -

In order for a council to take a position on the district budget in the name of the council, an instructed vote is required. Each unit's general membership takes a vote and each unit then has one vote on the council. If there is a dissenting unit their vote can be listed as such.

As many of you know, from time to time, we need to vote at our PTA meetings. In order to vote we need a quorum of 16 members. Please remember that you may only vote if you have a PTA membership this year. As Co-Presidents, we can only vote together as one vote. Traditionally presidents do not vote



General Meeting Proposed Agenda
April 4, 2024, 10am | Walt Whitman Elementary School

unless there is a need to break a tie. When we conduct a vote, a motion is made. If the motion is coming out of committee it will not need a second.

We need to take a vote now on whether our unit supports the proposed Syosset District 2024-2025 budget. Please note this does not ask for nor does it need to indicate how you will personally vote on May 21. Do we have a second? Yes, motion passes and our support will be communicated in the April meeting.

All those in favor of the Walt Whitman PTA supporting the proposed Syosset District 2024-2025 budget? All those opposed? The Whitman PTA votes to support the proposed Syosset District 2024-2025 budget. Thank you everyone, we will report our unit's support at the April Council meeting.

IX. Old Business

A. Whitman Facilities - After our meeting last month, Inna and Karen went to speak to the Board of Ed at their March meeting on behalf of our Walt Whitman PTA. We have printed out copies of our statements. Please take a look at it, there is good information in there. If you are moved to write to the Board members, the email address is allboardmembers@syossetschools.org (included Dr. Rogers)..

One of the topics regarding facilities we discussed at the March meeting was about election day and why it was so important for Whitman to have a facility to host elections that results in a secure and safe building for our children. As you may be aware, Tuesday was the primary election. This resulted in our children being in a lockdown state all day long. They were unable to leave their classrooms for lunch, specials or recess, as Mr. Snyder has already told us. It is very important that we all make sure that the Board and Administration understands the risk our children deal with.

Please watch upcoming Board of Education meetings as they are discussing Whitman facilities and the budget. As you heard from the annual budget and election committee, there will 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 the bond on your own personal taxes and the updates to our building.

WW is the only school in which the voting site (gym) does not have direct outdoor access for voters which necessitates the school is in lock down all day. Kids were stuck in their classrooms all day. This is unacceptable.

The Board of Elections decides the voting sites, not the school Board. Parent question, would it help to reach out to them directly to request a different site - probably not. Is there a better short term solution or is the best course of action to advocate for improved facilities at WW. We need support from all of you to make this happen. Please email the Board before the next meeting on the 18th to advocate for improved facilities at WW.



General Meeting Proposed Agenda
April 4, 2024, 10am | Walt Whitman Elementary School

X. 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 **May 6th at 7:30pm.**

April

- 5 - End of Third Marking Period
- 5 - 5th Grade Fundraiser - United Skates of America
- 10 - No School**
- 11-17 - Grades 3-4 ELA
- 11 - *Bingo - 5th Grade Committee* ****NEW****
- 12 - SHS Family Astronomy Night
- 15 - 5th Grade Applications Due for 2024-25
- 15-16 - Grade 5 ELA
- 15 - PTA Council General Meeting, Berry Hill 7:45pm [Delegates]
- 16 - Budget & Board of Education Meeting, SW 8pm
- 16 - 5th Grade Lawn Sign Ordering Deadline
- 17 - *SEPTA Meeting, Berry Hill, 6:45pm* ****NEW****
- 18 - School Store
- 19 - *5th Grade Lawn Signs Deadline* ****NEW****
- 19 - *PTA Award Nominations Deadline* ****NEW****
- 22-30 - No School**

May

- 2 - School Store
- 3 - Fun Fair 6-8pm
- 3 - Celebration of Culture submission deadline
- 6 - PTA Meeting (BOE visits), 7:30pm**

Last meeting is JUNE 4th at 7:00pm.

Thank you everyone once again. If there is no further business, the meeting will stand adjourned.
The meeting is adjourned at 11:11am.

Recording Secretary
Theresa Seedorf

Attached
Sign in Sheet