

## Westchester Elementary PTA Minutes – Meeting January 8, 2024

### **Mr. Byers Update:**

GT Program is coming our way. Identification and the program. More information is coming out to the school families soon. This is second graders through fifth grade. Going to affect WES in a positive way.

Please note Dr. Wade Kerns, Coordinator of Advanced Academics for BCPS will attend our March PTA meeting to discuss changes to the Advanced Academics program.

**Treasurer Update: Melissa to update us and we'll add to the minutes.**

### **Communications Update: Giordana**

- Continuing with sending emails through memberhub, our communication platform, and a beginning of month email with monthly activities. Reminders mid-month with anything coming up for the second half of the month. Also requests for help. Lindsay and Laryn are a big help on Facebook and WES parents' groups.
- Swag store we will update the link, send the reminder and keep it open until the 12<sup>th</sup>.
- ☐ Teachers with bcps.org email cannot receive these emails but can add a different email address using the Join the Mailing List link on the pta website
- <https://www.westchesterespta.org/learn>
- ☐ Updates and reminders will also continue to be posted to Facebook. Follow the PTA (WES PTA)
- 

### **Membership Update: Nicole**

220 members. 34 Faculty & Staff, 7 grandparents, 3 community members

**Special Resources: Jamie – not in attendance.**

### **Teacher Appreciation: Jen**

- Upcoming Events:
  - o January – teacher supplies – This Friday and next Wednesday – fill up a cart with supplies and let the teachers shop from the cart to help fill up their classrooms.
  - o February – kindness grams were so popular – something for teachers. Carnations – fill their bucket. Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup>

### **Green Team: Heather**

– the initiative is to clean up, weed and beautify the grounds and make the school a certified green school. It helps give the kids an opportunity to get involved and understand the importance. Heather has connected with Ms. Buker & Ms. Chatman and will be planning ground clean up event with Epik Kids.

**Bingo – Laura**

- No permit or license since we're not taking money. But that also means we can't take donations.
- Talk to Heather Cassetta about how she did it.

**Family Food Night** – once a month. Either food day or food night. We need someone to chair this role/initiative. February is already planned – Chef Paolino's – February 6<sup>th</sup>. We need someone to finish February and start the other months.

- Communicating and coordination with the various restaurants.
- Reach out to a board member or email westchester21228@gmail.com

**Spirit Wear** – closed on 1/12. How did we do? What do we do differently next time?

**Justin Berk Assembly – Karen Williams**

- o Rescheduled for January 23 & 25
- o Second round of Faith in the Flakes shirts ordered should arrive this week

□ **5th Grade Activities – Laryn Rollhauser**

- o Planning in progress

□ **Parent's Night Out - Jen Peters**

- o Night Out with the Stars
- o March 8 th
- o @ The Basement (downstairs area of El Guapo)
- o First year reintroducing this event, keeping it small this year. May consider a larger event featuring silent auctions in the future.
- o Additional details coming soon

□ **Super Star Sprint- Liz Sothoron and Katie Jones**

- o Sunday, May 5 th
- o Committee could use volunteers. Please email the westchester21228@gmail.com email address if you would like to help

**Drama Club/Kid's Club – Leslie Miller and Kara Silanskis**

- The Little Mermaid production will take place 2/23
- Tickets will be available to play participants and staff
- Each participant will receive 2 free tickets. Additional tickets \$2

□ Mr. Byers will check capacity for gym/café before finalizing ticket sale plan

□ Gym - Banquet (Grandparent Breakfast) is 262

o Chairs only is 562

□ Café - Banquet (Grandparent breakfast) is 167

o Chairs only is 258

**o Kids Club – Kids Club will return this Spring. Details tbd**

Reports from 2023:

- **Grandparents Breakfast – Monica**

- o Thank you card to Grocery Outlet from Mr. Byers from the school.
- o Bakery Express for bagels and muffins.
- o We made a profit!! \$2200!!
- o Next year – need more help!! Hosted in November.
- o Lot of middle school volunteers in exchange for food
- o Challenges – a lot more people, not enough table and chairs.
- o Extra food –

**Coat Drive – Melissa West**

Thank you to counselors, staff and community for the help with the winter clothing drive.

- It was a great success.

**Book Fair – Lisa Siegfried**

- □ The November book fair sold \$22,140 & WES earned \$11,000 in Scholastic Dollars
- □ Scholastic Dollars are used to pay for future book fairs, to buy book prizes for the library, to buy prizes for the upcoming Bingo night and Graphic Novels for 5 th grade.
- □ Lisa will provide us with a catalog so that we can let her know if there is anything we need that can be purchased through Scholastic
- 
- □ The Spring book fair is usually smaller. WES will take the lower percentage return in cash profits instead of Scholastic dollars to purchase library bound books for the school.
- □ In the fall all staff received \$25 to shop. For the spring book fair PTA members will receive a larger spending budget.

**Q&A:**

o New families feel overwhelmed and unsure about information. How can we better understand things like the website? American Education Week? Etc.

o Suggestions to support new families included

□ Re-initiate the Buddy Parent/Mentor Family program

□ Consider creating a Year at a Glance calendar with descriptions of each event including Math Night, American Education Week, etc.

□ Consider creating a document available on the website with alphabetized information about any and all topics, lingo, and vocabulary – How to Speak WES PTA

o Families did share that they find the weekly teacher email newsletters to be very valuable and they are appreciative.