

# Whitehills School Association Meeting Minutes

October 10, 2017 • 6:00pm



1. Call to order with welcome and introductions
2. Agenda and September minutes approved
3. Principal's report
  - a. Mrs. Volovsek and Ms. Wagner, in conjunction with the WSA, did an awesome job of facilitating Walk to School Day. It went off without a hitch, although Mr. Johnson was not able to attend because of a mandatory training.
  - b. Last month there was discussion of purchasing orange cones to mitigate traffic issues in drop-off area. School was able to obtain 20 cones with funding from Safe Routes to School grant.
    - i. Cones have been out for two days now; a lot of cars are coming from a lot of directions, so there should only be one line in the drop-off loop. The cones prevent people from cutting across the loop.
    - ii. Aside from one father who has been able to help some days, there are no volunteers to help with the drop off and pick-up; we would like to get a new sign or a couple signs that are larger than the existing ones to help with traffic flow.
    - iii. It would be nice to have a video and maybe a handout to help explain how drop-off should go.
      1. This may be a long term goal but will be nice to have eventually.
    - iv. Approval voiced to purchase additional signage for the dropoff/pickup area. WSA will work with Mr. Johnson on specifics.
  - c. In response to parent questions about school start-up, a packet of FAQs has been drafted for future distribution. Mr. Johnson will discuss it in an upcoming administrative meeting to see if other schools are interested in a similar document or if Whitehills should proceed independently.
  - d. Halloween party/parade plans:
    - i. East Lansing High School Band will be coming at 11:00am to perform for the kids.
    - ii. Parade will be at 3:00pm on October 31; information will go home this week. Parents will get to see the kids out by the playground; the rain backup will be to have the parade go through the gym.
  - e. Lunch Monitors in the hallway
    - i. Amy Zaagman brought up concern about the older kids being held in line outside until everyone is quiet and it's been a challenge, especially right after recess and almost at 1:00pm when they're very hungry.
      1. Mr. Johnson said that he is not there every day, but he can look into it further. He is not aware of kids waiting outside to get in to the lunchroom, but will ask to see if procedures are different on days he is not there.
      2. It was suggested that if the teachers were made aware of this issue they can also address it when talking to their classes about

expectations for line-up behavior, so Mrs. Volovsek said she could bring it up to the teachers.

4. Teachers' report(s) and activities

- a. Congratulations to Mrs. Brenner, Ms. Desilets, Ms. Foley, and the fourth grade Hurricane Helpers program for raising \$486 for hurricane relief!
  - i. They used upcycled items to make their collection containers in science class and integrated the project into other lessons as well.
  - ii. It was cool to see the kids come up with this idea and run with it, and raise a great deal of money for a great cause at the same time!
- b. Mrs. Pike has asked for additional funding for very simple costumes for the Lower Elementary Winter Musical. Can we approve an additional \$100?
  - i. The additional funds were verbally approved.
  - ii. She is also looking for: An artificial pine tree (pretty big, 5-6 ft. tall), lights for the tree, garland/nonbreakable wintery decorations for tree (e.g., snowflakes, icicles, silver balls), and people to help make simple backdrops for the show
    1. If you have these items at home that you can spare, your donations/loans will be welcome!
  - iii. Tabitha Zimny and Amy Sayers are helping with simple costumes for the kids for these performances.
- c. Mrs. Volovsek announcement about Family Fit Night
  - i. There will be at least two (possibly more) Family Fit Nights! The first will be from 6:00-7:00pm on October 24 for grades K-2. It will include demonstrations of the games and skills they have been learning in PE class.
    1. A second Family Fit Night will be held for older grades later in the year.
      - a. If anyone has any suggestions for older-kid-oriented children's activities for the next evening, please email Mrs. V.
  - ii. She is trying to get more family and community involvement by doing events like Family Fit Nights where families can have healthy fun together.
  - iii. Jamie Letts, a Whitehills father, is a professional disc golfer and donated two disc golf baskets and some discs to the school. He is coming to the school to teach grades 3-5 how to play disc golf during their PE time.
  - iv. Fuel Up to Play 60
    1. She is looking into applying for a Fuel Up to Play 60 grant and has two student volunteers to help out.
    2. This is a program created by the NFL Play 60 program and the National Dairy Council that encourage kids to be active. There are requirements for the grant, and Mrs. V will work with her student committee to make realistic plans for what can be implemented at Whitehills.
      - a. One project could be to re-think indoor recess so kids can still be active and get exercise. Another idea would be to encourage kids to choose healthy snacks for school. A third

would be to work on ways to encourage more movement in the classroom every day.

5. School Board representative report – Hillary Henderson
  - a. The board has been focusing a lot on the school bond in recent meetings.
    - i. The decision on the next school to be constructed (after Red Cedar, Glencairn, and Donley, the schools already on the timeline) should be made in February 2018. Red Cedar is being addressed first so it can serve as a swing school while others are under construction.
    - ii. They don't want student to have to move twice, so that is a deciding factor in choosing what schools are being constructed first.
  - b. The district has done a bus audit and there will be some changes implemented soon, chiefly at the secondary level.
  - c. 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading law
    - i. The new district curriculum director, Glenn Mitcham, presented on the law at the board meeting last night; you can watch the presentation online for more information: <http://www.nfhsnetwork.com/events/east-lansing-high-school-east-lansing-mi/6dfcea5105>
  - d. There is an opening on the board of education due to the resignation of Yasmina Bouraoui. Applications to fill the vacancy will be accepted through October 24; a new board member will be appointed in November.
6. Officers' reports
  - a. President Joy Campbell
    - i. We are now offering free child care during WSA meetings in the hope of encouraging more parents to become involved.
  - b. Vice President Jen Gorchow
    - i. No report
  - c. Treasurer Jeff Hicks
    - i. Current balance is \$17,285
    - ii. WSA paid for Wharton Center tickets this year, invoice was \$1800.
      1. We were told for the past two years that tickets were covered by an anonymous donor, but it appears that they were being paid for in error via an endowment at the Wharton Center that was supposed to be covering tickets only for children who receive free/reduced lunch. The error was discovered when a new person started the job at the Wharton Center. We did receive the invoice for this year and have paid it.
  - d. Secretary Elizabeth Ivkovich
    - i. PawPalooza report discussed below.
7. Recent WSA events
  - a. Curriculum Night & Ice Cream Social, Thursday, September 14
    - i. Thank you to volunteers who helped serve treats, sell Spirit Wear, and staff information tables!
    - ii. The Science Club table was a nice addition.

- iii. Feedback to consider for next year? (The ice cream social portion was put on by the WSA and the curriculum portion was the staff – feedback welcome on either part.)
  - a. Amy Sayers asked what the expectation was on the teachers for the layout of the evening.
    - i. Mr. Johnson said that the idea was to move toward an open house style, where teachers and parents can talk and ask questions but the feeling would be warm and welcoming, with less of a rigid lecture-type structure.
    - ii. A suggestion was made to consider having specific activities to involve the students (e.g., show parents their desk, locker, classroom areas) to keep them focused while teacher might be chatting with other parents. Would also keep things quieter in the halls!
    - iii. Another suggestion would be to consider sending the curriculum/handouts home ahead of time so parents could have the information and be able to prepare questions.
- b. Science Club, Friday, September 15
  - i. Great attendance (almost 30 kids). Science Club did heat experiments and had the highest attendance yet!
  - ii. October topic is soap/dirt. It will be a week earlier than normal because there is no school next Friday. Pack grubby clothes because it might be messy!
- c. Marco's Pizza Night, Thursday, September 21
  - i. Made \$46; only 17 orders came in last month so we are going to make sure that next month parents mention that they are placing an order for Whitehills and having the order go to a specific teacher.
  - ii. Next one is on the half day next week – don't forget!
- d. Walk to School Day, Wednesday, October 4
  - i. Went well! Hundreds of Wolves—regular walkers and not—celebrated National Walk to School Day (joining 5,217 other schools nationwide, 317 of them in Michigan).
  - ii. Students gathered at seven designated spots throughout the Whitehills catchment area, including a drop-off spot for kids who usually ride the bus or get dropped off.
  - iii. All students did a neighborhood parade with their teachers and classmates at the 8:40 bell. Superintendent Dori Leyko and former principal Andy Wells greeted students as they returned to the building.
  - iv. Walking School Bus continues every Wednesday
    - a. We will seek clarification that this will continue through the winter. Current understanding is that it does, unless the yellow caution sign figure is not on the corner.
    - b. Additional walking ropes were verbally approved if Ms. Wagner needs WSA funding to purchase them. Current rope is at capacity with kids!
- a. Popcorn Friday, October 6
  - i. Thank you to volunteers! Children continue to look forward to this!

8. Upcoming WSA volunteer opportunities
  - a. T-Shirt Tuesday, October 17
    - i. We need one or two parents to help Joy with set-up and sales, set-up 11:45am, sales scheduled until 1:00pm but main rush is over by 12:30pm.
      - i. Jeff Hicks volunteered to help.
  - b. Teacher Appreciation Lunches, Tuesday and Thursday, October 17 and 19
    - i. Sign Up Genius is posted on website, a few needs remain, especially on Thursday.
  - c. STEM Festival, Thursday, November 9
    - i. Labs and other groups from MSU and the community come to do hands-on demos for science, math, engineering, and more.
    - ii. Sign Up Genius is posted on website for a handful of volunteers.
  - d. "Winter Wonderland" Scholastic Book Fair, Monday-Friday, December 4-8
    - i. New co-chairs are Zaje Harrell and Erica Dziedzic!
    - ii. Sign Up Genius is posted on website (includes Winter Musical help).

9. Other leadership and volunteer opportunities

- a. PawPalooza
  - a. Elizabeth spoke to the teachers at their staff meeting today to ask for their assistance in choosing their class basket themes this year. Having the students brainstorm their own themes will help get them excited about the PawPalooza and auction.
  - b. Mrs. Ruttman has agreed to help with class art projects again; it will be garden rocks again this year because we have left over rocks from last year's donation.
  - c. Seeking people to assist with collecting donations for Silent Auction.
    - i. Mia Gougeon-Adarkwa has volunteered to help event chair Elizabeth Ivkovich. Still seeking more people!
  - d. Future needs will include donations for class themed baskets and help the night of the event. Class basket themes will be announced the week of October 30.

10. Upcoming events (**bold = need volunteers!**)

- Wed. 10/11 - Walking School Bus
- **Fri. 10/13 - Science Club, 3:35-5:30pm**
- Tues. 10/17 - Half Day, dismissal 12:10pm
- **Tues. 10/17 - T-Shirt Tuesday, 12:00-1:00pm**
- **Tues. 10/17 - Teacher Appreciation Lunch**
- Wed. 10/18 - Walking School Bus
- Thurs. 10/19 - Box Tops fall deadline
- Thurs. 10/19 - Half Day, dismissal 12:10pm
- **Thurs. 10/19 - Teacher Appreciation Lunch**
- Thurs. 10/19 - Marco's Pizza Night
- Fri. 10/20 - No school
- Wed. 10/25 - Walking School Bus
- Fri. 11/3 - Popcorn Friday

- **Thurs. 11/9 – STEM Festival, 6:00-7:30pm**
- Tues. 11/14 - WSA meeting, 6:00pm

11. Adjournment

In attendance:

Joy Campbell

Jen Gorchow

Paul Donahue

Amy Sayers

Mia Gougeon-Adarkwa

Jeff Hicks

Shane Johnson

Trisha Donahue

Amy Zaagman

Hillary Henderson

Elizabeth Ivkovich

Marie Volovsek

Lorely Polanco-Alimonos

Angie Smith