

**Westchester Elementary School PTA
Meeting Minutes
April 2, 2019, 7PM**

PTA Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/westchesterpta>

PTA Website: <http://westchesterpta.org/>

Attendance – Sign-in sheet available upon request.

PTA Minutes – Motion to approve minutes from the last meeting: Approved

Treasurer's Report – Balance at end of last month: \$34,849.05, which precedes the expense of the reading materials packet that the PTA

Administration Report –

Destination Imagination teams (Mr. Byers): Two teams from WES that did really well in the state competition. The 3rd grade team came in 6th overall; the 5th grade team came in 2nd and has the opportunity to go to Kansas City to represent the school and the state at the global competition. It is 4 full days of activities, with the cost of \$5,500 for registration alone, not including travel and accommodations. We welcome business sponsorships. Unfortunately, the school cannot pay for it at this time. These kids are representing WES in a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It's not just "for" these kids, but for the school with the goal of sharing and expanding the program at WES. Ms. Crabb read a powerful advocacy letter from DI sponsor teacher Ms. Miele. PTA voted yes, unanimously, to provide the funds for registration. The DI team will maintain a travel diary and share their experience with the WES community, even presenting to the school. Additional fundraising will be tricky; it can't be directly associated with WES or BCPS. People can send money to the PTA with DI in the memo. Otherwise, the team is eager for leads: local businesses, private corporations in the area who would have dedicated discretionary funds for these kinds of community things. Elizabeth Newton is looking into a shoe donation program to raise funds (\$1/pair) with a bin in the hallway and then perhaps collecting at the Sprint. Students who are participating in DI are disappointed that they'll be missing the spring concert, Mr. Byers will look into moving the daytime concert so that they still have the opportunity to perform.

Reading materials—Thank you to the PTA for this purchase; the set is not just books, but also curriculum that will really help with the reading program.

PI Day was a wonderful success.

Outdoor learning Center—the proposal as presented had to be sent in to the county since it would be considered a permanent fixture. Unfortunately, the county came out and determined that due to the hill not being level, it would need to be levelled and a cement pad poured so that equipment can be bolted down. Aside from being

cost-prohibitive, that is also not really what we were thinking of for that space. Ms Maguire adding that we will remove the stumps, mulch it, and leave it bare. The Green Team is doing a survey of the teachers to find out what works for the teachers, what materials can they think of that would be useful and encourage them to use it: clipboards, dry erase boards, do you want stumps, or do you want the waterproof picnic blankets? That brings the expenses down significantly. This also makes it easier to use other outdoor spaces. There should be space (a corner) in the rec and parks room for a cart that would contain all of the materials. The goal is ease of use.

Snowballs for Intermediate (gr3-5) Field Day – WES drinking water fixtures came up clean for lead, but there are consumption restrictions for certain outlets (can't use outside spigot). We discussed having a snow ball truck come at a cost of \$1,000. That's a lot of money. We will look into getting popsicles in bulk--through Ms. Costa perhaps (freezer space dependent)--or if someone else in the WES community can offer cold treats for the day.

Testing snacks (Ms. Crabb): Thank you! PTA paid for MISA snacks for the 5th grade. Students each received an apple and chips each day and they were thrilled. PARCC testing is longer (10 days) and for more students (grades 3-5). Ms. Costa was very helpful. Laurie Sabatelli is happy to organize more limited snacks for PARCC testing; maybe do snacks for the last day of each test (reading and math) for students.

Scholastic dollars for Speech Language teacher—if there are certain books that Ms. Alkali wants, she should go to the website and pick out books and let Elizabeth know so that they can be ordered through the book fair to save on shipping. Ms. Crabb was thinking \$200; PTA voted to give her \$500. These are books that she gives out to her students as rewards.

Box Tops competition soccer game will be scheduled soon.

Maker Fest Night—Tuesday, April 16. Activity and then book fair and STEM gallery.

Schedule for Teacher Appreciation week. Open Door would like to put together a lunch; Mr. Byers would like to coordinate that with the PTA schedule; please forward when it's available.

SuperStar Sprint update (Ms. Sabatelli): Mr. Mitton gave out a “Fun Fitness Challenge” chart to teachers for them to send home with students to do physical activities at home, some additional activities during the school day to build excitement. Ms. Sabatelli will remind teachers to send the FFC chart home tomorrow. There will be a prize drawing for students who have turned in their completed charts. In addition, grades 1-5 will be doing the mileage challenge during the school days; there is a raffle drawing for this as well. This is a way for kids who are unable to participate in the sprint to feel involved.

Staffing for 2019-2020: We continue to grow and are excited to announce some staffing additions for next school year. We will have 5 Kindergarten classrooms; right now that means that the K classes will be 16 per at current projections; while we expect that could change with registrations, we still hope to keep those classes below 20 students. We will be adding a full-time Math/Reading resource teacher, which we are very excited about, especially if class size numbers are high. We will also be expanding the Spanish instruction to include 5th grade in addition to 4th. We are also happy to announce the addition of Special Education Program for Inclusion Autism Students (SELS) which means the addition of 3 Special Education Teachers and 2 Para-Educators just for that program. The county selected a school in each region to serve as the learning center for identified students in that region. This goes beyond curriculum instruction to help students with socialization and communication. There are specific criteria that need to be met in order for a student to participate in the program. It is an inclusion program that will provide outside sessions for students to work on social skills and communication. Ms. Maguire has a student for whom this program would be fantastic. She celebrated Autism Awareness Day today in her classroom; BCPS may use the photo that was tweeted for their website.

Grouping of students for next year's class assignments: we will ask that if parents have requests that they speak with Mr. Byers or Ms. Crabb directly. Each classroom next year will be truly heterogeneously grouped. In 5th grade, advanced academic students for math specifically will re-group for that subject alone.

Calendar for the rest of the year:

April 5: Close at 12:45pm	May 27: Memorial Day, schools closed
April 11: 5 th Grade visit to CMS	May 29-31: 2 nd Grade Banneker
April 16: Maker Fest Night 6-7:30pm	Museum Field Trip
April 19-22: Spring Break	May 30: Volunteer Breakfast
April 23: Report Cards go home	May 31: 3 rd Grade Recorder concert
April: 26 5 th Grade Philadelphia Trip	2:30pm
May 1: Refugee Assembly	May 31: 5 th grade picnic
May 5: SuperStar Sprint	June 10: 5 th grade ceremony
May 6-10: Teacher Appreciation Week	June 11: Kindergarten ceremony
May 10: 1 st Grade Theatre Works	June 12: Last day for PreK
May 22: Field Day for Grades 1&2	June 14: Schools close at 12:45pm
May 23: Field Day for Grades 3-5	June 17: Last Day of School

Committee Reports (only those with updates and/or representatives present are listed below):

Spirit Night (Melissa Schwartz) – Peace A Pizza in May.

Yearbook (Melissa Schwartz) – Yearbook looks great according to Mr. Byers, order needs to be finalized soon.

Spirit Wear (Melissa Schwartz) – Need someone to take over for this committee for next year. Shannon Bateman may be interested.

Book Fair (Elizabeth Newton) – We could use an additional volunteer for the evening sale on Maker Night, but otherwise are doing very well with volunteers. The author who came to the last book fair has approached us about coming to set up again during the Maker Fest Night—a portion of his books sales go to the PTA.

Kids Club (Melissa Schwartz) – Need someone new to run for next year, ideally perhaps a team or committee of people moving forward. Mr. Byers volunteered that there is a staff member who should be able to assist more with the clubs as well.

Health & Wellness (Shannon Bateman and Robin Mitchell) – 161 registrations for SuperStar Sprint in the first week, including 7 teachers and 70 students. We do have some new expenses this year. The mascot costume should be arriving soon. We will also be providing #WES20 headbands for all the kids. We are also looking into getting two 10ft feather flags for the start line. This puts our budget about \$1,000 above previous years, but still puts us in-line for a \$1,000 profit overall. Shoppers is closing, so we did lose that food sponsorship for the oranges that we provided at the end of the race, so we are looking for new leads on someone to provide end-of-race fruit—200 of whatever they can provide.

Green Committee (John Bolten) – As previously stated, we will need to orchestrate the removal of the old stumps and add some mulch to clean up and level out the “classroom” space. We will also be scheduling a weeding day soon to deal with the pollinator beds. Heritage Community Association is having mulched delivered for the walker path this weekend, we will add on to the order for additional mulch to be dropped on the hill next to the classroom.

Old Business:

Screenagers viewing is being promoted online, it's this Thursday at 7pm at CHS. It is not listed on the Screenagers website. BCPS Outreach was supposed to send flyers to the school to be sent home; those have not been received. It's too late for a flyer, now, Mr. Byers will send a message. Melissa Schwartz will need help at the showing—perhaps check with the National Honors Society and offer them service hours.

New Business:

(Laurie Sabatelli) One update from Epik Kids—next big project is Casey Cares pajama collection. If they are able to collect 100 pair of pajamas, there will be a school-wide pajama day.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:20PM.