



General Meeting Minutes

October 8 at 10:00am | Walt Whitman Elementary School

Our meeting was called to order at 10:09am with a quorum present (*majority of the board - 15 members - Section 4 of Article 11*). Attendance was taken by sign in sheet.

I. Approve minutes - September 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 – Allison Soren

Opening Balance, 8/22/24	\$ 50,877.13
Income/Deposits	\$ 27,889.62
Expense/Cash Disbursements	\$ 7,825.06
<u>Checking Balance 9/22/24</u>	<u>\$ 71,723.68</u>
<u>CD Balance as of 9/22/24</u>	<u>\$ 35,000.00</u>
<u>TOTAL Cash on Hand as of 9/22/24</u>	<u>\$106,723.68</u>

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

III. Correspondence Secretary – read by Niki Gionis

None

IV. Principal’s Report – Mr. Snyder

Fall NWEA wrapped up; it is a state benchmark assessment offered 3x per year. Cogats also finished, District will send notification on Infinite Campus portal under the Backpack tab when results are ready.

Security Presentation

Overview: Importance of emergency drills in schools

Objective: To understand the types of drills, their frequency, and the collaboration required

- Evacuation drill, lockdown drill, shelter in place drill, hold in place drill, lockout drill

V. President’s Report - read by Karen Ostrick & Cindy Ho

Good morning, everyone! We hope you’ve had your coffee and are ready to jump in because we’ve got an exciting meeting ahead! Thank you for being here as we continue to find ways to better accommodate all of you—our amazing parents!



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What a whirlwind of a first month back! We kicked things off with an incredible **Welcome Back Picnic**. The weather was perfect, the kids had a blast, and we couldn't have asked for a better turnout! A HUGE shoutout to Amanda Fickler, Sunita Hansraj, Michelle Bochner, Pam Bahiri, and our fabulous VP Tara Bensol for organizing such a fun and successful event!

Our **Newcomers Social** was another fantastic highlight, giving our new families and kindergarteners a chance to connect and feel welcomed. Special thanks to Miraim and Jason Zemsky for hosting with such warmth and hospitality—it truly made a difference!

And finally thank you to Inna Choi and Pam Bahiri for running a very successful 5th grade Car Wash! The kids had a blast even though it was a bit soggy outside and we are so thankful for all the friends and families that came out to support our 5th graders even though they knew their cars would look about the same when they left.

Now, let's talk about October—it's going to be **jam-packed** with events and fundraisers! Our hard working committee chairs will be giving you all the details shortly, so stay tuned!

Looking ahead to November, we'll be voting on the Nominating Committee for the **2025-26 school year**. If you're interested in being part of the team that helps select our next executive committee and delegates, we'd LOVE to have you! Reach out for more details—we welcome your involvement!

Before we move on, this month we need to vote on resolutions, which were sent in the email. To save time we will be taking a block vote, which means we will read each resolution/bylaw amendment and discuss or answer questions that people may have. Once all resolutions are read/discussed, then we will take a vote on all the retentions first, then all the rescissions, then all the updates, and finally the new resolutions. Please take a few minutes to review and we will vote on the resolutions later this evening. Remember you can only vote if you are a paid member.

Lana: I would like to ask for a motion to use block voting for the proposed resolutions and amendments: Is there a second? Yes. Any objections? No.

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

A Friendly reminder: We NEED you! Your presence at PTA meetings makes such a difference, so please try to attend as many as you can. And if you're not already a PTA member, now is the perfect time to join! Membership gives you access to our weekly newsletter, Directory Spot, and opens doors to volunteer and join committees. Don't forget to download the Remind app for quick updates from the PTA, and be sure to follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and our website to stay in the loop!

Finally, we're excited to get parents back into the building more often. When you attend events, just a quick reminder to follow the school's rules. For example, if you're here for the book fair, please stick to the library. The same goes for the brown bag lunch program or school store where you must stay on the stage, or any other activities—let's all work together to respect the school's policies.



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VI. Standing Committee Reports

- A. We will hear the report of the Arts in Education / Curriculum Enrichment committee given by Erica Schulman or Heather Egert.

This month, our assembly is called "**Kindness Quest**," during which students will participate in an interactive laser adventure that explores community and friendship through puzzles, games, and optical illusions. Focusing on character education and foundational qualities, this presentation combines tunes with teamwork to emphasize awareness, empathy, and compassion - all the keys to kindness. This Kindness Quest assembly addresses coping with stress, improving problem-solving strategies, and dealing with peer pressure. Students will be seeing this on **October 21st** so make sure to ask them about it!

- B. Now we will hear the report of the Book Fair Committee given by Samantha Lebenhart, Erika Schulman and Patrice Gooden.

The purpose of this committee is to raise funds for the PTA through the sale of books. A portion of the proceeds goes directly to our PTA. It is also a great opportunity for parents to volunteer in the school! The fall book fair will be held this week on Thursday, October 10th & Friday October 11th. Any students that were absent or forgot their money are able to shop the morning of Friday, October 11th. We highly recommend that you set up an eWallet online for a better shopping experience, which is available in the PTA newsletters, as well as on the catalogs that went home with students. During the book fair, parents are needed to help the students choose age and subject appropriate books, as well as to make sure that the students have enough money to purchase the items they want. An online volunteer sign-up sheet was emailed last week, many thanks to those of you who are already signed up. Also, this year you are able to purchase the new "Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Hot Mess" book that comes out at the end of the month, online at the Scholastic website. Use the code FAIRSHARE for free shipping through 10/22. Please contact Sam, Erica, or Patrice for any questions regarding the book fair by emailing bookfair@waltwhitmanpta.org.

- C. Now we will hear the report of the Board of Education Reporter given by Daneille Sandjaby or Heather Egert.

The last meeting was mainly about the votes for the two propositions. There was a parent who discussed getting extra special education science classes. Thank you for voting in this passed budget vote. Both propositions passed which means Whitman is getting a new Gym and new classrooms! **Hip Hip Hooray!** Your hard work and PTA support helped our School get what it needed. *(If you want to check out this meeting, please [click here](#).)*

- D. We will now hear the report of the BoxTops given by Erika Auerbach.



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The Box Tops Fundraiser is the easiest way to raise money for the school! Simply download the app, scan your receipts or if you buy online, forward them to the email address provided! We have raised \$49.30 as of October 7th! Our goal for the year is \$100, so we are halfway there. So many products you buy are included, it is easy! Please keep scanning your receipts or hand them to me!

- E. We will now hear the **Brown Bag committee report** which will be given by Sunita Hansraj and Stella Wei

We had a super successful brown bag lunch recess program yesterday. Thank you to all the parents that volunteered. The kids really enjoyed our first project with paper pinwheels. Our next event will be on October 16th. We are working on creating a "maker space" type of recess activity. We are looking for more committee volunteers and new ideas for the kids to work on. Check out the sign up forms online.

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

We will be having our annual Coat Drive through the month of November. So time to start cleaning out your closets and see what your kids have outgrown! We will be accepting new and gently used coats, and new hats scarves and gloves. Please be sure all used coats have been cleaned. There will be a box in the vestibule starting November 1. Thanks in advance and contact Joanne Fang or myself with any questions.

- G. Now we will hear the report of the **Discount Card Fundraiser Committee** given by Michelle Bochner

The 2024 discount card is back with some new additions like Miko and old favorites too. Don't miss out on the best fundraiser to save at places you shop. \$25 per card. We have already earned \$2,668! It is not too late, buy your card today!

- H. Now we will hear the report of the **Fall Festival Committee** given by Ioana Calka, Jessica Kotkin, Hera Bokhari and Jackelinne Stadler - October 31st

Good morning, my name is Ioana Calka. I'm one of the Fall Festival Committee chairs along with Jacky Stadler, Hera Bokhari, and Jessica Kotkin. We also receive valuable help from Tara Bensol and many parent volunteers. The date for the Festival is Thursday, October 31st. This event will be indoors at the gym during school hours. ONLY parent volunteers may attend as this is an in-school event. The kids will come in by grade. Some of the activities might include: 1- Pickleball pumpkin obstacle course, 2- Mummy wrapping, 3- Dance party, 4- Photo Booth, 5- Sensory Table, 6- Pumpkin decorating.



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- I. We will now here from our **Fall Family Fun Night Committee**, Heather Egert, Nancy Denora and Niki Gionis

Join us on November 12th at Bounce! Syosset. This event will be similar to last year with sign up and waivers. Also, the same as last year, any Non-Whitman children may attend for \$25 each. Two sessions will take place, one earlier for younger children and then for the upper grades.

- J. Now we will hear the report of the **Fifth Grade Committee** given by Pam Bahiri and Inna Choi -

Thank you to everyone that participated in the car wash! It was a huge success!! And thank you to everyone who ordered chrome book decals! We truly appreciate all of your support! We have some exciting fundraisers coming up soon so be on the look out - we will be selling Syosset spirit wear as well as delicious popcorn!! Also, 5th grade parents, emails have gone out regarding pictures for the yearbook so please make sure you check your emails and reach out if you have any questions.

*Tracy Brown will speak on behalf of the **Fifth Grade Yearbook Committee** now -

We are so excited to begin the yearbook process with you! Here's where we need your help. We need EVERY 5th grade parent to submit a total of 10 photos by October 30th the latest!! 8 must be on school property, preferably group shots, and not containing siblings or other children not in the grade: 1 should be a baby photo, approximately ages 6 months-2.5 years for a guess who page. 1 should be what we call Strike a Pose photo. Them doing something they enjoy, this does not have to be on school property and should neb just them alone in the photo Please tag or label each photo with the students who are in them. Do not submit screenshots, they will appear blurry and we can't use them.

The 5th grade committee chairs sent out an email with all the information on how to upload photos and the requirements. Feel free to contact any of the yearbook staff if you have any questions. Again, please remember to upload all your photos before October 30th to make sure your child is equally represented in this year's awesome yearbook!

- K. Now we will hear the report of the **Parent Engagement Committee** given by Trupti Bahl, Brooke Kneller, Parisa Osmanovic and Jacky Stadler.

The Parent Engagement Committee is using verbal communication as well as WhatsApp in an effort to keep parents aware and encourage them to participate in our school activities and PTA events. We know some parents haven't yet signed up for our PTA membership, Remind, or just forget to check their emails. We feel this committee will be helpful in creating lines of communication for everybody. Therefore, we are planning to reach out to each committee to learn more about their initiatives and how we can partner together to maximize family engagement.



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- L. Now we will hear the report of the **PARP Committee** given by Mollie Newman, Heather Egert, Rachel Levenson

We are so excited to be kicking PARP off next **Wednesday, October 16th**. For those who don't know, the theme for this year is "Royal Reading in the Wolverine Kingdom". Think all things medieval. This week, we will be sending home a fun activity for the students to do. They will be asked to decorate a crest of their favorite book. Younger grades can draw while the older kids can write as well. These crests will help decorate the school so please encourage your readers to fill them out. Detailed directions will be attached to the crest. Wednesday will also be a dress up day so think kings, queens, knights, dragons etc. Please make sure there are absolutely no weapons associated with any costumes. **Milk and Cookies will take place on Thursday the 17th**. Please arrive at 6:45 and follow the instructions given carefully as it will help make the event run smoothly. ***The Special Author virtual visit will be announced on 10/16!!*** Don't forget to help your child log their reading times as each class will have a winner. Happy reading!

- M. Here is a report of the **Pie Sale Committee** given by Adrienne Krueger, Erica Schulman and Yuko Bhatia -

Please support the Walt Whitman PTA and buy delicious award winning baked goods from White Post Farms by participating in our Thanksgiving Pie Sale Fundraiser this holiday season. It is one less thing to have to make yourself on Thanksgiving day. Pick up will be on Tuesday, November 26th, at school dismissal. Orders must be placed by Sunday, November 10th. We will be sending out a flyer with a direct link to place your orders. Be sure to keep an eye out . If you have any questions, feel free to contact me (Adrienne Krueger), Yuko Bhatia or Erica Schulman. Thanks!

- N. Another important report from **SEPTA** given by Danielle Sandjaby

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. Our main source of fundraising is our membership drive, so please join! Also back by popular demand is our membership discount card, which is free with every membership. This card gives discounts at local stores such as Ask Alice, Frantoni's Pizza, Sandwich Express and much more!
<https://syossetsepta.memberhub.com/store>.

We had our first meeting of the year on Tuesday, September 24th at Village Elementary School. We were able to celebrate our award recipients and also get an overview of the different offerings (least to most restrictive) at the elementary, middle and high school levels. We also had a great introduction to the PPS team (who runs our special education programs) from across the district. We will be posting the presentation online soon. Our next meeting will focus on the types of technology and tools available to assist our students achieve their absolute best. A google form will be sent out soliciting what grade level(s) your children are if you plan to attend. This way, the presentation will be tailored to



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those in attendance and be of most value to you and your children this school year. **Next Meeting is:** October 22nd - 7:45pm, at Berry Hill Elementary!

- O. The report of the **Thanksgiving Luncheon Committee** will be presented by Gunika Singh, Sabina Chaikin, Rachel Levenson, Theresa Seedorf and Ashley Cohen

It might be the first week of October but we have already been planning our annual Thanksgiving luncheon for local seniors. This memorable event will be held on Tuesday, Nov 19th. The committee is fast at work inviting guests, planning the crafts that will be gifted to our senior guests and those that will transform the gym into a fabulous fall backdrop for the day. To all new families and those who are not part of the committee that will work the event on November 19th - you can still participate this year by volunteering for crafting with k-2 on Nov 6th or 3-5 on Nov 13th during recess time. A sign up for food and gift card donations will be blasted out to you in the next two weeks once we figure out exactly what we need. Donations from local vendors continue to come in as well. Families of 5th graders, your children get to be a big part of this special event. 5th grade students will be invited to BYOL (bring your own lunch) and eat and socialize with our guests. In addition, we are looking forward to having our 2nd annual 5th grade entertainment portion of the afternoon. If you are a parent of a talented 5th grader, keep your eyes open for an email from the committee with more details about how your child can be involved. If you have any questions feel free to reach out to the committee chairs Ashley Cohen, Sabina Chaikin, Theresa Seedorf, Gunika Singh, or Rachel Levenson - Thank you.

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

- 1. We will now hear a report from the **Reflections** given by Erica Shulman.

This year's Reflections theme is "Accepting Imperfection." There are 6 categories for students to show off their creativity: photography, dance choreography, film production, visual arts, literature and music composition. **The deadline to submit is October 28th.** If interested please let me know! You can also email reflections@waltwhitmanpta.org. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to showcase their talents. And the best part is - it doesn't need to be perfect...in fact, one can say that imperfect is preferred! Some bonuses for submitting in our school is that any child that submits will receive \$5 to the Spring Book Fair, as well as be a part of a Reflections Participation ceremony with our very own Mr. Snyder! Students who submit and advance to the Nassau County level attend an Art show at Syosset High School. Last year, Syosset had 12 students winners make it to the NY state level. Our children are beyond capable of making a difference with their submissions! Please reach out with any questions!

- 2. At this point we will hear a report by the **Legislation Committee** given by Lana Rizvi.

There are 3 proposed amendments. Are there any objections to the proposed amendments? As there are no objections, the vote has passed by acclamation. Thank you all for voting. The resolutions have been accepted and now we will ask for a vote of confidence for our voting delegates to bring our vote to council and to NYS PTA.

Vote of confidence passes.



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VII. New Business - None

VIII. Old Business - None

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!**

Friendly reminder: you can download our google calendar to your device from our emails or from our website.

October

- 10-11, Book Fair
- 14, No School
- 16-29, PARP (Pick a Reading Partner)
- 15, Monthly Board of Education Meeting, 8pm, SW
- 17, Pajama Night - Stories, Milk & Cookies, 6:30
- 21, Arts in Education Assembly
- 21, PTA Council General Meeting, 7:45 SG
- 22, SEPTA Meeting, 7:45, Berry Hill Elementary
- 24, School Store
- 24, PARP Evening with Surprise *famous* Author (Virtual)
- 25 – 27, SHS Carnival
- 29, PARP Closing Ceremony
- 29, Council PTA Virtual Presentation - Exec Function, 7:30p
- 30, 5th Grade Yearbook Photos Due

31, Halloween – Fall Festival

November

- 1, No School
- 1-26, Coat Drive
- 3, Daylight Savings Ends
- 4, Monthly Board of Education Meeting, 8pm, SW
- 5, No School - Parent – Teacher conferences
- 6, Thanksgiving Recess Craft
- 7, Parent Teacher conferences
- 7, School Store
- 8, End of First Marking Period
- 12, Family Fun Night - Fall
- 13, PTA Meeting 7:30 pm

The meeting was adjourned at 11:09am.

/s/ Inna Choi

On behalf of Recording Secretary Theresa Seedorf

Attached
Sign in Sheet