

Walker PTA meeting: Wednesday, December 11, 2019 @ 7:00pm

Location: Walker School

Attendees:

Terry Velan
Mya Wilkins
Erin Saculti

James Gray
Anita Geevarghese
Liz Ribeiro

Courtney Ivaska
Carla Green
Darlena Simmons

Nicki Devine
Raechel Alexander

Principal's Announcements:

- Chess tournament at Walker on Sat. We still need more volunteers
- The 5Essential Survey is going on for the District. Please fill it out.
- Buddy Bench update: we almost have enough caps for 2 benches. We'll be ending collections by the end of January. We want to have them made and installed in April on Earth Day.
- On Jan. 23rd at 7pm, there will be a Town Hall at Walker with the topic of safety at our school and in the district.

Teacher Announcements: None

Executive Committee Announcements:

- Walkerfest Recap: We made over \$9,300 gross - we met and exceeded our goal! We were even under budget in our expenses. We didn't have a lot of kids that needed scholarships come. Concession sales made more this year than the last two years. Pre-sales were good.
- Movie Night Recap: We had a decent turnout. Sound was an issue - tech issues, only had little speakers. We have another movie night scheduled in Feb. We're thinking of changing it to an open gym/board games or crafts event, esp since most of the kids end up playing in the gym anyways and we can avoid dealing with any equipment issues.
- Evanston Women's Club Craft Fair Recap: Made 2 different potpourri satchels made by Walker kids to sell. We sold 70 satchels, making \$85, which we'll be giving to the Evanston Danceathon. We are leaving the leftover satchels in the teacher's lounge for them to take home.

Treasurer Update:

- Good job with Walkerfest - met our goal!
- The 5th grade yearbook fundraiser did great. Made \$840 profit - raising enough to pay 100% of their yearbooks.
- We're in budget, doing a great job
- A couple of school supplies payments have come in
- The granddaughter of David E Walker bought spiritwear and sent us news clippings on how the school was named. We'll share these.
- Spiritwear orders should be coming in next week - hoping to get it home before break. We'll be contacting parents to come pick up their orders.
- The Teacher Support line in our budget is being changed to School Support. In the past this line in the budget has been used to gift teachers gift cards at the end of the school year or has gone to purchase the school a big item - like a rug for the library. We want to make the name change so it's used more for a gift to the whole school, so every child can benefit from it. We want to steer away from the gift cards because with the supplies program the teachers should have enough funding to not have to pay for anything out of their own pockets. We've only had 2 teachers go over their budgets since starting the program and this year we increased the budgets and gifted cleaning supplies. Plus buying that many gift cards has been a logistical nightmare.

Community Service Committee:

- Coat Drive: The drive is still going on! We have 2 bins full. Please keep donating up to the break. Walker students will get 1st choice of items donated. We are trying different avenues for where to donate through our service projects. The leftover lost and found items go to ESSCA.

Equity Committee:

- FAN Events:
 - Peggy Orenstein, Boys & Sex and Girls & Sex (Jan 13th, 7pm, New Trier)

- A lot of these events are recorded and you can watch them on YouTube.
- **Next Steps:** Had an Action group meeting last month at Nichols. We had a great turn out - 12 parents from Walker. We learned about the Equity Assessment Tool - use it to evaluate all school events. The next two sessions will focus more on how to use the tool and assess what we do at Walker. It was a good way to start the discussion, but we need to continue and have more. The project the group picked to focus on was Parent's Night Out and that lead to parent engagement and communication

PTA Council Updates:

- Black Lives Matter Week is Feb 3-7. The PTA Council gave a great overview of the program. They gave suggestions on how the PTA can help - have flyers go out, bulletin board for it and possibly do an activity during lunch/recess.
 - Last year on one of the days we had a project available to the kids during recess to make magnets. Ms. Arceneaux is on that team and likes the idea, so we might do it again this year. If there's any other ideas for a quick project that the kids can do, please let us know.
 - There will be take home work during the week - but nothing that has to be turned in, just as a way to continue the conversation at home.
 - The District is thinking of having a curriculum preview night to inform parents and try to avoid the blow back that came with LGBTQ+ week last year. Parents will have access to the curriculum prior to the event week. Maybe we can have our own info night at Walker, in case the District doesn't have the time to get their event together.
- There was a vote to add a LGBTQ+ resolution to the PTA Council bylaws and it passed

Teacher's Lounge Beautification Project Update

- A couple of parents have met with Dr. Chambers to spruce up the lounge - have a new vision for it. Want to delineate workspace from eating area, make it more welcoming and peaceful. Will possibly have some volunteer asks and maybe a grant to help out in the future.

New Business:

- **Bathroom Improvement Grant:** 1st part - all bathrooms cleaned up (all doors to be sanded, primed & painted) and decorated with decals. 2nd part - a large sensory decal for the wall and floor area in the hallway just outside the gym. James is covering the cost of new mirrors for the bathrooms. The 3rd grade girls raised \$100 for the project. We're proposing to give \$1700 to fund the rest of the project, with the money coming out of the School Support budget line (this would use almost half of that budget). The money will go directly to the school - not going through the district to get it done.
 - James had a meeting with the Director of Custodians to improve the level of cleaning.
 - New hand dryers are on the list of asks that James has for the district, but right now he's trying to get new stage lighting for the auditorium - have to space the asks out.
 - Erin put the vote out, Liz 2nd it, all were in favor - **PASSED**

Volunteer Needs:

- Walker School ES Chess Tournament: Saturday, Dec. 14th, 8am-6pm (The biggest district-wide event held at Walker. The best part is: NO CHESS EXPERIENCE NEEDED! Sign up at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040b44a5a82ba57-walker1> email Allen Alexander with questions at aalexander68@gmail.com. About 400 people in the school (200 kids). The concession stand brings in a lot of money. It is a lot of work, but a lot of fun, and our biggest need for volunteers.

Important Dates

- 4th & 5th Grade Basketball Info Night: Dec. 12, 6:30-8pm (we need another coach for 4th grade boys team. We are planning to do the younger grade teams next year - this year we didn't have the gym space)
- Dining Out for Walker PTA: Epic Burger at Old Orchard, Thursday Dec. 19th, All Day
- Winter Break - No School: Dec. 23rd - Jan 3rd
- Students Return: Monday, Jan. 6th
- January PTA Meeting: Wednesday, Jan. 8th

- MLK Service Project: Jan. 13-17th, collecting items and making survival kits for the homeless. We made 400 kits last year. Please save up any toiletries or food items to donate.
- PTA Winter Dance: Jan. 25th, 6-8pm (the 5th grade class that sold the most yearbook fundraiser pizza certificates gets free admission to the dance).

Adjournment

Mark your calendars! Our next meeting: Wednesday, January 8th at 7pm in Walker Cafeteria