



General Meeting Agenda

December 5, 2024, at 7:30pm | Walt Whitman Elementary School

Our meeting was called to order at 7:38pm 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 2024 - Minutes were approved.

II. Treasurer’s Report – Allison Soren

Opening Balance, 10/23/24	\$ 64,834.26
Income/Deposits	\$ 17,360.31
Expense/Cash Disbursements	\$ 9,861.82
<u>Checking Balance 11/22/24</u>	<u>\$ 72,332.75</u>
<u>CD Balance as of 11/22/24</u>	<u>\$ 35,000.00</u>
<u>TOTAL Cash on Hand as of 11/22/24</u>	<u>\$ 107,332.75</u>

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

III. Correspondence Secretary – read by Niki Gionis

[Thanksgiving Luncheon Thank You](#)

[WW Staff Thank You](#)

IV. Principal’s Report – Mr. Snyder

In addition to the thank you card received, I received a phone call from one of the Thanksgiving Luncheon attendees Antonio. He was extremely appreciative of the event and having been able to attend. He got emotional at times as he expressed his gratitude and said I should be proud. He even wanted to write an article in his local newsletter about his experience.

Thank you all for putting together such an amazing event. It is such an important event for our school and for the students to see us reaching out and giving back to the community.

Today’s presentation will be on “lunch and recess”. Each grades session is 55 minutes; 25 for lunch, 25 for recess and a 5 min transition period. An additional lunch server has been added. It only takes 5-6 minutes to get through the lunch line. The younger grades have lunch first then recess and the older grades have recess first then lunch. Outside the students have access to equipment for various sports including touch football, soccer, kickball, 9 square, gaga and frisbees. Students will be outdoors when the “real feel” temperature is above 32 degrees. When recess is indoors students have access to other activities such as board games, arts and crafts and card games. They are in the classroom as the gym is not available. An option to get out of the classroom is to sign up for the PTA’s maker space program. There is a 12-1 ration for lunch aids. Please encourage your kids to be more respectful of the lunch monitors and aides.



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

Thank you Mr. Snyder. We began our month with an incredible *Family Night Out* at Bounce! It was such a fun way to connect and celebrate together. We would like to give a huge thanks to Niki Gionis, Heather Egert, and VP Tara Bensol for pulling off a fantastic event for our school community. We hope you and your children had as much fun as we did! We'd also like to give a big shoutout to our amazing chairs—Gunika Singh, Sabina Chaikin, Theresa Seedorf, Ashley Cohen, VP Tara Bensol—and all the volunteers who made the *Thanksgiving Luncheon* for our local senior citizens such a memorable event. Your effort, organization, and commitment were truly outstanding. Special thanks also to Mr. Snyder, our music teachers, and the Whitman staff who helped create a wonderful experience. Everyone—seniors, children, staff, and parents alike—had a fantastic time and loved being part of it!

The *Pie Sale* was a delicious success! Thank you to Yuko Ono, Erica Schulman, and Adrienne Kruger and VP Trupti Bahl for organizing it. We hope everyone enjoyed the amazing food from White Post Farms at their Thanksgiving dinners! As we welcome the season of giving, we're thrilled to share that our *Holiday Boutique* was a huge success this week! Thank you to Neha Sharma, Erica Sutter, and Lauren Grams and VP Trupti Bahl for organizing such a lovely fundraiser—it was a fantastic way to kick off the holiday spirit. Additionally, there are opportunities to donate items for our Toys for Tots charity programs this season—more details will be shared by the chairs soon.

For the holiday season, we've posted a complete list of Whitman's teachers and staff on our website, available in the "minutes" section. This year, we're collecting only for the office and custodial staff to thank them for their invaluable work supporting our PTA events and our students every day. For all other staff members, we recommend individual gifts as a meaningful gesture of appreciation. *Inna Choi will be coordinating collections on behalf of the parents.* Lastly, a quick reminder that we'll soon be forming our *Awards Committee*! This committee will select honorees among our amazing staff and incredible parent volunteers for recognition during the 2024-25 school year. If you're interested in joining, we'll be seeking volunteers at our next meeting—don't hesitate to reach out!

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.

Next week the circus is coming to Walt Whitman! Students across all grades will participate in learning fun and challenging circus skills. 5th Graders will do a circus performance at the end of the week for the other grades and then have an evening performance at HBT. Students should arrive at 6:40pm at HBT, the show for 5th grade families begins at 7:30pm.

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

Thanks for all your support - we are at \$77.20 with the goal of \$100. Let's keep pushing. It's basically free money for the PTA. Questions? Contact Erika Auerbach.



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

Thank you to everyone who made donations for our fall coat drive. It was a huge success and the LI Coalition for the Homeless was so appreciative! Next up is our annual Toys for Tots Toy drive. Please donate new unwrapped gifts to children who may not otherwise be getting any gifts this holiday season. There is a box in the vestibule. For any questions please contact Joanne Fang or Tracy Brown

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

Discount cards are still ON SALE for 40% off - get yours tonight. Use the code BLKFRI. Don't miss out on great savings at Miko and Victoria's Market and Frantoni's.

- E. 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 candy bouquet fundraiser! If you placed an order, they will be available for pick up before the winter concert at HBT. We truly appreciate all of your support! The 5th grade circus performance is next Friday, December 13th at 7:30pm at HBT. Information about yearbook boosters will be coming soon so please make sure you check your emails and always feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

- F. We will now here the **Maker Space Recess committee report** which will be given by Sunita Hansraj, Valerie Kesten and Stella Wei

Our Maker Space Program has been going really well! Students have enjoyed completing various craft and STEAM related projects during recess periods across a month. Our goal is to continue to provide additional activities for students to engage in during recess periods throughout each month. Thank you to everyone who has already volunteered! We are always looking for volunteers to help out, as well as ideas for future Maker Space sessions. Please feel free to reach out via email or through the Google form in the weekly newsletter. Additionally, if anyone has Legos in good condition that they would be interested in donating to the Maker Space program that would be greatly appreciated.

- G. Trupti Bahl, Jenn Crecco, Booke Kneller and Gabby Platz, from the **Multicultural Committee** will report now

The International Day and Multicultural Expo Committee has been working on our annual event. Turns out this year's annual event will in fact, be two events. First, a traditional International Day where our students will travel from country to country learning interesting facts along the way. Our committee is still in the planning stage, but the basic format remains the same. Participating parents will construct a trifold poster board about the country they are presenting; this presentation should be geared towards a kindergarten age audience. Also parents considering volunteering for this day will need to set aside the entire day. There will be an opportunity for parents who can only come for an hour or so to be flight attendants; ushering the students from country to country. Second: Our second portion is an international food exposé. Volunteers will supply food from their country of choice please note this food



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should be hors d'oeuvre style and/or easy to eat while standing up. There will also be a fashion portion for this night, where our students will participate in a fashion show or perform an act of their choice. Please remember this is a dry event. This is completely optional. Both events are going to be great.

Parent question - would it be possible to have a school wide no homework initiative on nights with events such as the multicultural expo or an assignment that is geared towards the event such as a scavenger hunt. Mr. Snyder stated he was not opposed to this.

H. The **Parents Night out Committee** will report now -

Hi everyone! We're excited to get the ball rolling with Parents' Night Out—mark your calendars and help spread the word! 📅 **Date: February 6th**, 🕒 **Time: 7:45 PM - 9:45 PM**, 📍 **Location: The Granola Bar** We've got a fun-filled evening planned, featuring raffles and a performance by the amazing TJ Tana, Illusionist! We need your help! We're looking for raffle donations—sports tickets, spa packages, experiences, or anything else you can think of. Please ask your friends, family, and local businesses if they'd like to contribute! If you'd like to get involved in planning, soliciting donations, or helping with the event, let us know—we'd love to have you on board! Thanks so much for your support!

I. Now we will hear the report of the **School Store committee** given by Heather Egert and Carlie Laffie

Next meeting will be Thursday December 19th. We will be allowing parents to sign up more than 1x for their students. Maker space also allows parents to be there during recess for activities. Please go to the sign up form to see what is available. Shout out to the 4th grade parents - *please sign up*.

J. Another important report from **SEPTA** given by Danielle Sandjaby or Erica Schulman

SEPTA had its last meeting a few weeks ago with wonderful speakers from InStride Health, a company specializing in pediatric anxiety and OCD treatments, as well as Vallahan Esports, a gaming social club for kids that has opened in Huntington. A few nights ago SEPTA hosted its 2nd annual resource fair, with vendors/therapists/camps/social groups/services and more from nearby areas. There was a fabulous turnout! Congratulations to our very own Danielle Sandjaby, who made this vision come to life with great success! In January, SEPTA membership dues will go up a slight amount to \$15. If you are interested, you can join tonight for \$12. SEPTA's next meeting will be held VIRTUALLY on Jan 16th. We hope you can attend!

K. Which leads us to the report from the **Spirit Wear Committee** given by Sydnie Monchik and Ashley Feig -

Everyone should have received their Walt Whitman Gear by now, if you ordered Syosset spirit wear, it should be available for distribution next week.

L. We will now hear from our **Sunshine Committee** - Katerina Fradelakis and Gabby Mohammadi -



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We have begun our monthly birthday celebration in the lunchroom, celebrating our students with December birthdays! Thank you to all the parents who submitted forms and if you haven't, please do. Students loved seeing their names on the white board and they will also get a birthday sticker & pencil!

VII. New Business - None

VIII. Old Business - Discussion: Proposed Changes to Membership Dues

We need to address the increase in National PTA dues and plan accordingly for the 2025-26 year. Here's what we are proposing:

- **Elimination of Discounted Family Memberships:** Instead of offering discounted family memberships, we will provide the option to purchase two full-price memberships at once for convenience. This change will help offset the National PTA dues increase.
- **Future Adjustments if NYS PTA Increases Dues:**
If NYS PTA raises their dues, we propose increasing our dues as follows:
 - \$18 per individual membership
 - \$12 per teacher/staff membership
 - A double family membership option at a reduced total of \$35

These adjustments aim to ensure we can meet financial obligations while maintaining accessibility for all members. Members agreed to the proposal. A vote will take place later in the year.

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.

December

12/9-13, Circus Week
 12/9, BOE 8PM SW
 12/10, Maker Space
 12/10, Council General Meeting, WW
 7:45pm
 12/13, 5th Grade Circus Performance, 7:30
 pm and 7:10pm for children

12/19, School Store
12/23 - 31 No School

January

1, No School
 9, School Store
 15, PTA Meeting 10am

Thank you everyone once again. We would like to wish you all a very happy holiday season and a wonderful new year! If there is no further business, the meeting will stand adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 8:49pm.

[December Sign-In](#)

 TS
 Recording Secretary Theresa Seedorf



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Attached
Sign in Sheet