

Wilmette Junior High School  
PTO General Board Minutes  
September 11, 2014

\*\*DRAFT\*\*

**The meeting was called to order at 9:20a.**

**In Attendance**

Pam Roehl, Maureen Kebo, Maureen Fagan, Sanja Radouanouic, Tina Tedeschi, Dave Palzet, Julie Johnson, Sara Kurensky, Susan Gallagher, Karen Morgan Holmberg, Sally McQueen, Jaclyn Stern, Kirsten Stadheim, Jackie Pomerantz, Susan Petito, Elizabeth Ganz, Sabine Hinrichs, Sarah Rudrud, Katherine Byrnes, Natalie Kincaid, Elaine Kiner, Cecilia Clarke, Rhona DiCamillo, Mary Condon, Elaine Kliner, Nancy Hoying, Carol Anne Enright

**Approval of Minutes**

The May, 2014 General Board Minutes were approved.

**Principal's Report**

• **Parent Technology Boot Camp**

Principal Palzet shared that the plans were well underway for the inaugural Technology Boot Camp along with possible topics such as: *Setting Time Limits, Types Of Technology Available* and *Using Technology As A Tool v A Toy*. 25 diverse topics will be offered at NT West Campus on Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup> 8:30 am to noon. Participants can register for up to three sessions. Presenters will be selected from Township Staff. All K to 12 parents from NT feeder schools are invited.

• **State Representative Debate**

WJHS will co-host a candidate forum with The Wilmette League of Women Voters on the evening of October 8<sup>th</sup>. It will include local incumbent State Representative Laura Fines and challenger Kathy Myalls. The evening and the related classroom activities are designed to engage kids in the political process.

• **Ipad Deployment**

- There is an iPad technician, Ryan Pigeon, available each morning before school and via [wjhsipad@wilmette39.org](mailto:wjhsipad@wilmette39.org). If kids have technology issues they should come before school or e-mail Ryan Pigeon at the above address.
- Principal Palzet is using the kids' district e-mail addresses. He is using their school e-mails for things like birthday greetings, *Top Ten Reasons To Love WJHS* as well as other direct administration-student communication.
- Dave manages a PTO Angel Fund to help parents defray cost of iPads and other school-related items that may be beyond the family budget.

• **District Initiative Streamlining Communication**

Dave is hosting a new blog called **School Matters**. The first post was last weekend. It is a non essential but value-added communication, therefore separated from the weekly school e-mail. Three hundred parents signed up during the first week.

- **Recent and Upcoming Events:**

- 7<sup>th</sup> Curriculum Night went well
- 8<sup>th</sup> Curriculum Night will be September 18<sup>th</sup>
- September 18<sup>th</sup> is the D39 Foundation Attire To Inspire Luncheon/Fundraiser

- **The storm on Friday, September 5<sup>th</sup>**

The tremendous rain storm at dismissal time on September 5<sup>th</sup> caused the district to add a fourth storm alert system. There were many lessons learned to integrate into future storm events. The D39 Admin Council continues to address seasonal storm events and will send reminders about procedures during snow events, rain, tornado, etc. In the future, cell alerts will be considered as a complement for when e-mail is down. Additionally, the bus company will be instructed to pull over and not let kids off buses during a storm.

### **President's Report**

- Presidents' Council did not meet. There is no report.
- Volunteers are needed in the Cafeteria and Outdoor Classroom.
- Thank you to Tatiana Goldina who successfully managed (only three issues out of 900 orders) the inaugural year of school supplies. Thanks to the many volunteers who helped distribute all the supplies to the classrooms.
- Thank you to Amy Larsen for arranging Newcomers Evening.
- Thank you to Maureen Fagan for coordinating our A to Z app launch.
- Haven organization offers counseling to kids from 11 to 17 years old. There are Haven staff available in the WJHS lunchroom every week. Social workers play games with kids in the Den at lunch.

### **New Business**

- The 2014/15 PTO budget was presented and approved by the General Board. No changes from the proposed budget.
- Principal Palzet is considering enlarging and getting new equipment for the existing Fitness Center. New equipment might include ellipticals, weight stations, and treadmills to replace Run Day, especially in the winter. His goal is to evolve and ratchet up the cardio experience offered to students. He will seek funds from the D39 Foundation, District 39 and WJHS PTO.
- It was suggested that lunch activities be added that would appeal to Jr. High students. The amount of standing around at recess was a concern for some parents.
- A New Trier Referendum is on the ballot at the mid-term November election. The PTO role is to educate our constituencies. PTO members are encouraged to go to New Trier website and to take a facilities tour. Check the PTO Highlights for dates of tours and other related information.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Overall, the balance sheet is strong. The Directory Membership Drive has generated \$14,000 to date. The *Kids are Key* campaign has generated \$33,000 to date.

### **Committee Reports**

- Communications:

- WJHS parents will be validated by A to Z Directory before being added to the WJHS Facebook page.
- The new WJHS PTO website is up and running smoothly.
- Generic website addresses are being forwarded to all WJHS Board Members. They are linked to the website and will be used by next year's WJHS PTO board members for a more streamlined communication process that will transcend single school years.
- The WJHS PTO Constant Contact e-mail system is up and running.
- WJHS Weekly Highlights Newsletter: The weekly deadline is Tuesday at noon. Submissions should be sent to Sarah Rudrud. Committee heads are reminded to submit timely updates for their respective committees.
- Graduation:
  - Planning is underway for the ceremony and party.
  - 2015 Graduation will be Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Ways and Means  
The target has been achieved. \$25,000 was the budgeted target. Current funds raised are \$33,000. The WJHS website and renaming the campaign *Kids Are Key* helped increase name recognition and participation.
- Clubs:
  - Clubs registration is open on the WJHS PTO website. There are some technology-related payment processing issues with PayPal. Changing a browser can alleviate the tech glitches.
  - Diversity Alliance: Dinah Barthelmess is launching a Diversity Alliance. The Alliance will be teacher lead and guided, perhaps with another staff member. The target audience is students from diverse backgrounds.
  - Service Over Self: The SOS teacher moderators are pulling together the 2014/15 budget and plans. Principal Palzet has advised them that the PTO will pay fees above and beyond club fees.
- Enrichment:
  - Currently, the team is working on developing field trips and Service Over Self at the programming and budget levels.
  - The Early Dismissal Day, October 31st: Programing will revolve around an anti-bullying, teasing and cruelty theme. The Seventh Graders will focus on social media bullying.
- Environmental Awareness  
The new water bottle filling stations are well utilized by students. The stations were retrofitted to existing drinking fountains and installed over the summer. WJHS logoed water bottles are being sold for \$7.00 that fit the new water bottle stations.
- FAN:  
Upcoming speakers include; Jennifer Senior on September 19<sup>th</sup>, Sarah Lightfoot on September 20<sup>th</sup> and Andrew Solomon on October 23<sup>rd</sup> at NT West Campus, 7pm.
- Civics and Safety:
  - Committee members, along with Officer Julie Paresi, are monitoring the front of school in an ongoing effort to keep kids safe at drop off time.

- New rules and signage are being considered with regard to the houses next to the school. The goal is to eliminate cars stopping either to let out students or to park during drop off and pick up at these locations just before the drop off circle. If parents wish to drop their students before they reach the drop off circle they should do so at the end of the block, long before the drop off circle.
- The committee is developing a plan to enlarge the bike rack space and add new bike racks. The new racks will be installed over summer break 2015.
- October 8<sup>th</sup> is Bike to School Day.
- There will be major construction on Locust Road next year. There will be village hearings on this matter for community members to attend and voice concerns about how it will impact the students.
- Students can be dropped off in the teacher lot to alleviate traffic in the drop off circle.
- There are neon safety vests available for parent Civics & Safety volunteers.
- Hospitality:
  - Tasty, healthy food has been ordered for the Teacher's Luncheon next week.
  - Coffee was provided for the Back To School Coffee.
  - Will do a SUG for food to be donated at Parent-Teacher Conferences.
- School Spirit Wear  
The order deadline is next Friday.
- Yearbook  
On-line ordering is up and running. An up to date order list will be posted in the lunchroom later in the school year for students to check if they've ordered yearbooks.
- D39 Educational Foundation:
  - Tickets are available for Foundation Bingo Night at Masonic Lodge on October 10<sup>th</sup>.
  - Science Olympiad registration will start in October.

**The meeting was adjourned at 10:37 am.**

***Upcoming Dates***

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Curriculum Night- September 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm

Combined WJHS/HMS PTO Meeting- November 12 at 7:00 PM

TOPIC: Good Mental Health for Families by Karen Cassiday, Ph.D

LOCATION: WJHS Auditorium

Combined WJHS/HMS PTO Meeting- February 11 at 9:15 AM

TOPIC: New State PARCC Test updated by Dr. Palzet

LOCATION: HMS Auditorium

Incoming/Outgoing General Board Meeting- May 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:15 AM