

Whitehills School Association Meeting Minutes
March 13, 2018 • 6:00pm



1. Call to order with welcome and introductions, circulate sign-in sheet
2. Approval of agenda, approval of previous month's minutes
 - a. Minutes approved
3. Principal report and questions
 - a. \$4,843 was raised for the American Heart Association through the Jump Rope for Heart program.
 - b. The district is getting bids for secure entry points installed at the entrances to the schools.
 - i. This will take an adjustment and will require a bit of a culture shift, but it will be a good thing.
 - ii. Coni will buzz everyone in after visual confirmation using a camera system.
 - c. Question from parent: Do kids have lockdown drills here at school?
 - i. They have three each year; two have already been done and they practice different protocols (internal threats, external threats, and shelter in place).
 - d. Third grade teacher Mr. Grady, school counselor Mr. Anderson, and Mr. Johnson all attended a restorative justice training recently. The training allowed them to learn more about solving conflicts with and between students. In a restorative justice program, everyone gets to have a say instead of employing a punitive approach. This method will be tried as an alternative to simply suspending children from school.
 - e. Mr. Johnson also recently attended a conference on Pursuing Educational Justice
 - i. Speakers included Dr. David Kirkland, Executive Director the NYU Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and The Transformation of Schools, and Dr. Terah Chambers, ELPS Board Trustee and professor at MSU.
 - ii. Aspects of the conference included having an awareness of biases and trying to continue to break down walls. Embrace the World was an event that embodied these concepts.
 - f. March is Reading Month
 - i. Author Paleo Joe is coming March 16.
 - ii. Dancers from the Quin School of Irish Dance will also be coming March 16.
 - iii. Kids are turning in their reading logs.
 1. Three student names from each classroom each week are drawn to win a book and the kids have been very excited.
 2. Every Monday kids all go in the hallway for DEAR and read for 15-20 minutes; the students get to pick what they want to read and there is no talking – they're totally engrossed in their books. Even specials teachers come out and read.
 - g. Is there any final decision on the "Let Me Run" program for 4-5th grade boys?

- i. If we don't have our own team this year, Marble and Donley have teams and have offered to open them to boys from the other elementary schools. The season begins March 20 and culminates May 18 with a 5K.
 - 1. There were not any volunteers to lead this group, so students will have to go to other schools that have offered to have Whitehills kids come and participate. The WSA will share this information.
 - ii. Donley will be practicing Tuesday/Friday from 3:45-5:15.
 - iii. Marble will be practicing Tuesday/Thursday from 3:45-5:15.
 - h. Was Katie Pike able to answer why there is a Girls on the Run lottery or where the fees go?
 - i. The national organization does a lottery system because it allows girls to sign up but maintain the required coach-to-student ratios by limiting the team size.
 - ii. The Whitehills group did have too many girls show interest after the deadline and because the ratios were capped already, they had to either create a second team (which we didn't have enough volunteers for) or have those girls join teams at other schools.
 - iii. The national organization sets the restrictions about ratios, so local (Whitehills) coaches have no control over making it possible for more girls to join. There were volunteers after the fact, but that was after the full day of coach training, so those volunteers couldn't be full coaches this year. A few girls who didn't get lottery spots on the Whitehills team went to the Donley team.
 - 1. By central GOTR rules, a team has to have a minimum of 10 girls, and a maximum of 20 girls.
 - 2. An idea for next year would be to have two teams with fully trained coaches, one team meeting Mondays and Wednesdays, and the other on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We would just need to have a lot more volunteers.
 - iv. GOTR is a nonprofit so the fee covers curriculum, shoe coupons, 5K entry, and t-shirts, paid GOTR staff (none of our volunteers), and girls who need scholarships to be able to participate.
4. Teachers' report(s) and activities
 - a. Reading Month is in full swing! Refer to handouts from teachers for more details about the Readmojis theme, DEAR days, and special visitors this month.
 - b. Go to Menchie's Art Gala Night for your child's grade level and support the Art Room!
 - i. K and 1st grade is this evening.
 - ii. Menchie's has been such an amazing support to Whitehills, and Mrs. Ruttman receives money for the Art Room so it's a great program.
 - c. Discussion of 5th grade field trip – school buses vs. charter buses
 - i. In the past, Whitehills has used school buses; Marble uses money from their Parent Council in conjunction with money earned from a movie night. At this point, Ms. Beasley said that that they are going to stick with a school bus for this year.

5. School Board representative report and questions
 - a. School board member unable to attend in person, but Hillary Henderson was available by text.
 - b. New Whitehills building will be constructed in 2019-20, with student body moving to the old Donley building for the swing year.
 - c. In response to a parent question, Joy texted and asked when we will find out when the school year is starting.
 - i. Hillary said that they don't have that information yet and she wasn't able to give a date when the school start date would be announced.

6. Officers' reports
 - a. President Joy Campbell
 - i. Lifetouch determined that a call for public photos couldn't be made because there weren't enough personnel to sort them.
 - ii. Next year Lifetouch will contact the WSA earlier if a school staff member isn't in charge of the yearbook so we can seek volunteers and manage an art contest.
 - iii. Are we required to use Lifetouch? Have we always used Lifetouch?
 1. Hillary will look into this and see if we are committed to using Lifetouch.
 - b. Vice President Jen Gorchow
 - i. No report.
 - c. Treasurer Jeff Hicks
 - i. Current balance of account: \$22,350.
 - d. Secretary Elizabeth Ivkovich
 - i. Thoughts on trying to get more volunteers by requiring parents to volunteer for a minimum amount of time for their children to participate in certain events – just a thought to try to solve the volunteer dilemma.
 1. A lot of other schools and teams do this so that they don't have to struggle to find enough volunteers.
 - a. Discussion that this co-op style may work better at private institutions. Many parents don't have flexibility to volunteer due to job schedules, family responsibilities, sports teams, other volunteer work, etc.
 2. Discussion of the need for more communication with incoming families. New parents don't know a lot that is going on, and need to be better informed so they feel more invested. New families don't always know what different events are and there might be confusion. Teachers have different styles and forms of communication and don't always share school-wide or WSA events and deadlines.
 3. One idea would be to identify parents (e.g., at the Ice Cream Social) who are willing to talk about the different activities and grade-specific activities. Volunteers could wear name tags with the grades of their children listed, or just a simple "welcome" button, so parents with a child just starting that grade could feel free to talk to them.

4. Joy and Gretchen Neisler will work on starting a conversation on how to include more parents in communication with incoming families at the district and school levels.
7. Recent WSA events
 - a. Embrace the World (February 22, 6:00-8:00pm)
 - i. Embrace the World went well! About 250 people attended, with students and their families visiting almost 20 tables representing countries, cultures, and causes from all over the world and right in Michigan.
 - ii. Thank you to all the table hosts and volunteers!
 - b. PawPalooza Dance & Silent Auction
 - i. Decide on date – Fall 2018 vs. Winter 2019
 1. We will look into mid-October as a possibility; there are conferences in October that we will have to plan around.
 - ii. Each grade level (and specials as a 3-teacher bloc) will receive \$700 to spend on something special (equipment, guest speaker, field trip, etc.). This will be given to the school as a lump sum check.
 8. Upcoming WSA events and volunteer opportunities
 - a. You can now see all upcoming Sign Up Genius lists via one web page instead of having to open lists individually. This is possible because we upgraded to a paid version of Sign Up Genius. This version also allows us to remove ads from up to five sign-ups at a time.
 - b. Teacher appreciation luncheons this week and next – just a few spots remain on the Sign Up Genius.
 - c. Science Fair
 - i. All students K-5 are welcome to participate. Students can work alone or with a partner.
 - i. Deadline to sign up students for a project is March 16. Science Club on March 16 will be for brainstorming and troubleshooting, so you can leave it to the last minute!
 - ii. Thank you to co-chairs Kyle Enger and Pete White.
 - d. Mileage Club monitors
 - i. Program dates are April 9 through May 25, 2:15-3:00pm each day.
 - ii. Sign Up Genius is posted.
 - e. “Paws for Books” BOGO Book Fair (April 16-20)
 - i. Sign Up Genius is posted.
 - ii. Wednesday of Book Fair week will be 3-5th grade Spring Music Showcase.
 - i. The showcase comes up so fast after spring break, so Mrs. Pike wonders if we could move the week a little farther from Spring Break, Mrs. Pike will continue to do the showcase at the same time as the book fair. If it will be right after spring break, the Showcase will likely be a different week later in the spring so they can be more prepared.
 - ii. This means that the week of Book Fair needs to be looked at, along with the other spring events like Carnival.
 - f. Carnival (May 18)
 - i. Lynsey needs to move from May 4 to another date. Her preference would be Friday, May 18, with June 1 also being a possibility. (Not May 11

because Mother's Day weekend, not May 25 because Memorial Day weekend.) Thoughts? School is also going later this year.

- i. Need to change date on raffle application.
- ii. She is seeking ideas for new games and activities and plans to put out a survey (or people can just contact her with ideas). She is especially looking for someone to help her create a Tunnel of Terror.

9. Any other business?

- a. Angie Smith asked if we could get a new Little Free Library cabinet to hold books outside since the one we have is falling apart.
 - i. We agreed that was a good idea and it should probably be plastic.
 - ii. Angie is going to get a couple options and will bring them to next month's meeting.
- b. Bricks for walkway
 - i. Angie said she will head up this mini-fundraiser again this year.
 - ii. Bricks will be preserved in the construction phase.

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

- Tues. 3/13 - Menchie's Art Gala Night (K & 1st gr.)
- Wed. 3/14 - HALF DAY (conferences)
- **Wed. 3/14 - Teacher Appreciation Lunch**
- Thurs. 3/15 - Reading Month: Team up with Reading Day (wear your favorite team gear)
- Thurs. 3/15 - Marco's Pizza Night
- Fri. 3/16 - Celebrate St. Patrick's Day (wear green) & Quinn School of Irish Dance Performance
- Fri. 3/16 - Reading Month: Paleo Joe Author Visit
- Fri. 3/16 - Deadline to register for Science Fair
- **Fri. 3/16 - Science Club**
- Tues. 3/20 - HALF DAY (conferences)
- **Tues. 3/20 - Teacher Appreciation Lunch**
- Tues. 3/20 - Menchie's Art Gala Night (2nd & 3rd gr.)
- Wed. 3/21 - Kindergarten Parent Information Night, 6:00-7:00pm at MacDonald Middle School
- Thurs. 3/22 - Reading Month: Readmoji Day (wear your emoji gear)
- Thurs. 3/22 - HALF DAY (conferences)
- Fri. 3/23 - Deadline to order yearbook
- Fri. 3/23 - NO SCHOOL
- Tues. 3/27 - Menchie's Art Gala Night (4th & 5th gr.)
- **Wed. 3/28 - Science Fair**
- Thurs. 3/29 - Reading Month: Book Character Day
- Fri. 3/30 - NO SCHOOL (first day of spring break)

11. Adjournment

In attendance:

Joy Campbell	Shane Johnson
Trisha Donahue	Gretchen Neisler
Paul Donahue	Mark Neisler
Jen Gorchow	Katie Pike
Jeff Hicks	Angie Smith
Elizabeth Ivkovich	