**Westbrook PTA Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, May 7, 2019**

1. Welcome - 8:06 p.m.
2. Approval of April minutes – approved

3. Co-Treasurers’ Report – Budget Approval

* We are entering spending season, and Carnival is a big part of it. We have a lot of money in the budget, but we also expect significant expenses and classroom parties coming up. Cash position is great, but that will dwindle down.

4. Co-Presidents’ Report

* 2019-2020 Budget Draft Approval
  + We continue many traditions in our budget proposal.
  + We changed the PTA contribution method last year – to a single family contribution of $225 rather than an amount per child. It worked well. We were buoyed by Carnival success last year. It was profitable and successful. We netted $13K net last year. You’ll see in the budget we don’t expect Carnival to make money because sometimes it makes $0 – like if it’s rained out. That’s why it’s reflected accordingly on the budget.
  + Next year’s budget basically stays the course. One change is with PTA dues – historically it’s $20 for first person and $5 for the second family member, and that’s for the little PTA card. We are eliminating the $20 charge. What that means is that the directory will be free to PTA members. You’ll pay the $6.50 for PTA dues, not the separate $20. So, any PTA member who joins with the $6.50 fee will get the directory. Mike also proposes to eliminate the requirement that only paying members get the AtoZ access.
  + The budget draft for next year looks a bit different than what Neil shows for the current year – that reflects some reorganizing Mike did to help make it more user friendly and organized by activity.
  + The budget needs to/will add back in the $1000 5th grade transition expense.
  + There’s also a new line item for a Student Government stipend.
  + Otherwise, the budget is pretty similar to last year. We have small tweaks, for instance to reflect that International & Multicultural Night brought in more money. We also increased the Building & Grounds budget a bit.
  + Regarding gift cards: the gift cards we give to teachers and staff at holidays and end of year is not and cannot be a PTA item. It’ll never be on the budget because, if it were a budget item, it could be considered a form of compensation. So our fundraising on Cheddar Up is just an individual parent organizing that.
    - PTA cannot be a part of it at all – we likely need a non-PTA parent to organize it. Parents can purchase gift cards and give to the school.
    - May need to revisit this discussion to compare what Westland does and figure out our organization for the collection for next year.
    - Bottom line for the budget: the staff appreciation line item is NOT the gift card/holiday card activity. The staff appreciation line item reflects support for potluck lunches and various activities that committee organizes.
  + Question: Will Kids Care Club and Community of Caring expenses and activities exist without Miss Pickle? Taryn: there will be another full time counselor.
  + Motion to approve the draft budget? (With 5th grade transition addition). Motion made. Seconded. APPROVED.
  + One note: the actual PTA budget will be a smaller, 7-8 line budget, not with the detail given here, which is to share with our community. The PTA guidelines do not require such detail.
* 2019-2020 PTA Executive Board & Committee Recruitment
  + We have one member on a nominating committee right now, and we’re looking for other members. This is critically important to fill these positions.
  + We have several openings for subcommittee chairs. It’s often too hard to recruit for several positions, and people don’t have a clear understanding of individual roles. We’d like to collapse some of these. For example, for Recess Ranger, there wasn’t a lot of excitement, but there was for PE, so we are combining those two things. We are looking for other similar suggestions to make these roles more manageable.
  + We will need to recruit a co-president, 1 VP, co-treasurer, secretary.
  + If you’re interested in helping on nominating committee, please volunteer. At the next meeting, we’ll circulate the extra roles of who we’re looking to commit. For example, we need Science Committee chair. We’ll need another person to co-chair Carnival. Mike will co-chair it along with someone else. We’ll need one more for Spirit Wear.
  + The executive board is not the most time intensive commitment. Secretary takes notes – commits to 1x/mo meetings. VP has a few jobs, like securing permits for events, finding a guest speaker for a meeting, bringing snacks to meetings, and committing to the following year as president. President: it is what you put into it. Treasurer – you don’t need to be a financial expert, but you spend a year shadowing the current treasurer and commit to the following year. One thing we’ve done this year with Treasurer is putting the reimbursements all online, so it’s made the job much easier to track.
  + Concern (Erin Harcourt): will the slate be presented and voted on? We should present the slate at the June meeting and swear in during the fall meeting, or we’ll figure out a parliamentary way to swear them in. The procedures are important. One of the Secretary’s role should keep the Exec Board in check with the procedures and timelines for various roles.
    - We were not able to present the slate this year because we have had a lot of resistance even to the Nominating Committee. We do not have a slate to nominate right now.
  + Jessica Deighton: suggest that we mirror the Little Falls requirement that all members of the swim teams commit to certain number of volunteer hours?
    - Mike: Love it. Perhaps we have build this into Cheddar Up to see what people are interested in.
  + Overall, we have a larger issue in our community of not having parent volunteers. PPA Soccer faces this. Community parties have this issue as well.
  + BOTTOM LINE: The PTA has a lot of need for volunteers to continue the traditions that this school offers and our children love, so please raise your hand and get involved.
* Thank Yous
  + Maureen Kramer, Erin Harcourt – Science Fair AND Earth Day Celebration
  + Chris Barone – 1st Grade Artist in Residence Performance
  + Janelle Wong – Today’s Presentation
  + Jessica Deighton & Caroline Smith – Teacher Appreciation Week activities

5. Teacher Liaison Reports: Nina Pattakos/Kim O’Connell

* Kindergarten: K is kicking off their Artist in Residence this month. We are very excited to work with Mary Gresock again on an opera story. Students will be going on their final field trip to the zoo mid-May.
* 1st Grade: 1st is rocking along into the 4th Quarter. We have been practicing addition with regrouping and being able to orally discuss what that entails. We have been practicing our written responses to questions in reading, citing text evidence. We are feeling very prepared as we enter into our end of year testing.
* 2nd Grade: Students just finished their poetry unit in Reading & Writing. We now begin our unit on Biographies, which integrates with Social Studies as we study historical timelines and artifacts. In Math, we continue to practice fact fluency to 20 and will also focus on 3-digit addition and subtraction strategies. Today we started our Artist in Residence program learning about rare Madagascar bugs and focused on the shapes that make up the animal.
* 3rd Grade: In writing we have started our Marking Period 4 inquiry project, which is about facts vs. opinions on an issue topic. In reading, we are reading different kinds of traditional stories – like folk tales, fables, and Greek myths. In math, we worked on multi-step word problems with all operations. Now we are solving word problems with elapsed time.
* 4th Grade: Students are learning an online program called NoodeTools in order to learn how to cite sources and organize research information. They continue with nonfiction and fiction reading. We will begin to learn about magnetism in science, and government in social studies. Students are also enjoying outdoor learning with their 2 environmental field trips.
* 5th Grade: We just completed our Health unit in April. Now we are incorporating what we learned about chromosomes in Health class in our Science & Reading classes. We are learning about cells and cell division and genetic traits. We are using this information in our research project in Writing, where we will be taking students on a virtual tour of a plant or animal cell. In addition, we will be going to Colonial Williamsburg in May for our fifth grade field trip.
* Media Center: We have added Drop in Reading Time to our menu of attractive Media Center options. Drop in Reading and Maker Space are super popular. We are planning to cast our ballots for our favorite Black Eyed Susan book after spring break, so we are reading up a storm so we can vote. Black Eyed Susan voting happened the week of April 22. Everyone voted, using a paper ballot, for their favorite BES picture book. Students in grades 3-5 who had read and reviewed 3 or more BES novels or graphic novels voted online. We are anxiously awaiting the state-wide results.
* SGA: The SGA recess equipment collection was a huge success! We collected 38 balls and a very generous parent installed a basket to put them in by the basketball court. These balls will remain outside at all times (after school and on weekends). Mrs. Woods will ensure that 4 balls are in the bin at all times. As balls disappear, we will replace them. The SGA will vote on equipment to buy with the extra funds at the April meeting. At our March meeting, each grade level spoke about their grade level concerns. Their peers from other grade levels helped troubleshoot solutions to their problems. These ideas were shared back with each classroom. Shout out to our Publicity Secretary for creating a beautiful bulletin board to advertise International Night. Many students have been submitting and hanging posters to advertise trash free lunch. Our April mission will be around testing encouragement! The SGA will help send out letters to parents encouraging them to write letters to their child(ren) to open the morning of PARCC/MCAP (grades 3-5 only). The SGA will be involved in organizing the returned letters to ensure they get to the right student in the morning of the test. Additionally, SGA will encourage buddy classrooms (lower grades) to write encouraging letters to the students in grades 3-5. In a nutshell, all students in grades 3-5 will receive two letters of encouragement. Teachers and other staff members will write any letters to students that did not receive one from their parent/guardian.

6. Committee Updates

* Carnival: Sarah Brady sent SUG for day-of volunteers, but we need more! Everything is falling into place.
* Note: Westland’s play – cell phones were stolen from Media Center, the thief was found. For Carnival, so many people are in and out. There are two security, plus a cop in the room with treasury, and someone manning the cakes.

7. Upcoming Events

* Thursday, May 9 – Staff Appreciation Chalk Walk
* Friday, May 10 – Staff Appreciation Catered Luncheon
* Tuesday, May 14 – Trash Free Lunch (last one for the school year!)
* Friday, May 17 – FOWS Dad’s Pub Crawl
* Saturday, May 18 – FOWS Moms Unwined
* Thursday-Friday, May 23-24 – Field Days (23rd: K-2; 24th: 3-5)
* Monday, May 27 – Memorial Day – NO SCHOOL
* FRIDAY, MAY 31 – CARNIVAL

Next PTA Meeting: Monday, June 3rd

Meeting Adjourned: 8:47pm