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| **WHS PTA General Meeting** | Wednesday, 10/20/21 5:30 |
| **Attendees:**  Board: Peter Butler, Laura Daniels, William Hawkins, Vicki Grubaugh  Principals/Teachers: Mrs. Gethings, Ms. Clarino, Ms. Alden, Mrs. Ackerman, Ms. Stein, Ms. Cavanaugh, Mr. Stone, Ms. Paine. Ms. Forsa  Parents: Patricia Small, Hope Metcalf, Claire Rowe, Alana Blubak, Mark Roosien, Eric March, Sandra Enimil, Joy Edwards | |
| **Minutes:** Vicki Grubaugh | |
| **Agenda:**  I. Warm welcome to all and introductions (Peter)  II. Gratitude (Peter)  III. Teacher Updates  IV. PTA Updates (Board)  V. Financial Report (William)  VI. Principal’s Report (Mrs. Gethings)  VI. New Business (Board, all)  IX. Motion to Adjourn | |

1. **Welcome and Introductions** (Peter)
2. **Gratitude** (Peter)
   1. We are so thankful for the parent volunteers that made school picture day a success - Alana Blubak, Claire Rowe, Kim Salsbury, Maria O'Dea, Rhonda Roumani
3. **Teacher Updates**
   1. **Ms. Cav (Art)** – Thankful for restoration of art budget; a lot of Hispanic Heritage Month activities; looking to set up a Remind or window art to allow parents to see the art the students are working on; review of the elements of art; lower school request from teachers to teach the children how to draw people as they are illustrating their writing.
   2. **Mr. Stone (PE, 3-8)** – Thankful for PE supplies; grades 4,6,8 do fitness test in the spring with pre-test in the fall, incorporates the skills and prep into games throughout the year
   3. **Ms. Paine (2)** – Working with 2nd graders on being leaders of the building; 7th grade buddies came over today for anti-bullying activity; first “normal” school year and working on academic and SEL needs; sends out Second Grade Scoop; first field trip to East Rock Park and incorporating math unit for graphing
   4. **Dr. Stein (7,8)** – Overview of subjects- Science: 7th: atoms, cells, 8th: forces and gravity; Social Studies: 7th: co-teaching with Spanish and doing Hispanic Heritage Month, 8th: colonial history, field trip next week; Math: 7th: complex equations, 8th: exponents and advanced equations, stock market game/program; English: 7th: “Brown Girl Dreaming” memoir, visited art studio, hiking to top of East Rock next week;.8th: “Ground Zero”, writing short stories, visit from published writer Catherine Eagan. A lot of learning going on this year – never seen more motivated children, so happy to be back in school.
4. **PTA Updates:**
   1. **Directory** (Vicki): We currently have ~71 children who have been entered through the Google form that was sent out. We are working to do more communication and get the word out, so we can publish the Directory to foster communication between families and help our room parents ASAP. **Link to the form to opt-in to the Directory is here:** <https://forms.gle/BpVJNyodWzm5QTcv9>
   2. **WHS Basketball Program** (Peter, Mrs. G): Survey went out to gauge interest. 40+ kids are interested and 7-8 parents interested to help. **Opportunity to volunteer:** We need more parent volunteers to make the basketball program successful. Some interest in 2nd grade – will be considered after 3-8 up and running. Day of the week preference is part of the survey.
   3. **Mask-a-rade/Halloween event** (Hope); **Saturday 10/30 3-5, Whitney field;** limited to just WHS families but siblings are welcome! **Opportunity to volunteer/contribute**
      1. A small group of room parents are planning this brand new event to be similar to a “trunk or treat” but with tables and games. Original idea was to have 1 table per grade - but not enough volunteers across the schools. There was a lot of good discussion with the group here re: ideas to get more involvement and to adapt the event to be successful. Once the building permit is approved (in progress, per Mrs. G), we will do a lot more communication to get excitement - including morning announcements at both schools, Remind from teachers, etc. The Student Council is planning to attend.
      2. If you want to volunteer to help hand out candy or help with a game or activity, clean-up/set-up - reach out to Hope at [hopermetcalf@gmail.com](mailto:hopermetcalf@gmail.com).
      3. If you are able to donate candy, please bring it in next week to your home room teacher.
   4. **Parent feedback for PTA re: communication** (all) - great ad hoc discussion re: how to best build community and engage parents, particularly those new families.
      1. Be specific in requests: Parents may want to help but feel intimidated if the ask isn’t clear - how much time? What is entailed? Etc.
      2. Address people by name in emails - not just “parent”. This matters.
      3. As we build relationships and community - it is easier to ask for involvement from people with personal connections.
      4. Phone tree is another way to get engagement and get the word out.
      5. PTA meetings - emails are not clearly showing up to remind people with the important details. Balance between combining a bunch of info in one email, versus individual emails for emphasis - as we are all overwhelmed with NHPS emails/phone calls.
   5. **Member Registration Drive** (Laura) - Currently 145 members
      1. Feedback on why parents are not joining the PTA - Non-English speaking is a challenge; can we get literature in other languages?; Time is a limitation for some parents
      2. **Membership Drive – We are hoping to get a burst of members and offering pizza party for the homeroom with the highest percentage of registered parents! Deadline extended until Nov. 5**
      3. We welcome as much or little time as parents/guardians are able to give!
      4. Ms. Forsa requested a list of parents who have joined and haven’t joined for more personal outreach– William can generate
5. **Financial Report** (William)
   1. $57,000 in our accounts, up from $45,000 on June 30; however, once we account for ASP wages and prepaid ASP tuition (not our money yet!), we are down to about a net of $25K.
6. **Principal’s Report** (Mrs. Gethings, Ms. Clarino)
   1. Wins (Mrs. G): We are proud of our teachers and students who have transitioned back to school and making it a very successful year; setting up things like buddy activities, Common Ground on Fridays, Math Counts, strong grade level focus. Kids can’t wait to come into school! Keeping trend of finding out who we are. Looking at intervention needs kids have. SEL focus. Still looking for a 5-6 math teacher. New social worker – Mrs. Riley.
   2. Ms. Clarino – Purposeful Play soft start – kids start with their choice bin and start school off on the right note. Starting their book study. Re-establishing the event previously called “Harvest Parade” – 10/29/21 at 2:00 PM doing a walk around the block – costumes are welcome. Room parents may be invited to join to help with costumes.
   3. Mrs. Gethings – We are working on getting kids used to presenting and speaking and sharing their projects and work to increase their confidence after being behind a screen. Art shared from Purposeful Play art activities in 4th grade. So far, we are the only school left that hasn’t had a quarantine period yet - fingers crossed!
7. **New Business**
   1. **Format for next meeting** (Peter) – We will be moving to Zoom next month due to weather/light.
   2. **Updating the PTA by-laws** (William) – We need to update our by-laws to match CT PTA and just need updating in general. **Opportunity to Volunteer:** We need a few volunteers who are not on the Board to contribute to updating the bylaws. Hope Metcalf volunteered (thank you!) - we need a few more volunteers. Please email [treasurer@whspta.org](mailto:treasurer@whspta.org) if interested.
   3. **Winter/Monthly events** (Peter) - We have held events in Sept (ice cream social, picnic) and October (Mask-a-Rade Halloween event). We want to keep monthly community events going – we need ideas and volunteers, so please reach out! **Opportunity to volunteer/contribute**
8. **Closing** (Peter)
   1. YOU being here matters! Your thoughts and comments are valuable. Please reach out to the Board with ideas, feedback, and questions! [officers@whspta.org](mailto:officers@whspta.org) **Opportunity to volunteer/contribute**