



General Meeting Agenda
September 4, 2025 at 7:30pm | Walt Whitman Elementary School

Our meeting was called to order at 7:34 pm with a quorum present. Attendance was taken by sign in sheet.

I. Board of Education - Central Administration - 8:04pm

Thank you to the Board of Education and Administration for joining us tonight. We sincerely appreciate your support in ensuring that Walt Whitman receives the attention it needs to serve our students & families effectively. Joining us tonight are the Board President Carol Cheng and Trustee David Ginsburg, along with Dr. Curry is Deputy Superintendent from Central Administration.

Ms. Carol has three children, all of whom received an excellent education in the District. Mr. Ginsburg has two kids, both of whom attended WW. The next Board meeting is Monday Sept 15th at 8pm at Southwood's Auditorium. In order to speak at the Board meeting during the Audience to the Public portion, you must [sign up online](#). In general, you may communicate at the Board meetings after registering to speak and / or emailing allboardmembers@syossetschools.org. For any day-to-day concerns, please reach out to your principal and / or teacher.

Parents understand balancing resources, needs, and budgets, however, they expressed concern with the District's lack of communication and its decision to keep the third grade to three sections, rather than adding a fourth, despite the population being at the very high end for developmental needs at this age. The District caps class sizes at 25 students for Kindergarten through 3rd grade, and 27 for 4th and 5th grade. Further confusing the situation was that another elementary school, with almost identical grade-level numbers, did receive a fourth section. The concern was not questioning the needs of another school, but rather about consistency and equity. Parents requested support to provide a better educational experience for these overcrowded classrooms (23 or 24 in a class), whether it be a fourth section or class-reduction tutors, instructional aides, or additional support staff, and not just for third grade. A large class size is a concern, not only for Whitman students, but for all Syosset students.

Parents requested more information regarding the process involved in determining class size and timing, the policy appears to have been set years ago. Our hope is that the District will address these inequities now, and also consider long-term policy adjustments so that all students—regardless of school—have equal opportunities to thrive and receive smaller group and individualized instruction.

Dr. Curry will bring all comments back and discuss with her team and Mr. Snyder and Dr. Rogers and return to present to Walt Whitman parents.

II. Approve minutes - June 2025

We sent out the minutes from our last PTA meeting for review via email and have some copies on the tables today. There were no comments, changes, or questions. The minutes stand as approved.

III. Treasurer's Report – Allison Soren

Opening Balance, 8/1/25	\$ 39,005.03
Income/Deposits	\$ 2,096.67
Expense/Cash Disbursements	\$ 1,478.38
Checking Balance 8/31/25	\$ 39,623.32
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CD Balance as of 8/31/25	\$ 40,786.06
TOTAL Cash on Hand as of 8/31/25	\$ 80,409.38



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All balances were reconciled to the bank statements. The books were reviewed and found to be in order by Heather Egert.

IV. Correspondence Secretary – read by Heather Egert

[September Thank You.pdf](#)

V. Principal's Report – Mr. Snyder

Welcome back! If you have transportation concerns/issues/questions please contact transportation@syossetschools.org directly and keep me informed.

COGATs will be administered starting next week to 3rd, 4th and 5th graders. COGAT scores is a benchmark used to evaluate participation in Project Beyond. There is no flexibility on this marker. NWEAs will also be administered starting at the end of the month. These are given to all grades three times a year: fall, winter and spring. We use the data to develop programs for the classrooms. Additional information can be found on WW's [website](#). Please remind your children to take their time.

The WW Open House is on September 16th.

The District, Principal and teachers will communicate with parents via the [Parent Square](#) app. Parents are required to use the [Pickup Patrol](#) App to make changes for attendance and pickup. The deadline for each day's change (for example, early dismissal, walker, etc) to pickup is 2:30pm. Please reach out to Bridget in the office if you have any questions. Children may not go home on buses other than the ones they were assigned to by the District. If they are on the same bus, you must communicate the different bus stop to the office - both parents must communicate the same through Pickup Patrol.

Parents raised concern about the large pothole that still exists in the parking lot. There are work orders made for it but parents need to continue to follow up on this issue.

VI. President's Report - read by Cindy Ho & Danielle Sandjaby

Welcome to our first PTA meeting of the 2025-26 school year! A special shoutout to all our new Whitman families! Cindy Ho and Danielle Sandjaby are your Co-Presidents. The Executive Committee consists of our VP's: Erica Schulman, Tara Bensol, Jackie Avellino and Carly Laffie, our Treasurer: Allison Soren, our Recording Secretary: Sunita Hansraj and our Corresponding Secretary: Heather Egert. We work closely with our amazing Principal, Mr. Snyder. Let's begin with our Mission Statement: PTA is a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child.

Mr. Snyder and the Walt Whitman staff, your hard work, optimism, and dedication have made the first few days of school fantastic. We can't thank you enough for always going above and beyond!

With so many parents here, we encourage you to attend PTA meetings regularly. Agendas and Minutes will be posted on our website each month. If you haven't already, please [join the PTA](#). Membership is essential



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for accessing Directory Spot, volunteering, and joining committees. For new families, don't miss out on our weekly newsletter, packed with all the info you need. Sign up for the PTA Remind App too!

Tonight, we'll be voting on the budget for the new school year under new business. Copies are available on the tables and have also been emailed to you. As we review the budget, I'd like to gently remind everyone that the true strength of our PTA comes from the dedication of our parent volunteers. While funds are important, our greatest impact is made through the time and energy parents give to support our mission. By coming together and investing in meaningful programs, we can achieve incredible results for our children and community, even with limited financial resources.

Class Parent applications are now live on our website and in the newsletter. The deadline to submit your interest is Wednesday, September 10th. If you have any questions about the roles, feel free to let us know. There are three class parents per class who are chosen by the PTA Co-Presidents. There are many opportunities to volunteer and see your kids in school. Remember, if issues arise, please follow the chain of command outlined in the District calendar, and for PTA concerns, reach out to Cindy or Danielle. We're here to enrich our children's lives and build a wonderful school community. Let's make this school year amazing! We look forward to working with all of you. Thank you!

VII. Standing Committee Reports

- A. Now we will hear the report of the **Book Fair Committee** given by Rachel Kaplan and Abby Levy. This fall's book fair will be held on Thursday, Oct 16th & 17th. Information regarding specific books being sold, as well as volunteer sign ups for those days will be sent out towards the end of the month or early October.
- B. Now we will hear the report of the **Board of Education Reporter** given by Heather Egert. - In July, the District wide safety plan was discussed. Refer to the District's website for more detail. In addition, enrollment and registration procedures were highlighted. A special meeting was held in July to approve the emergency repair work needed at Walt Whitman, which was completed before school started. A new student Board member was added to bridge the gap between students and the Board. The August meeting included the bell-to-bell cell phone/other devices ban, Policy 5300 Code of Conduct and support and Parent Square discussions. The bell-to-bell ban talks encouraged elementary and middle school students to leave devices at home. Students that bring their devices to school and sign onto Syosset's network will have certain apps blocked. The Policy 5300 establishes the District Code to support students in developing positive behaviors, becoming good citizens and demonstrating responsibility. There were changes made to clarify long vs short term suspension. Refer to the website for more detail. Parent Square is the new app the District utilizes to communicate with parents.
- C. We will now hear the report of the **Box Tops** given by Erika Auerbach. - 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! Our goal for the year is \$100. So many products you buy are included, it is easy!
- D. Now we will hear the report of the **Directory Spot and Membership** given by Sam Lebenhart or Michelle Kim - We have begun updating the directory this week and are in the process of turning over Directory Spot with this year's information and adding our new Kindergarten students to the system. As a reminder, to be a part of Directory Spot and to have access you must be a paid PTA member. Also, if you are volunteering for any PTA events this year, you will need to be a paid PTA member. The very helpful QR code quick link sheet includes codes for both the Directory Spot and PTA sign up. Please become a PTA member to avoid being locked out. Look for an email from the



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Directory Spot when your directory account has been reactivated for this year. Your same login info will work from past years once you receive that email. Once you join the PTA, please understand it takes us several days to update the directory. If it has been over 3 days since you signed up, feel free to email to check in. All of the info we have received thus far has been updated in the directory, but we do not have class information yet for many students. It will be updated as soon as we receive info from Class Parents. Please fill out the online form if you are a new family or have changes that need to be made to your existing info. Please remember that if nothing has changed, DO NOT fill out another form. If a prior submission has any changes please fill out a new form (i.e. change of address). All new students require a new submission form! Michelle Kim and I will be co-chairing the directory spot committee for the year, please feel free to reach out to both of us with any questions. SamLebenhart@gmail.com or Michki21@gmail.com. Thanks for your help and we are looking forward to a great year!

- E. Now we will hear the report of the **Discount Card Fundraiser Committee** given by Taylor Schacter or Jackie Avellino. The 2025 discount card is back with some new additions like Carvel, The Granola Bar, Woodbury Men's Shop, Playa Bowl and old favorites too. Don't miss out on the best fundraiser to save at places you shop. \$25 per card, 3 for \$65, and 5 for \$100.
- F. Now we will hear the report of the **Fall Festival Committee** given by Michelle Bochner, Hera Bokhari, Jessica Kotkin and Ashley Cohen. The date of the festival is Friday, October 31st. This event will be indoors, in the gym during school hours. Only paid PTA members may volunteer. The kids will come in by grade. We are in the process of planning exciting fun activities and will be sending out an email with details with a sign-up for volunteers in the upcoming weeks.
- G. Now we will hear the report of the **Fifth Grade Committee** given by Anna Karotkin or Jacky Stadler. We are so thrilled for our 5th graders this year - This is going to be the most exciting and memorable final year at WW for them. Please make sure to sign up for our 5th grade Remind texts so you don't miss out on any information! Please be on the lookout for emails for info for the yearbook soon!! We are currently selling chrome book decals with really cool designs for all students so please place an order - the kids love them! Info is available on the PTA website. Please save the date for our car wash which will be held on Saturday, September 13th from 10am to 12 noon. Come out and support the 5th graders while getting your car "washed"- no guarantee that it will actually be cleaner than before!! But the kids will "Soapin' You Have a Sparkling Day!"
- H. Now we will hear the report of the **Newcomer's Social** given by Miriam Zemsky - Newcomers social will be on Friday, September 26th from 7 to 9 PM at the Zemsky residence. It's a great event to meet new parents entering Walt Whitman elementary school. All kindergarten parents are welcome and will be also welcoming the new families to the school. Light food and refreshments will be served. Please don't forget to RSVP on SignUp. Can't wait to see you all there. The committee made a motion to increase the budget by \$200 to cover the cost of food due to increased guest RSVPs compared to prior year. Since it came out of the committee it did not need a second. With no opposition, the motion passed, the increased budget was adopted.
- I. Now we will hear the report of the **School Store Committee** given by Carly Laffie or Carly Orlansky - School store is back and better than ever! We have a bunch of new items that we are very excited about from new vendors and know the kids will be excited about them too! School Store will take place once a month and we would love for parents to help volunteer during your child's timeslot. It is a great way to see your kids during the year and help teach them about money, budgeting and purchasing. If you do volunteer, please make sure to arrive 10 minutes before your designated time to help set up and when you get into school, walk directly to the stage. We kindly ask that you do not linger in the halls or take any pictures of the children while you are there. We appreciate you



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signing up earlier than later so we can give a final list to security a few days before the event. The 9 confirmed school store dates are as follows: Sept 25 (Please note there will be no Kindergarten parents allowed on this date), Oct 23, Nov 13, Dec 17, Jan 22, Feb 26, March 12, April 23, May 14. Please be on the lookout for school store sign ups and let us know if you have any questions!

- J. Which leads us to the report from the **Spirit Wear Committee** given by Sydnie Monchik or Ashley Feig - We are so excited for what we have to present for spirit wear this year – we have a great mix of items including both Walt Whitman and Syosset gear that all of your kids are sure to love! As many of you know, we encourage students to show their spirit on Fridays so make sure to stock up! At the Welcome Back Picnic tomorrow, we will be selling some of the t-shirts, sweatshirts, hats and more but make sure to check out the full offering online - we are passing around fliers with the QR code and we are super excited to have an online store this year that will make ordering very easy! The deadline to shop is September 28th and items will ship a few weeks later. So come and grab your quick items at the picnic and buy the rest online. 😊 Please let us know if you have any questions or need help with ordering!
- K. Another important report from **SEPTA** given by Erica Shulman or Jackie Avellino - Good evening we are Erica Schulman and Jackie Avellino, the SEPTA Liaisons for Walt Whitman. What is SEPTA? SEPTA (stands for Special Education Parent Teacher Association) 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. Please join! SEPTA's number one fundraiser is our membership - anyone can join! Our first meeting of the school year will be Thursday, September 11 at 7:45pm at Willits elementary school. Come see what it's all about. We hope to see you there!
- L. And now we will now hear a report from our **Social Media Committee** given by Anna Karotkin or Bari Litvack - Our instagram account is a private account - you must provide your child's name and teacher. Social media is supplemental to the newsletter. Event organizers should request an album to be created: Photos and Video should be uploaded to the album and not sent to us directly. To promote something on social media, please provide ALL information in one email to us social@waltwhitmanpta.org. We will try our best to promote quickly, but we need at least 48-72 hours: links, flyers, important dates, etc.
- M. For our final report we will hear from the **Welcome Back Picnic Committee** given by Katherine Lee, Jessica Lischin, Gunika Singh or Ashley Cohen - The Welcome Back Picnic will be held tomorrow, September 5th from 5:00-7:00 PM and will be a really fun event to kick off the school year. We have a DJ, lots of crafts and some great activities for the kids. We are looking forward to seeing everyone at the picnic. Admission is free but you must be a Walt Whitman family to attend. Pizza was available for pre-order from Mario's, so if you placed an order you can pick it up at the picnic. There will also be a food truck and an ice cream truck with lots of options for purchase at the event. Please note this is not a drop off event. Please supervise your children and help us to keep all the children safe and away from the parking lot. Children who need to go inside to use the bathroom must be attended by an adult. Please bring a blanket or towel to sit on - Walt Whitman towels will be available for purchase at the picnic - quantities are limited. We still need parent volunteers so please contact us if you would like to help out! We can't wait to see everyone there!!
- N. Now we will hear **Syosset Council of PTAs Committee reports.**
 - a. We will now hear a report from the **Reflections** given by Erica Shulman or Rachel Medvin - Reflections is a national contest that provides opportunities for recognition and access to the



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- arts which boost student confidence and success in the arts and in life. Each year, over 300,000 students in Pre-K through Grade 12 create original works of art in response to a student-created theme. This year's theme is : "I Belong!" Last year our school alone had over 25 submissions! This year our goal is to surpass that number. Syosset has had several national winners, including a few from Walt Whitman last year! There are several categories in which a student can submit a piece of work to the Reflections contest: Visual Arts, Film Production, Dance Choreography, Literature, Music Composition, Photography. There will be more dates and details to come. Usually the deadline to submit pieces of work to the Reflections program is late October or early November. Please keep an eye out for information coming home.
- b. And our final report will be from the **School and Community Committee** given by Perri Drexler - The Syosset Council of PTA's will be co-hosting a Newcomer's Get Together with Administration on Tuesday, September 29th at 7:30pm at the SHS for parents and guardians of students new to the district. New families will meet members from Central Administration as well as PTA Presidents and of course other new families in the district. There will be presentations featuring the incredible programming Syosset offers and attendees had a unique opportunity to pose questions and get some answers directly from Dr. Rogers and other representatives from the district. This informative event is designed to allow a glimpse into your child's future and discuss the amazing academic, athletic and co-curricular options available in our schools. This is a unique chance to learn more about the School District as well as the learning experiences offered to your child.

VIII. New Business

As many of you know, from time to time, we need to vote at our PTA meetings. In order to vote we will need a quorum of 15 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 unless there is a need to break a vote that is tied.

When we conduct a vote, a motion will be made. If the motion is coming out of committee it will not need a second.

A. Approval of Budget for 2025-26

Treasurer:

The Budget Committee would like to make a motion to adopt our 2025-26 Budget as presented.

President:

The Budget Committee Treasurer moves to put it to vote on the "2025-26 Proposed Budget." Since it is coming out of the committee it does not need a second. The motion passed, the Proposed 2025-26 Budget was adopted. Thank you everyone.

B. Audit Committee Report:

Audit Committee: (Theresa Seedorf) *The Audit Committee has examined the records of the Walt Whitman PTA for the period of July 2024 through June 2025 and found them to be correct.*



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Co-Presidents: Thank you to our Audit Committee members, Lauren Grams, Katerina Fradelakis, and Theresa Seedorf for their important work. Thank you all. The Audit has been adopted.

IX. Old Business

None

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!**

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

September

- 5 - Welcome Back Picnic, 5-7pm
- 8 - 5th Grade Parent Meeting (Virtual) 7:30pm
- 10 - Class Parent Sign Up Deadline
- 11 - SEPTA Mtg, 7:45pm @ Willits
- 13 - WW Car Wash supporting 5th Graders
- 15 - BOE Meeting 8pm @ Southwoods
- 16 - WW Open House
- 22 - WW Picture Day
- 23 - 24 - No School**
- 25 - First School Store (No Kindergarten Parents in Sept)
- 26 - Newcomer's Social, 7pm
- 29 - PTA Council Newcomers Reception, 7:30pm @ SHS

October

- 2 - No School**
- 8 - PTA Meeting 7:30pm (Executive Board 7pm)

Thank you everyone once again. If there is no further business, the meeting will stand adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Recording Secretary
Sunita Hansraj

Attached
Sign in Sheet
[9.4.25 Sign In](#)