

## **Whitehills School Association Meeting Minutes**

February 19, 2019 • 6:00pm  
(rescheduled from snow day February 12)



1. Call to order with welcome and introductions, circulate sign-in sheet
2. Approval of agenda, approval of previous month's minutes
  - a. Agenda approved and previous month's minutes approved.
3. Principal report and opportunity for questions
  - a. Rodney Page presentation update from Shane. He came for a Black History Month presentation funded by an ELEF grant.
  - b. Testing window for winter was completed and Shane and the testing team will be evaluating data soon.
  - c. Mrs. Brenner's class did their "Hello Hospital" field trip and visit went well. Purpose is to familiarize children with the hospital to mitigate anxiety if they find themselves needing to visit.
  - d. Late start days
    - i. Via the DPC, we've learned that B & A will provide breakfast for its currently enrolled morning kids during the 2 spring late start days
    - ii. The district will also provide "Grab & Go" breakfast for all K-12 students on these days. They acknowledge not all students are getting food so they will have something for everyone.
    - iii. Is any WSA assistance needed for packaging or distributing food?
      1. No. Shane says food will be distributed in classrooms the day before the late start days.
  - e. As the snow days accumulated, some parents discussed concerns:
    - i. Students who rely on free or reduced-price school breakfast and lunch (sounds like this is being addressed)
    - ii. Families who might not have flexibility to work from home or take extra days off who might struggle to pay for so much unexpected child care.
    - iii. Is there anything the WSA and/or Jan's Closet could do to set up a plan to assist with this in the future?
      1. General suggestion that Jan's Closet information be included in WSA welcome letter at beginning of next year.
  - f. Is anyone aware of any district-level plans for additional child care in the event of snow days? Cat Schwarz (a DPC parent) volunteered to put together a list of resources, so Joy will pass on any information we gather here.
    - i. Some districts provide emergency snow day child care (for a fee) with their B&A staff.
      1. Okemos – Offers child care through Edgewood Early Childhood Center
      2. Williamston
        - a. Offers child care through Kids' Corner, their district B&A care. They call in extra staff as needed for snow day coverage.

- b. Parents must have completed an enrollment packet (can be on intermittent care list), so it's not on a completely walk-in basis.
    - c. Can pay for half day or full day
  - g. Brainstorming for possible end-of-year event like a BBQ as a "goodbye" to the school?
    - i. Joy suggested inviting alumni, as we did for time capsule opening.
    - ii. Possibly an evening event.
4. Teachers' report(s) and opportunity for questions
- a. Only a few teachers have used their full \$200 classroom grant so far. Remember those funds are available for classroom needs at teachers' discretion – supplies, snacks, books, etc.
5. District Parent Council report and opportunity for questions
- a. Angela Michael provided these updates from the January and February meetings:
    - i. Members of the Academic & Technology Committee attended in January. Lots of discussion, the following being most pertinent to K-5:
    - ii. An after-school language program was piloted at Pinecrest and filled up quickly (plus 20 students on a wait list) so it's a success.
    - iii. Glenn Mitchum talked about two ongoing K-5 science committee pilot projects. This committee is in charge of changing the existing curriculum to fit the changed state standards.
    - iv. K-12 new science standards have been implemented.
    - v. Math mentor program (select high school students go to the elementary schools to assist younger students with math) is expanding to all elementary schools next year (currently at Whitehills and Pinecrest).
    - vi. Christian Palasty talked about upgrade on security in elementary schools and repurposing the newer technology from the old elementary buildings into the new buildings.
    - vii. Kath Edsall attended the February meeting to report from the Finance Committee. Overall, the district's budget is healthy. Many more details are available in the DPC minutes, but a few highlights include:
      - 1. It is recommended that a district have 10-15% of its operating budget in savings. ELPS has 13% of its budget set aside.
      - 2. ELPS had 5 fewer Schools of Choice students than initially anticipated.
      - 3. ELPS saw a decrease in property taxes
      - 4. District has \$467,786 more dollars going into fund balance than projected last year, which is good.
      - 5. There's a lot going on with the sinking fund money, particularly repairing some expensive plumbing issues at the high school (this was anticipated, though, so the money is there to take care of it).
      - 6. District is working on a 5-7 year contract with B & A (current contract was very short because of unknowns regarding the EL income tax vote).

- a. Discussion on whether snow day care has been discussed in this contract negotiation. Joy will email Kath Edsall to ask.
  - b. Parent asked about minutes from the DPC meetings. Joy will follow up with Angela Michael to ask about bringing minutes page up to date.
- 6. Officers' reports, announcements, and opportunity for questions
  - a. President Joy Campbell
    - i. We've added a page on the website with committee chairs' names for those seeking to learn more about a particular initiative. Go to "About and Contact," then "Committee Contacts."
    - ii. The "Let Me Run" program hopes to have a team at each school this year. This program is like Girls on the Run, but for boys in grades 4 and 5.
      - 1. They are seeking a coach and assistant coaches.
      - 2. If no Whitehills coaches are found, coaches at Pinecrest and Donley have offered to have Whitehills boys join those teams.
    - iii. The Marble Equity Team is hosting its first workshop in the Marble cafeteria on May 1 from 6:30-8:30pm.
      - 1. Participants will be exposed to issues of diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice, and will engage with facilitators re: social justice concepts and educational best practices to help move our district toward cultural proficiency and authentic, just change.
      - 2. All ELPS administration, teachers, trustees, and parent council representatives are welcome. Learn more and RSVP here:  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/increasing-our-appetites-for-social-justice-registration-56382312013>
  - b. Vice President Jen Gorchow
  - c. Treasurer Jeff Hicks
    - i. Current balance of accounts, outstanding/upcoming bills
    - ii. WSA's account balance: \$23,652.84
    - iii. Jan's Closet account balance: \$4,345
  - d. Secretary Lorely Polanco
- 7. Updates on bond, construction, and transition to Donley building
  - a. Any updates from members of building committee?
    - i. Shane has attended several meetings that discussed architecture, furniture, decorations, etc. as well as parking flow, schedule for playground, and other topics.
  - b. Any new questions to bring to building committee?
    - i. Has the district considered installing "sensory walkways"? These are sets of durable floor stickers that allow students to get short movement breaks throughout the day. They do activities such as jumping, bending, and turning by following the walkway during lunch time, indoor recess, or for movement breaks during class periods. Sets range from single activities (~\$150 at one site) to full-hallway sets with 10 activities (\$2,000).  
Reference: <https://fitandfunplayscapes.com/product-category/stick-on-stencils/>

1. Shane agreed to ask about this, not having heard any prior discussion about such walkways. He didn't seem optimistic about this happening in the near future.
8. Recent WSA event recap
  - a. Science Club — Wednesday, January 23 and Friday, January 25
    - i. New sign-up policy based on parent feedback was implemented in January. Now families sign students up on a month-to-month basis, increasing access for all students and not limiting enrollment to students who may not come in a given month.
    - ii. January's topic was "cars and racetracks"; the grade 2-5 session was cancelled because of a snow day (11 of 30 spots had been filled), but the K-1 group was well attended (all 22 spots filled).
9. Upcoming WSA events and volunteer opportunities
  - a. Embrace the World (February 21, 6:30-8:00pm)
    - i. Celebration of diversity in the Whitehills community.
    - ii. Third graders will give a musical performance.
    - iii. There are 15 hosted tables and 3 activity stations.
    - iv. Seeking groups or individuals for short performances (past examples include Irish step dance and Indian classical dance)
    - v. Sign Up Genius is posted – seeking families to host tables and help with event set-up and logistics.
  - b. Science Club — Wednesday, February 27 and Friday, March 1
    - i. Sign Up Genius is posted – seeking adult volunteers
    - ii. Topic is Science Fair brainstorming and project troubleshooting
  - c. Teacher Appreciation Lunches – Tuesday, March 12 and Thursday, March 14
    - i. Sign Up Genius is posted.
  - d. Science Fair — Thursday, March 21
    - i. All students K-5 are welcome to participate. Students can work alone or with a partner.
    - ii. Deadline to sign up students for a project is March 11; form is available on Science Club and WSA websites.
    - iii. Kyle Enger is coordinating again this year.
    - iv. Sign Up Genius is posted – seeking a few adult volunteers
  - e. Mileage Club — April 8 through May 24
    - i. Registration deadline is March 4 for students to have a personalized punch card.
    - ii. Mary Lytle is coordinating this year, but would love a co-coordinator.
    - iii. Sign Up Genius is posted. MC takes place during second recess, 2:15-3:00pm each day.
    - iv. WSA sponsors the toe tokens; program is free for students.
  - f. "Dino-Mite" Scholastic Book Fair — Monday-Friday, April 29-May 3
    - i. In December, there was discussion about moving Book Fair to the week of conferences in March. After consulting with the Scholastic representative, chair Erica Dziedzic has decided to keep the current dates

for this year. If there is interest in doing Book Fair during conference week in October or March next academic year, this can be discussed further.

1. Pros for moving to conference week: more parents/guardians in building to encourage shopping; March fair would coincide with Reading Month
2. Cons for moving: families are already doing a lot of schedule shifting that month due to half days and late start day; having the book fair open on half days would require even more volunteer hours during typical workday hours; the selection in March is not as good for a BOGO fair as the selection later in the spring (per Scholastic rep); Spring Music Showcase is already scheduled to coincide with the fair (this year)
- ii. This year the book fair committee will partner with Jan's Closet to purchase books for families who have been served by Jan's Closet with the All for Books loose change program.
- iii. WSA will also support Part of the Pack students with free books from their wish lists, as it does every year.

#### 10. Jan's Closet Update

- a. Have been able to provide support for students to participate in Girls on the Run (scholarship through GOTR does not cover full cost, so picking up the difference and supplementing the Playmakers shoe allowance).
- b. Starting to work on benefits for summer camps, including music camps.

#### 11. Carnival Update

- a. Still trying to coordinate dates.

#### 12. Upcoming events (**bold = need volunteers!**)

- Tues. 2/19 - WSA meeting, 6:00pm (rescheduled)
- Thurs. 2/21 - Marco's Pizza Night
- **Thurs. 2/21 - Embrace the World**
- Wed. 2/27 - LATE START (10:45am start)
- **Wed. 2/27 - Science Club** - Grades 2-5, 3:40-5:00pm; Topic: Science Fair brainstorming
- Thurs. 2/28 - Yearbook order deadline
- **Fri. 3/1 - Science Club** - Grades K-1, 3:40-5:00pm; Topic: Science Fair brainstorming
- Mon. 3/4 - Kindergarten Parent Information Night, 6:00-7:00pm at ELHS
- Tues. 3/12 - HALF DAY (dismissal 12:10pm)
- **Tues. 3/12 - Teacher Appreciation Lunch**
- Tues. 3/12 - WSA meeting, 6:00pm
- Thurs. 3/14 - HALF DAY (dismissal 12:10pm)
- **Thurs. 3/14 - Teacher Appreciation Lunch**
- Fri. 3/15 - Popcorn Friday

#### 13. Adjournment

#### In attendance:

Joy Campbell  
Paul Donahue  
Erica Dziedzic  
Jen Gorchow

Mia Gougeon-Adarkwa  
Jeff Hicks  
Shane Johnson  
Lorely Polanco