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| **WHS PTA General Meeting** | Wednesday, 12/8/21 5:30 |
| **Attendees:** *Board*: Peter Butler, Laura Daniels, Veronica Douglas-Givan, William Hawkins*Principals/Teachers/Staff*: Ms. Clarino, Ms. Alden, Mrs. Ackerman, Ms. Forsa, Mr. Marcellino, Ms. Sisson.*Parents*: Claire Bowern, Alana Dlubak, Joy Edwards, Sandra Enimil, Ilana Richman, Rhonda Roumani, Claire Roosien, Claire Rowe, Arielle Rubenstein, Jonathan Wyrtzen.*Remark: this list of attendees is missing some people. If you were at the meeting, apologies if your attendance is not recorded here. Please contact us to have it changed if you’d like!* |
| **Minutes:** William Hawkins |
| **Agenda:**  1. Warm welcome to all and introductions (Peter)
2. Teacher Representative Updates
3. Gratitude
4. PTA Updates:Directory (Vicki), Basketball Program (Peter), Room Parents (Room Parent Rep), Member Registration Drive (Laura), Format for next meeting (Peter)
5. Financial Report (William)Motion for adding Teacher Appreciation to the budget
6. Principal’s Report (Mrs. Gethings and Mrs. Clarino)
7. New Business: Gala Committee, International Night Committee, Nurse Advocacy, Giving Tree, Sharing Ideas around supporting our kids
8. Motion to Adjourn
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1. **Warm welcome to all and introductions** (Peter)
	1. Attendees shared the kindest thing their – or any – child had done this week.
2. **Teacher Updates**
	1. **Mr. Marcellino** (custodian at Canner St.) was acknowledged by Ms. Clarino and thanked for his hard work. He organizes lost and found, among many other things he does.
	2. **Mrs. Alden (2)**- Social/emotional focus this month is gratitude, all teachers working hard to explain and model the many ways to show gratitude at home and at school
	3. **Ms. Sisson (K)**- Gratitude was a focus around Thanksgiving, now sharing family traditions for the holidays; strengthening home-school connection. Reading is taking off, some guided reading groups, learning letter conventions, spaces, punctuation, capitals, and growing in confidence all the time
	4. **Ms. Kegel (K-4 Music)**- (via video): K working on louds and softs and spatial representation of musical ideas; 1 practicing rhythms and notes of different durations; 2 learning music from indigenous people of Australia, and also practicing triads, the basis for harmony; 3 studying the music of the African diaspora, including syncopation such as in calypso, and practicing melodic dictation; 4 preparing for Revels, with songs from six different traditions.
3. **Gratitude** (Peter)
	1. Mrs. Alden thanked the PTA for funding snacks and coffee for staff. Peter thanked Vicki Grubaugh for her hard work on the directory; the Treasurer for ongoing work; and room parents for building community (including the 6th grade room parents Joy and Alana who organized a coffee and hang out in person. He also thanked those helping with the basketball program :Matt Grossman and his wife Millie, Josiah Brown, Drew Samsel, and Christian Jenkins. He also thanked Laura Daniels for a successful membership drive. Mrs. Ackerman thanked her colleagues for the great spirit in the K-2 building. Claire Bowern thanked the teachers for their hard work in a pandemic. Claire Roosien thanked the Board. Peter thanked former board members like Claire for their continued engagement.
4. **PTA Updates:**
	1. **Directory** (Peter on behalf of Vicki): Has been released.
	2. **WHS Basketball Program** (Peter): Up and running, 40 kids playing basketball 3 nights a week, will have 5/6 and 7/8 teams in Parks and Rec league, and practices for 3/4.
	3. **Membership Drive** (Laura): Final update 149 members. Mr. Shortt’s class won the pizza party, which was held 12/7 (including different food for those with cheese allergies!). But it’s never too late to join the PTA.
	4. **Format for Meetings** (Peter): Decided to be on Zoom this time to give families who choose to vaccinate their kids time to get that done. Will hopefully be in person in Jan.
5. **Financial Report** (William)
	1. $71,000 in our accounts, up from $45,000 on June 30; healthy. Comment: basically all the income is from after school; we are light on fundraisers so far. We omitted to include staff appreciation in the budget passed in September. After discussion of the amount, a motion was taken to spend $2000 on staff appreciation, and was passed 15-2.
6. **Principal’s Report** (Ms. Clarino)
	1. Staffing update: Hired new K para Morgan DiFrancesco, 5-6 Math teacher Courtney di Maria, very excited to have both. Have also hired to replace in 5-8 Music and band; will be beginning full-time in January. Focusing now on filling math coach vacancy.
	2. Thanks to families for filling out survey on ‘state of the school.’ 45 responses. Families very pleased with safety, feel safe sending students to school. Lots of feedback on unfilled positions; hopefully now mostly fixed.
	3. Curriculum: focus on family traditions; spotlight on 2nd grade, where students are doing posters, families invited in to share traditions.
	4. Common Ground partnership going very well. Delighted to have opportunity for all students to share this experience without having to go to Common Ground. Each class gets three different ‘field trips’ starting in February.
	5. Thanks to everyone who donated to the Food Drive. Fall Fun Day was a success; Pajama Day coming up, proceeds to be donated to American Cancer Society for children
	6. Questions from parents: Hooker is on the Covid testing rotation, logistics being worked out.
7. **New Business**
	1. **Gala** – Peter asked for volunteers to help put on this event. Historically the PTA’s big fundraiser of the year. Please help if you can. You don’t need to know what to do: just get involved. Contact Peter (officers@whspta.org) **Opportunity to volunteer/contribute**
	2. **International Day** – Hope to revive this tradition. Hasn’t been held in a while, so volunteers would have a free hand to use their creativity. Please contact Peter. Rhonda Roumani gave some thoughts: trying different foods could be one activity. **Opportunity to volunteer/contribute**
	3. **Nurses** – we are down to one nurse shared between campuses. A thoughtful discussion, to which Laura Daniels, Peter, Veronica Douglas-Givan, and Mrs. Clarino contributed, emphasized that on the one hand this is a concern in the event of an urgent medical issue. On the other hand, we recognize the challenges of providing sufficient nurses for all New Haven schools, and do not want to demand a second nurse if there are other schools with no nurses. However, we don’t want our need for a second nurse to be forgotten, if nurse staffing remains short for a while. Peter urged families to advocate to New Haven Health Director Maritza Bond (MBond@newhavenct.gov) and Director of Nursing Stacey Hutcherson (SHutcherson@newhavenct.gov), expressing our need while also recognizing equity concerns across the city. Rhonda Roumani mentioned that the PTA could provide funding for teacher training in CPR or similar. **Opportunity to volunteer/contribute**
8. **Closing** (Peter)
	1. YOU being here matters! Your thoughts and comments are valuable. Please reach out to the Board with ideas, feedback, and questions! officers@whspta.org