

September 2017 PTA Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order: Welcome – Started at 7:11pm at Stacey & Jeremy Porter's Home, We went around the room and did introductions

- The following members were present:
 - Darlena Simmons
 - Al Bonney
 - Lori Coombs
 - Erin Sacluti
 - Jill Bowdon
 - Junette Moseley
 - Liliana Fargo
 - Karen Gordon
 - Stephanie Kimmel
 - Jenevieve Arceneaux
 - Paula Maldonado
 - Raechel Alexander
 - Anita Geevarghese
 - Natasha Dobson
 - Liliana Baluteanu
 - Stephanie Stas
 - Keith Robinson
 - Inbal Fraiman
 - Stacey Masliansky
 - Tina Vinson
 - Tari Mack
 - Robin Linn
 - Joe Brownlee
 - Courtney Ivaska
 - Tara Williams
 - John Hernandez
 - Stacey Porter
 - Jeremy Porter

Budget Recap – We might need to make some modifications to the current budget. John is working on a budget update and will have it for the next meeting. He is currently working on wrapping up last year's finances and getting them ready for the audit.

Committee Updates

- Principal Announcements - None
- Exec Committee Announcements
 - Walker Open House is this Thursday 9/14, 6:00-7:15pm
 - Bulk School Supply Program update
 - We are still accepting payments for this year [Supply order form](#)
 - We began to this program (as opposed to ordering kits as a fundraising activity) to make things more equitable for all students, lower cost for families, and to eliminate surplus of unused supplies.
 - It's modeled after the programs at Washington and Bessie Rhodes schools.
 - The teachers get to order supplies themselves to get exactly what they want.
 - \$45 per student, \$35 for reduced lunch students, and there's an option to donate towards the fund.
 - \$9,000 budgeted; we have passed that goal in buy-ins: 191 families (268 students) have participated out of the 390 students at Walker. \$11,323 in cash has been collected after paying all fees (for on-line purchasing processing - PayPal).
 - We will have to pay attention to the amounts that teachers will need – some teachers are concerned that they won't have enough since they are new staff and came to Walker without supplies in reserve. So in the future, some teachers may need more than others. Since this is our first year doing this, we will be looking to see how we can make it work better for the next year.
 - Ideas to make the money go farther: Buy in bulk (the items that the whole school uses – like tissue), look into different ways and/or places to make the purchases (some teachers feel you can get better prices other than the warehouse we're ordering from), possibly bump up the cost to families to \$50-\$55 per student, consider the other parent costs throughout the year (like fieldtrips and scholastic) – maybe add these costs into the supplies so parents can pay for it all at one time.

- PTA Council Meeting Tuesday, Sept 19, 7:00pm at Lincoln School – All are welcome to attend. We will try to keep everyone updated on the topics of the meetings. We aim to have at least one Walker representative at every meeting.
- First Quarterly Executive Board Mtg (Exec Committee, Committee Heads, & Ms. Lumpkin) will be scheduled soon
- Committees are encouraged to start email correspondence or set up a meeting (phone, or in person) to plan this year's activities. Please email [draft proposals](#) for feedback to [exec committee](#) by **Wednesday, Oct 4**. We will talk to committees separately to walk through this more.
 - [Proposal Considerations](#)
 - Committee Heads
 - Engagement – [Erin Sacluti](#)
 - Education - [Jeremy Porter](#)
 - STEM – [Jill Bowdon](#)
 - School & Community Partnerships - [Geneva Solomon](#)
 - We still need 2 heads for the Fundraising committee. We have 14 people on that committee; we just need a point person for the group.
 - Stacey is currently working on organizing the sign-ups from coffee & BBQ and will send out the committee member rosters and contact info soon.
 - Committees feel free to meet in whatever way works best for your groups (via in person, on-line, phone calls, etc.)
 - Start planning what you want to do this year and send in your proposals. Please make sure to check dates against the [D65 calendar](#) and [D65 Consolidated Calendars](#) so families don't have conflicts.
 - Education Update:
 - Enrichment classes are going well (the fair at the BBQ was a success!)
 - Chess has 27 students to sign-up, more than any time before
 - The chess tournament at Walker will be on Dec. 2nd
 - We are planning on doing something with the school garden – if you have any garden tools/supplies to donate to the project, they will be happily accepted.
 - Engagement Update:
 - Looking into new ways to produce the yearbook. Try to get the cost down if possible.
 - Wanting to be able to gift the 5th grade class yearbooks. Looking into ways to be able to do this – talking with teachers to see if the 5th grade can do a fundraiser for it.
- [Boys Running Strong \(BRS\) is selling shirts to supporters for the Oct 21 5K in Chicago -\\$20](#) – funds go toward Hurricane Harvey relief contact [Ms. Rouse](#). Orders due by 9/18. They want to make a “Sea of Red” at the race. This program is run by the teachers. The BRS curriculum was developed by the teachers and works towards making a community while teaching conditioning.
- Petition to get crossing guard at East Prairie / Grove – contact [Courtney Ivaska](#). Courtney will bring this idea up at the next Skokie Village Council Meeting. Idea: to reach out to Bessie Rhodes and Joan of Arc Families to get more signatures for the cause.
- Special Ed resource for families who need help navigating the process or resources – contact [Stephanie Kimmel](#)

New Business

- **Review & vote on approval of [Walker PTA By-laws](#)**
 - Stacey read out loud the changes (highlighted on attachment above). Stephanie Kimmel moved to approve, Joe Brownlee seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.
- **Conference Need:** Ms. Lumpkin wants the PTA to provide sweets and beverages for the first night of conferences.

- Erin will set up a Perfect Potluck sign-up for parents to volunteer to bring items in.
- **Discussion: [Battle of the books proposal K & 3rd from Ms. Rouse](#)**
 - The 4th & 5th grades are competitive at district level.
 - The program started out as a way to engage the gifted students. It's now broader and covers a lot more diverse topics.
 - Students get very excited to participate – 80% of the 1st & 2nd grades sign-up.
 - It really helps get kids engaged and excited about reading (2 personal stories of students were shared – about how Battle of the Books sparked their love for reading)
 - Ms. Rouse wants to be able to make the program open for all grades. She wants to know what we can give towards that goal so she can figure out how she can start expanding the program.
 - Budget concerns: are the proposed amounts accurate? What will be the ongoing costs for each year?
 - Can we make this a district funded activity? – Currently zero is covered by the district and only the 4th & 5th grades are done district wide.
 - Can we take a portion of the money raised at the book fair to fund this project?
 - Can we do a book share with another district to get costs down?
 - Maybe use Donors Choose to raise the money needed
 - Maybe we can get a grant from Foundation 65
 - Maybe add this cost to the school supply program fee
 - Perhaps take some money from the teacher gift cards and put it towards funding this.
 - We don't need to vote on this now – The Education Committee will take this on and meet with Ms. Rouse to come up with 3 proposals (one for just 3rd grade, one for just Kindergarten, and one for both).
- **Discussion: Fall Fundraising Event / Schedule**
 - PNO (funds the Residencies) and Walkerfest (funds the Angel Fund) are our biggest fundraisers.
 - Last year PNO was in February and was super successful. We like it in February, but when should we do Walkerfest and the Harvest Dance? We want to spread them out so there's not too much in the spring.
 - Doing Walkerfest in November could be done, but the hardest part will be getting the raffle prizes in the short amount of time. The grocer sponsor might like to do in November since it's close to the holidays.
 - Last year we had Walkerfest in May and participation was low.
 - Years ago it was held outside, called Walkerthon and kids were sponsored to run laps. Maybe we can do a dance-a-thon w/ Marcus?
 - Maybe we can combine Walkerfest and the Dance?
 - We'll let the fundraising committee discuss the matter and come up with a plan.
 - We just need to make a plan and get moving on it to do something in November.
 - The consensus was to keep the Harvest Dance and Walkerfest separate and do both in the fall.

Volunteer needs – A big thanks to all who volunteer!

- Audit Committee – contact [John Hernandez](#)
 - Joe Brownlee volunteered to be chair
 - 2 more volunteers needed who are not Exec Committee members
- Ways & Means Committee – ideally one member from each committee needed and 2 from general membership (non-committee members)
 - Somebody from the teacher's grant committee at Walker would be great to get on here to keep us informed of what grants the school is applying for
- Translators for our PTA Newsletter/Communications – especially Arabic
 - Reach out to Northwestern or Rotary (Joe Brownlee will look into) to help. Also ask Ms. Clara
- Fluency Tutors, 3 different program opportunities- contact [Stacey Masliansky](#)

- Walker Bookstore – during lunch/recess periods, ideally once a week through the school year
- 4th & 5th grade co-ed Flag FB & Basketball players & coaches – contact [Al Bonney](#)
 - Need 10 players for flag football
 - We got a football coach this week, but still need 4th grade coaches for basketball
- Yearbook – contact [Miriam Diversiey](#) or [Erin Sacluti](#)
 - Ms. Matten and the Photography Club will help out with taking pictures
- Scholastic Bookfair: contact [Erika Seaver](#) or [Kelli Kaul](#) or [Sharon Robinson](#)
 - Setup: evening of Friday Oct 13
 - Monday, Oct 16 (wish list day- 9a-3:30p)
 - Tuesday Oct 17, 4-7p
 - Wednesday Oct 18, 4-6p + teardown
 - "Special Friends Day" during lunch/recess periods 11:30a-1:30p-TBD
 - Bookfair team will send link to sign up when its ready

Open Discussion

- Topics of interest for meeting speakers – Please send us any topics you'd like to learn about
 - Courageous Conversations – would like to continue this
 - Maybe combine with Y.O.U. speakers – drive participation to both events
 - How to save for college – pros & cons to education savings plans

Adjournment

Next meeting: [Wednesday Oct 11](#) @ 7:00 pm at Raechel & Allen Alexander's Home