

# Washington Elementary School PTO Meeting Minutes

December 12, 2023 6:00 - 7:00pm

## Meeting Attendees:

Melanie McFarland	Emily Moody	Sam Constance	Megan Little
Laura Krueger	Kakie McGill	Michelle Kiel	Ann Hilger
Alicia Gillespie	Gwyneth Cliver	Craig Moody	Peter Cales
Jessica Griffin	Kelsey Fischer	Callyann Casteel	Annie Grace
Michelle Craig	Taylor Borchert	Janene Bolt	Alison Sobczyk
Jessica Hunt	Emily Natal		

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Motion to approve November PTO meeting minutes passes.

III. Reports

### A. Principal's Report

1. AQuESTT (Nebraska's state reporting system) continued to classify the OPS district as "needs improvement", but Washington moved from "good" to "great" (based on NSCAS test results). This was a true team effort by all and should be celebrated! We will continue to keep striving.
  - Celebration idea - April pep rally
2. Our singing bus drivers were also recently in the news.
3. Behaviors are spiking before Winter Break, but we will continue to be consistent with expectations.

### B. Teacher & Staff Report

1. Jessica Hunt, 5th grade
  - Students are writing about westward expansion and will be going on a field trip to the Douglas County historical society.
2. Emily Natal
  - Students reached their Cool Cat goal of 10,000 to earn a Popcorn and PJ day! Mrs. Natal has also been helping with testing.
3. Ann Hilger, 4th grade
  - Students are writing narratives. They are working on fractions in math. The new social studies curriculum includes the use of graphic organizers and writing short essays, which is setting students up for success in the long run.

### C. Treasurers' Report

1. Current balance is about \$37,500
2. Expenses - gaga pit and Harvest Party
3. Field trip discussion
  - PTO currently provides grade levels with one field trip per school year but would consider doing more.
  - OPS also provides grade levels with one field trip per school year.
  - The Durham Museum was mentioned as a potential field trip idea because it is free.
  - Field trips do need to be curriculum-based.
  - Mrs. Gillespie and the teachers will assess the need for additional field trips. PTO can help fill the need if one is identified.

IV. Actions & Decisions

A.

**Spend Money Taskforce**

1. Assign responsibility for each project.

- Trees and Benches - 2 benches and 2 trees will be a 100th anniversary gift to the school. The plan is to put the benches on each side of the stairs on the east side of the building by the playground. Janene Bolt and Amy Quinn will lead this project. Craig Moody and Mrs. Gillespie will lock in locations for all the new exterior plans.
- Playground games - Amy Quinn found some stencils, and we will freehand the rest. Craig Moody and Mrs. Gillespie will work with teachers to determine the best layout. Janene Bolt will lead this project.
- Cricut machine - PTO treasurers will purchase.
- Video screen - Mrs. Gillespie will decide on the model, and PTO treasurers will purchase.
- Gaga pit - Michelle Craig is leading this project. The brackets will be here Thursday, and the gaga pit will be installed on December 22 by the Craigs and the Wards. The gaga pit will be in the field down the hill from the basketball hoop. Its weight makes it sturdy (it is not installed in the ground).
- Enrichment programs - We need to communicate to parents regarding the process of proposing/volunteering for clubs. All clubs need a purpose. Gwyneth Cliver will develop a process sheet. Volunteers should apply starting in August 2024 for next school year. Previously offered clubs included cross stitch club, board game club, craft club, chess club.
- Inflatable arch - Amy Quinn is still exploring.
- Basketball hoop - Michelle Craig is leading this project. She suggested the same in-ground model that Lifegate Church has in their parking lot but starting with a portable hoop to determine the best location on the west playground. Mrs. Natal offered a portable hoop. Sandbags could be used to hold the portable hoop down.
- Disney play - This could be classified as an enrichment program. Callyann Casteel offered to help with costumes and building. Ms. Hunt said that, from past experience, this is a massive time commitment.

B.

**Fundraising**

1. Decision on spring fundraiser

- Ideas included having 1 or 2 dinner nights or Topgolf night instead of another event. Also discussed hosting a Trivia Night or Bingo Night at the school (could be free to attend but have a raffle or silent auction to raise money). There is already a Title I Reading Bingo Night scheduled in March.
- People liked the idea of having 1 main fundraiser each school year and letting people know that in advance.
- It was suggested that students passing out fliers door to door (like we did for the 100th anniversary celebration) should have more supervision if done again in the future.
- Megan Little and Alison Sobczyk will meet with the PTO treasurers and make a final decision.

C.

**Membership & Directory**

1. Still waiting on class lists from Student Information Services

- Mrs. Gillespie suggested using student first names only for privacy concerns. It was suggested that we don't print a directory this school year since it has taken so long, but business sponsors need to be listed. We will move forward printing with first names only.

D.

**Upcoming Activities**

1. Dec 15 Family Fun Night: Roller-Skating Party (5:00-7:00pm)
2. Dec 22 - Jan 7 Winter break (school resumes Jan 8)
3. Note: no PTO meeting scheduled for January

E.

**Adjourn**