

PTA Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 3, 2015

Maureen Kramer, PTA Co-President, called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.

Approval of the Minutes

David Kales, PTA Secretary, asked if anyone had corrections or additions to the minutes from the December 2014 meeting. As there were none, the minutes were approved and entered into the record.

Treasurer's Report

Nan Hartman, PTA Treasurer, announced that Bingo Night was a huge success, and we just about broke even with a small loss \$200.

Nan renewed our charitable registration in December and paid our quarterly sales taxes for all our merchandise sales, which are doing great.

Lastly, Nan reminded everyone that with Valentine's Day parties coming up, she encourages parents to submit reimbursements on time. Timeliness helps with end-of-year planning.

Co-President's Report

Maureen Kramer and Erin Harcourt, PTA Co-Presidents, thanked many parents in our hard-working community.

1. Laura Kolton, An Nguyen, the Westbrook Science Committee and the many parent volunteers for January's STEM Lunch for 2nd-5th graders. And to Ms. Lane for letting 2nd and 3rd grade be included again. There are no more STEM lunches planned for this year, but next year again for sure.
2. Tiffany Rowan and Jesse Gordon for organizing another fun and successful Bingo Night as well as the Fifth grade transition

- committee for providing food for the hungry Bingo players. There were no prizes left at the end.
3. Jennifer Lavorel for publishing the information packed PTA Patter. There is one more issue expected to come out in the spring.
 4. Fourth grade families for contributing to the potluck breakfast for teachers and staff in December and third grade families for providing delicious soups and salads for the teachers and staff in January. The model to have each grade provide a potluck seems to be working well. With this model it means we can plan for six throughout the year.
 5. Kari Swenson, Katie Spurlock, and Terry Fry for collecting and delivering coats to Linkages for Learning at our sister school, Viers Mill ES. A car was filled with the coats, there were so many donations, and we received a very nice thank you note from their PTA President.
 6. Caryn Solomon for keeping the lost and found organized and tidy, and for washing them all before donations were made of the unclaimed items.
 7. Liz Brown for diligently tracking our volunteer hours each month. There is another volunteer training session in the works for the spring.
 8. Tiesa James for working with Randi Vogel and the Kids Care Club to collect hats, gloves, and scarves for the students at Viers Mill ES.
 9. Chris Dixon Barone and Jamee Whitten for organizing another Trash Free Lunch today.
 10. Gianne McNeil for the beautiful 4th and 5th grade winter chorale performances.

Maureen Kramer, PTA Co-President announced the winning classes for PTA Fundraising:

1st place went to Ms. Harrington's class with 100% participation. This earned her class an extra recess and lunch with Ms. Lane.

2nd place was a 3-way tie between Ms. Patakos's, Ms. Lichatin's, and Ms. Warwick's classes with 96% participation. This earned these classes an extra recess.

Erin Harcourt, PTA Co-President provided an Assistant Principal Update. Unfortunately there is not much of an update in that regard other than that our boss's boss will be new next year: Joshua Starr resigned today. We have copied Starr's chief of staff throughout, but we had hoped we had Starr's attention for Westbrook. We will just have to wait and see what the Board of Education does with the budget, and what happens on the state level. Our strategy for advocacy for the Assistant Principal will probably have to come at the state level. We will focus on an email campaign to the state level, government officials, BOE, and county council.

Maureen Kramer, PTA Co-President, emphasized that everyone needs to follow posted signs when driving/parking at Westbrook during arrival and dismissal! She asks that people especially make note of the signs that say "No Parking" or "Do Not Enter," or when parking in front of a hydrant or in front of someone's driveway. Maureen said she is hoping to get approval to move the "Do Not Enter" sign to the corner of Allan and Baltimore.

Kathleen McDermott asked the bus drivers be notified that they need to drive more slowly on the hills of Baltimore Avenue. Ms. Lane encouraged her to contact transportation directly for more of an impact.

Principal's Update

Ms. Lane wanted all parents to be reminded PARCC testing is coming up. She encouraged everyone to check out the website she shared on the listserv, because it is going to be a different type of test. She said she is pleased because it is more of a window test. There is a schedule you can look at, and please try to not schedule doctor's appointments on those days. There are make-up days, but it is easiest not to have to schedule those. Our Chromebooks were supposed to be here in January, but haven't arrived. They should be coming soon. Even if we don't have them, we have enough desktops and laptops to do the testing. Later in the spring one of our parent coffees will be dedicated to discussing how to use Chromebooks. Former Westbrook parent, and MCPS employee, Ryan McNavage will come and guide us through all of it.

Ms. Lane thanked all who consistently notify the front office that the front door is not fully closing. MCPS came out again and repaired it. Just hours later it was not closing again. They came again and did something different. But it seems to just be a band-aid on the door. Our next step is to change our visitor management system. We are pushing it to become the front office door. We have to change cameras and computer set up to make that happen. Door seems to only be fixed for a short period of time. Interior doors beyond the vestibule will continue to be locked during the school day.

Make sure you say thank you to Ms. Vogel, aka Ms. Pickle, this week – Counseling Week. Next parent coffee will be coffee with Ms. Pickle on Thursday, February 19.

Ms. Lane announced we are still trying to get dates for our Kindergarten Orientation. Projection for class sizes are similar to this year. If the way they allocate class sizes hasn't changed, we should still have roughly the same number of kindergarten classes next year.

Beth Marans had a question for Ms. Lane about the PARCC testing: Will scores be shared like they were for MSAs? Ms. Lane responded that that is the intention, but they haven't come out with details yet or shown us what the report will look like. She emphasized that you do get the information on where your child falls, but it has nothing to do with grading.

Teacher Liaison's Report: Natalie Atkinson

K – 100th day is coming up this week, during which students will share their 100 day project. Students are studying Geometry in math, writing personal narratives in Writer's Workshop, retelling stories in reading. Students are also learning about native Maryland plants, so they are going out into the schoolyard to look for them. Kindergarten teachers would love to get name plates for the plants because it is part of our curriculum. Cathy Stocker said they intentionally planned the courtyard to have more Maryland native plants. Career Day most likely coming at the end of February, date TBT.

1 – The new year is off to a strong start with their country research project. Students are getting ready for their World Fair convention in a few weeks.

2 – Researching and writing about different forms of technology. In Math students are working on measurement. In Science they are studying phases of the moon.

3 – Just finished their Wax Museum, which was fun to share with parents and classes last Friday. Working on finding fractions on the number line in Math, and reading Historical Fiction stories in Reading. Students are looking forward to the arrival of their Chromebooks.

4 – No report to share.

5 – Trout has arrived for AquaEagles. Classes are working hard with Gianne for the 5th grade Musical (“Guys and Dolls”).

Committee Reports

Carnival – Beth Marans

This year’s Carnival theme is “Wild Wild Westbrook.” Yee haw! Carnival is scheduled for Friday, May 1, and plans are well on their way. The t-shirt contest is currently taking place. And we are ready to start emailing and soliciting for volunteers. We will be sure to get the message out that this is an “all hands on deck” event. This is the Westbrook time to get involved.

Jump Rope For Heart – Kathleen McDermott

Checked online tonight and we have raised just over \$7000 at this point. Ms. Thai has been working with the teachers on a new incentive: For each individual class that has 80% participation, Ms. Thai will throw a whipped cream pie in the face of that teacher in the dining room. Please note there is a place on the form where you can opt out of the prizes. But also realize they do work for the kids’ motivation. The actual event will take place on February 18, during Wellness Week.

Talent Show – Orly Isaacson

This year's Talent Show is scheduled for Thursday, February 26, 6 pm, at Westland. There are 55 acts. Pizza will be served, as well as baked goods. We are currently trying to streamline the audio into a single playlist. Thanks to Jesse Gordon for coordinating that. Discussion to limit where food can be eaten to avoid the mess as well as noise distraction while parents are passing food to their children.

While discussing hosting events and eating at Westland, Maureen Kramer, PTA Co-President, noted that International and Multicultural Night has been changed from Friday, March 13, to Sunday, March 15. 5-7 pm.

Cluster Update – Dana Rice

The Cluster reps are preparing testimony for the upcoming budget hearings. Our cluster will testify at the Board of Education and the County Council hearings, primarily focusing on funding for the addition at BCC High School and the construction of the new middle school for our cluster. Both projects are at risk of being pushed back due to budget deficits.

FOWS – Cathy Stocker

Cathy Stocker and Ms. Lane will meet with the school's contact at American Plant on Monday to set up a maintenance and upkeep schedule. Also going to discuss some other possible projects (ie Butterfly Garden).

We have Count Me In Parties pending, some confirmed, starting to get a schedule put together. Tickets will start to go on sale February 16. Have not locked in committee for Dad's Pub Crawl or Mom's Unwined. If you know of anyone interested in being involved with those, please contact Cathy.

FOWS is going to purchase more microphones for Ms. McNeil for upcoming shows.

Spring Clean Up Day – Scheduled for May 16. On that same day there will be a dedication of a special bench in memory of Valerie Baruch. She was all about giving to the community and volunteering. There will be

simple remarks given. Terry Fry and the children will be there, and refreshments served afterward.

Aqua Eagles

Erin Harourt, PTA Co-President, read something on behalf of Leanne Graub. 150 trout eggs arrived, and hatched within a day or two of arrival. Aqua Eagle kids check on them before and after school and take good care of them. They go to the various classrooms and explain what they are doing. It is a wonderful program that has fortunately continued here at Westbrook beyond the teacher, Sandra Geddes, who started the program many years ago.

Wellness Week – Marina Bowsher

Marina Bowsher explained that Wellness Week has been moved up to February this year. We will have to see how the weather cooperates. An activity is planned for every day. Volunteer requests will be sent out. The week's plans include tastings like last year, which was a huge success, Mindfulness Assembly, Jump Rope for Heart, Ignition Fitness, and more. Additionally, there will be another healthy recipe raffle.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:49 pm.

Upcoming Westbrook Activities/Dates

February 10th – SGA Spirit Day – Decade Day

February 13th – Valentine's Day Class Parties (2-3 PM)

February 16th – President's Day – NO SCHOOL

February 17th-20th – Wellness Week

February 18th – Jump Rope for Heart

February 19th – Principal's Coffee, 9 AM (Fireplace Room)

February 25th – Potluck lunch for teachers (provided by 2nd grade families)

February 26th – Talent Show, 6-8 PM (Westland)

February 27th – Early Release Day

March 2nd – SGA Spirit Day – Book Character Day

March 3rd – PTA Meeting, 7:30 pm (Media Center)

March 15th – International and Multicultural Night, 5-7 PM (Westland)

March 18th – Principal's Coffee, 9 AM (Fireplace Room)

March 18th – California Tortilla Fundraising Night

March 25th – Potluck breakfast for teachers (provided by 1st grade families)

March 27th – NO SCHOOL

March 28th – Skate Night, 6:30-8:00 PM (Cabin John Ice Rink)

April 3rd-April 12th – Spring Break – NO SCHOOL