

PTA Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2016

1. Meeting called to order at 7:36 pm.
2. June minutes were approved and added to the record.
3. Principal's Report – Jennifer Lane
The school year is off to a great start and we're very excited to have an assistant principal to carry forward the work of the school. Everything so far has been off to a smooth start, including arrival, students getting into routines quickly, and everyone learning their way around.

Thank you everyone who came to back to school night. We had great attendance and we encourage everyone to stay in touch with your teachers so that you can be an active participant in your child's education. I also would ask that you come back for the open house on Columbus Day, Monday, October 10.

I would like to remind everyone that there is a new volunteer policy that we were alerted to during the summer. We know that this has caused some concern for 4th and 5th grade parents because of the extended day field trips and the June field trips for other grades. All volunteers for the extended day field trips must go through the finger printing process, as required by the county. We have tried to get the information on this process out to you as quickly as we could. A number of parents have already completed the finger printing process. The finger printing only needs to be done once, but you do need have it done by a MCPS approved service. All you need is a copy of the receipt that you paid to do it. Some parents have said they were in and out in 17 minutes at the Bethesda location. If you are not cleared, the school system is notified (typically within in 3 days). If someone is not cleared, Ms. Lane is alerted. The fifth grade is already having trouble getting chaperones, so please spread the word to fifth grade parents.

4. Treasurer's Report – Ed Valado

As of 6/30/16 the checking account had \$25,510 and the savings account was at \$25,268. There was a discrepancy from the June PTA meeting where former Treasurer Susan Higgins had assumed we would spend \$8,000 more through June 30, 2016. We actually spent \$10,933. Here is explanation:

- We were \$1,170 short in raising funds for teacher end of year gift. We funded this difference from unused budgeted amounts for end of year staff lunch (\$387), class dues/room parent fund (\$473), and teacher allocation (\$309).
- We were unaware that we would spend about \$600 in software fees in June (Quick Books subscription (\$430) and PTA website subscription (\$194)).
- We forgot to include the spending of class dues/room parent fund in my \$8k tally (\$1,400).

5. Teacher Liaison Report – Colleen Dahlem

- **PEP:** PEP started on Tuesday, September 6. We have been working hard to getting our students to learn each other's names and focusing on the routines of our class.
- **Kindergarten:** Kindergarten has been learning the routines and rules. For all academic areas, they have been learning how stations work in both the literacy and math blocks. Students have also dived into some science learning about the five senses, as well as understanding the purpose and importance of rules and routines in social studies.
- **First Grade:** In Math, we are graphing and analyzing data using bar graphs and pictographs. In Reading, we are focusing on retelling fiction using key details. In Writing, we have been authors of personal narratives focusing on a beginning, middle and end, as well as supporting details. In Social Studies, we have been talking about rules and why they are important. In Science, we are beginning to observe plants and animals.
- **Second Grade:** In Math, students are learning different strategies to solve addition and subtraction facts to 20. We are also identifying place value in standard form, word form,

models, and expanded form. In Social Studies students are learning new class rules and responsibilities. In Science, students are exploring rocks and their properties. In Writing, we are writing narratives about events in our lives using beginning, middle, and ending details. In Reading, we are using literature to guide us in our understanding of how character's respond to challenges.

- **Third Grade:** Third grade is working on rounding and 3-digit addition and subtraction in math. In reading we are reading realistic fiction stories and asking and answering questions about the story. In writing we are finishing up our summer memory personal narratives and then going into a community action research project. In science we are discussing motion and how it is caused by pushes and pulls and affected by different things like texture and friction.
- **Fourth Grade:** Fourth grade has started reading historical fiction documents. The students are excited about the eco-columns, both aquatic and terrestrial.
- **Fifth Grade:** We are excited to be going on a field trip at the end of September to Flag Pond and Battle Creek. We are grateful to Ms. Lane for doing so much with MCPS in order to get our field trip set amidst many very new MCPS regulations. We are working on reading and writing adventure stories. We are also working on fractions and standard algorithm multiplication.

6. PTA Volunteer Needs/Committee Updates – Karen Thornton

- **Volunteer Coordinator** – We are in search of a volunteer coordinator who will pick up the great work that Liz Brown was doing for the past several years. This job can be done from home, primarily consists of reaching out to fellow parents, and is a wonderful way to make connections in our community. This job is even more important this year due to the new volunteer training requirements.
- **MCCPTA Delegate** – We are in need of a MCCPTA delegate to serve as a liaison with larger county PTA. This role may appeal to someone who is interested in the larger level policy

decisions of the PTA and MCPS. The delegate will attend a monthly meeting and serve as our eyes and ears on the county-level PTA initiatives.

- **Book Fair (Carin Levine)** – This year the book fair will be held in December and will be adding early morning volunteer shifts. Additionally, there will be some evening activities and the addition of hours on a Saturday from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. The purpose of the Saturday hours is to open the book fair up to the broader community book fair and to maximize revenue. Also, the book fair moved to early December so that we can team up with some other committees and make it a multi-faceted event.
- **Fitness and Wellness (Kathleen McDermott)** – There are a variety of opportunities with fitness and wellness this year, including serving as a Recess Ranger. If you're interested, we need help with setting up the Sign Up Genius for recess and lunch periods. Also, the Wellness Committee is trying to have more activities during lunch, as well as coordinate Walk to School Day.
- **Friends of Westbrook School (Kathleen McDermott)** – In addition to the PTA, there are a lot of opportunities to get involved with FOWS, Westbrook's school/community foundation. Opportunities include serving on the board and as treasurer.
- **Yearbook (Joanne Jee)** – The price of the yearbook will increase a little bit this year. Additionally, we are thinking about having a student contest for the cover art for the year book, similar to what we do for the Carnival t-shirts. Please send photographs for the yearbook. Almost all the photographs in the yearbook are sent from parents. Some years we have trouble collecting photographs from some grades, so we will work through the Room Parents to get photographs.
- **Welcoming Committee (Karen Thornton)** – This committee helps to welcome new families joining Westbrook throughout the school year. Once a new family moves to the neighborhood, we connect the family with veteran family and

provide them information the school, sports teams, lessons, etc. We also provide tours to new families.

- **School Directory (Katie Funk)** – Information collection for this year’s directly has begun. Look out for emails, we need to hear from all new and returning families. Please also remember to update your Giant and Safeway card numbers, since those do need to be updated every year.
- **Trash Free Lunch (Kelly Fraser)** – Be on the lookout for emails about upcoming opportunities to help with Trash Free Lunch. We are also exploring opportunities to partner with vendors, including eco-friendly packaging.
- **Safe Routes to School (Kelly Fraser)** – Westbrook is currently taking a leadership role with this program with ideas from the county. We also want input from Westbrook families.
- **Talent Show (Meredith Wade)** – This year the talent show will include grades 1 – 5.
- **Special Needs Liaison (Amy Cropp)** – All parents of special needs please sign up for the list serve to share ideas and resources.
- **Artist Integration Committee (Chris Dixon Barone)** – The Arts Integration Committee supports arts integrated curriculum residencies with teaching artists and provides professional development training for teachers to increase student understanding in and through the arts. The committee sources funding, scheduling and management of the residencies and workshops. If you are interested in volunteering to support the artists in residence program, please contact Chris Dixon Barone.
- **Media Center (Liz Jalali)** – For any one likes to shelve books, we need volunteers on a weekly, monthly or ad hoc basis. A Sign Up Genius will be sent out soon.
- **Teacher/Staff Lunches (Erin Harcourt)** – There will be opportunities to help with the staff lunches throughout the year.

7. Thank You to All Our Volunteers the Past Month:

- Caroline Smith, Erin Harcourt and the Staff Appreciation Committee for enhancing the Teacher's Lounge and for providing a welcome back breakfast and lunch for the teachers.
- Chrissy Upston and Kristin O'Brien for planning a wonderful back to school picnic.
- Kathleen McDermott and Nan Hartman for getting Westbrook Spirit Wear up and running for the start of the school year.

8. PTA Updates

- The next Principal Town Hall and PTA meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 4.
- The PTA Calendar of Events is still being updated on the website, but please note that the Ledo Pizza fundraiser will be on Sept. 26 and 27.
- At the October meeting we will have the numbers for PTA membership, including totals by class.

9. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.