

Walker PTA meeting: Wednesday, February 20, 2019 @ 7:00pm
Location: Walker School

Attendees:

Nicki Devine	Terry Velan	Jenna Arceneaux
Paula Maldonado	Darlana Simmons	Michelle Henley
Ellen Nagella	Matthew Krause	Liz Ribeiro
Erin Saculti	Inbal Fraiman	Raechel Alexander

Principal's Announcements: None (didn't get an update from Ms. Edens, but we forgot to follow up with her about it)

Parent Questions/Comments: None

Teacher Announcements:

- Just had a huge Val-o-gram sale. We raised over \$450 and we talked to Student Advisory to see what they want to do with it. In the past they've donated it to 5th graders to help pay for Camp Timberlee. This year the group seemed more interested in putting it towards updating the outside of our building (like new benches, improve playground). These types of improvements don't really need to come out of this money - should be the district that pays through the Buildings and Grounds Team. The students want to come to a future PTA meeting to discuss this and see how they can help to get these types of projects done. The teachers will prep them for the meeting and are going to try to steer them to use the Val-o-gram money for Camp Timberlee.
 - There are some things that the district doesn't cover for beautification. We as a PTA are willing to work with the Student Advisory to do something for the outside.
- For Val-o-grams next year they are planning to send order forms to teachers and sell at lunch and recess. They will need parent volunteers to help do this.

Executive Committee Announcements

- **School Supplies Update:**
 - We've collected enough money to fulfill our planned budget for all staff. It looks like the specials teams need more (we were on the low side of funding for these groups compared to what other schools in the district do. For grade teachers we were in the middle). We will meet with them to find out their needs and see what we should do.
 - We did a survey to the staff to find out their feelings about the program. The results were mostly positive. Some teachers have exhausted their budgets and we are working to see how to fix this issue. This year we opened it up for teachers to shop anywhere, which most loved so they could bargain shop. But this does add more work for teachers.
- **Enrichment Update:**
 - We have a new STEM vender who is offering some great programming at a lower rate. We also have a new customer service club on Monday mornings. Every week, they will work on different project for various different organizations. The cost is for the materials. Kelli Kaul, one of our enrichment volunteers, will also be offering a new Friday after school enrichment for teachers, staff and parents on qigong and mindfulness. An email reminder will go out in Beverly's Friday email about registration deadline being next Monday.
 - We are exploring the Tuesday late bus to see if it can accommodate more students.
- **PTA Council Update:**
 - Last month we discussed bulk school supplies and how almost every school had different methods, cost, and participation. Some schools are on the kit, budget or some just have a list for the parents purchase the supplies. It was proposed to create a committee to explore presenting to the district about combining school supply fees with the district fees for an equity standpoint especially for those on free and reduced lunch.
 - This month we discussed enrichment and once again, there is a wide range of enrichment offerings. Vendors also range widely and several schools utilize Right at school to handle all of their enrichment and handles all of the registration as well so it's a one stop shop. However they up charge the parents.

The profits that they make, they split them with the pta who then uses that for enrichment scholarships. For example, sticky fingers at walker is \$150 but at Willard, its \$220. There was also discussion on the lack of childcare for the half days - some schools mentioned how they utilize Ridgeville or some of the city of Evanston resources such as Chandler Newberger, Robert Crown or Fleetwood Jordain. Right at school also offers a half day program for only \$25.

- o Kingsley hosted our February PTA Council meeting and they shared how this year, their board decided to operate with a lens on equity and looking at everything as in "is this for my family or for every Kingsley family?" which also included their annual benefit. They said that they'd share more details about this but this year, they did away with their annual benefit and many of the fundraising activities and instead, did a direct ask. To still maintain the social aspects, they still planned several events but changed them a little bit - all events are free from their school dance to potluck style, etc. They were pleasantly surprised that they have already surpassed their goal from direct ask and will be ending their direct ask campaign next Monday.
- o Also, for PTA Council - for any parent that is interested in serving on the committee for school supplies, please see attached for last month's meeting minutes. Northlight Theatre also presented their Education programs - the Enrichment committee might look into some of their programming for next 19-20 year.
- o PTA Council also voted on their by-laws and will present a slate of candidates for next year's PTA Council Board in March, to be voted on at the April meeting. The next PTA Council meeting will be March 19 and will be about Culturally Relevant Programming at JEH. Also, SAVE THE DATE - May 15th will be an equity training for incoming PTA leadership - ideally, Walker should send its next PTA leadership/exec board to this training session.

Treasurer Update

- **Parents Night Out:** We did very well! Made \$16,607 net after all fees paid. We did amazing this year, had 50 more people come, more buy-in parties, and the buy-in parties were extremely popular. The person who won the 50/50 raffle donated back their share of the winnings. The bar tab was so good that we only had to pay \$1100 for the venue (not the whole \$2250).
- **Restaurant Fundraisers:**
 - o Blaze Pizza: \$30 (not sure why so low)
 - o Dengeo's: \$90
 - o Potbelly: \$185

PAC Walker Survey Update: We've had a good response so far. We want to reach people that normally don't have their opinions heard - let everyone have a chance to talk. The deadline is April 5th. Please take one per child. Please take it so we know how you feel - we want everyone happy at Walker.

STEAM Night: Will be March 21st at 6pm in the gym. Last year was cool (had half as classroom displays and half interactive activities). This year it will be more interactive. We had a lot of great ideas being discussed in our committee. We're possibly going to do a music piece - playing with instruments or make them. We'll also have marble runs, lego robotics, among other things.

- Maybe reach out to Skokie Library to see if they'd like to send someone out to talk about their STEAM kits people can check out.
- We will need a bunch of volunteers for the event
- Working on getting a bus to bring families in (like what we're doing for World of Walker).
- We want it to be a big community event - teachers please blast it out to your classes!
- We will have posters advertising it. Maybe we'll have flyers for it to promote the event at WoW.

New Business

- **Vote on funding 3rd grade March Madness Reading rewards**
 - o Ms. Rouse put in 2 grant requests recently. One to fund incentives for the 3rd grade reading program starting in March and one to start a Kindergarten program in May.

- Last year she put in the request for the 3rd grade program to bridge the gap between the Jr Battle (1st & 2nd grades) and the Battle 2.0 (4th & 5th grades). We approved it last year. So this year she just needs funds for Walker drawstring bags to give the kids for completing it - asking for \$225 (this might be less, working with Walker parent Courtney Shapiro to see if she can get them cheaper). Ms. Rouse has the books, she just needs the incentives.
- The District changed Battle this year to make it less competitive and provided more/most of the funds for it. Ms. Hertle said they didn't need any funds from us.
- There has been some back and forth with communication about the money we have budgeted for the Battle Programs (is it for Jr & Battle 2.0? Does it include the 3rd grade program?). We have \$750 budgeted and haven't received any invoices yet for this money. The \$225 could possibly just come from the \$750 we have marked for Battle.
- The second grant she put in is a Kindergarten reading program (this would then give every grade a reading program). She needs \$600 for the first year to get all the books and incentives. We're not going to vote on this one tonight. Last year parents voted that they didn't want to move forward with this one before getting more information. We want to talk to Ms. Lumpkin (these grants were turned in after she left for her leave). The books needed could possibly be found in the District, saving us some money.
- Parent Feedback:
 - good idea. The Six Flags program has gotten her Kindergartener excited to read so she sees a school run program would do the same.
 - Libraries reading programs start as early as 3-4 yrs old so it would be great to have it at the school.
 - It does seem expensive - maybe we can try to get the books somewhere.
 - One concern is if the books would be exclusive to the early readers (she's expecting 20-25 kids to participate)
 - This can exclude the kids that don't have an adult to read with them at home
 - Could it be a program that pairs the Kindergarteners with 3rd graders? so there's a built in buddy.
 - This would have to be a teacher planning and collaborative effort, where in the past Battle has been an at home project.
 - Maybe Battle could be offered as an after school activity (for the lower grades, since 4th & 5th are run by the District). The 4th & 5th Battle all started for a way for the District to add enrichments.
 - Battle seems to be ran different in every school - just depends on who is heading it.
 - We have a lot of kids that don't have a parent to help at home.
 - The Kindergarten ask is for May, so we have some time to talk to Ms. Lumpkin and Ms. Rouse and for us to vote later.
 - In April we are having a service drive for Bernie Books. Before we give them the books, we are planning to let the teachers and Walker families to take what they want. Maybe Ms. Rouse could find some of the books needed there.
 - We like the idea, just not the cost.
- Erin Saculty motioned to approve the \$225 for 3rd grade incentives. Inbal Fraiman seconded. All voted YES.
- **Vote on donation to the Justin Winn Foundation**
 - They asked us to donate. We recommend donating \$200. Motion to donate \$200 made by Terry Valen, seconded by Matt Krause. All voted YES.

Volunteer Needs

- Movie Night (Movie: Coco): Feb. 23rd 3-5pm
 - 4th & 5th graders will pass out popcorn and water and assist the younger kids. Please come! We're hoping to have the little library/free books open so the kids can take some books home.
- ESSCA Serve Night: Feb. 26th 6:30-9pm
- STEAM Night: March 21 6-8pm

Important Dates

- Parent Coffee with Ms. Edens: Friday Feb. 22 @ 9:00am
- PTA Movie Night: Saturday Feb. 23 @ 3-5pm
- Deadline for Spring Enrichment Sign-up: Monday Feb. 25
- ESSCA Serve Day: Tuesday Feb. 26 @ 6:30-9pm
- D65 Community Sharing Circles: Wednesday Feb. 27 @ 6-8pm
- World of Walker: Thursday Feb 28 @ 6-7pm (students need to be in their classes at 5:45)
- Winter Enrichments End: Friday March 1
- Spring Enrichments Start: Monday March 4
- Early Dismissal: Wednesday March 6 @ 12:05pm

Adjournment

*The guest speaker from the Friends of Robert Crown board had to reschedule. We will announce the new meeting date once it is confirmed.

Mark your calendars! Our next meeting: Wednesday, March 13th at 7pm in Walker Cafeteria