

Westlake PTA Meeting

March 19th, 2015

Board Members and Teachers Present

Clyde Curley, Principal

Jen Fritzsche, PTA President

Tim Madsen, PTA Vice President

Mel Sweet, PTA Treasurer

Anna Turner, PTA Secretary

Adrienne Cramer, Teacher

Kristen Lenz, Teacher

Jane Forbes, Life Lab Coordinator

Approximate attendance: 17 people

Meeting called to order at 6:40pm

President, Jen Fritzsche, opened the meeting and called for order.

Santa Cruz Education Foundation (EDDY) Presentation

Casey Coonerty Protti, Westlake parent and SC Education Foundation board member, was present to talk about the foundation's purpose and future cooperation with the Westlake community. One purpose of the foundation is to raise money to fund enrichment/equity programs for all SCCS campuses. One of the foundation's goals is to identify quality enrichment programs currently happening in local schools and incubate them so that they can be introduced to other sites. Some programs currently being funded via the EDDY foundation: at the high school level, the AVID program (support for first generation seniors going to college); at the middle school level, general arts programs; at the elementary level, scholarships for the annual 5th grade science trip, training for Playworks coaches, and Life Lab work for summer farmers markets. The foundation is not out to compete with what PTAs are doing in terms of fundraising and development of site-specific programs, but instead aims to bring visibility to those special programs and help gain funding from

businesses to share across school sites. The EDDY awards ceremony is coming up on 4/28 to celebrate teachers, staff, community supporters; awards are given to teachers, innovators (last year Westlake won the Green Award for Life Lab and its work with Ecology in Action). You can sign up to receive the twice-monthly EDDY newsletter and sign up for their Facebook page, as well. Casey presented a check for \$1000 to the Westlake PTA, which was accepted by President Jen Fritzsche; the purpose of these funds is to fund any outdoor science students who can't afford to go this year and in future years. The foundation wants to get more connected to schools to hear about good programs that can be helped to grow, via funding and publicity.

Review of Last Meeting's Minutes by Anna Turner

Secretary, Anna Turner, reviewed the minutes of the last PTA meeting, which was held on March 19, 2015.

*****MOTION**

Motion to approve the minutes was brought by Clyde Curley

Motion was seconded by Jane Forbes

Minutes were approved as presented unanimously.

Principal's Report

Mr. Curley reported on recent and upcoming events:

The Read to Achieve program is coming to an end on 3/23. This has been a great partnership with SC Warriors basketball team. Winners of most books read through Read to Achieve will get SC Warriors or GS Warriors tickets. Westlake will be continuing with this program in future years.

Late April will see students being tested in English/Language Arts and Math (3rd-5th graders). The test results are not tied to accountability/standards yet, but might be by next year. Students will experience 1-2 hours of testing per day.

The City of Santa Cruz sponsored an "EarthCapades" assembly on 3/18; the assembly focused on resource conservation (specifically water). There will be an additional school-wide assembly on 3/24 focusing on science, and a "family night" science assembly will take place in the evening on 3/24 (first-come first-serve, due to fire regulations).

School safety: the Cool Cat jar has been filled. The school-wide reward is an extra recess/rainbow day on 3/27. Grade levels will wear specific colors, and a school photo will be taken. A new behavioral referral system is being implemented; a

database is currently being created to help track what each student's behavioral needs are. "Minor physical contact" is the highest-frequency type of referral happening; the database is trying to track when/where/what behaviors are being noticed. This is a district-wide program; the idea is to help support teachers to know how to deal with certain behaviors. A school-wide fire drill and shelter-in-place lockdown drill will happen in April.

The last round of Walk to Read started 3/16. There have been great results so far; over 90% of 2nd, 4th and 5th graders are reading at end-of-year benchmark in March (usually this percentage is reached by June). Tim queried: are we just seeing who is/is not reaching grade level, or do we find out how far away they are from grade level at the start of the year and then where they are at this point? Kristen Lenz and Adrienne Cramer respond: it depends on the cohort sometimes. Mr. Curley responds: we can get that sort of data out of the system (SRI).

Treasurer's Report by Mel Sweet

Mel started the report by announcing that the PTA currently has \$93k in the bank. We are still receiving income from the Art Auction, and some payables are also trickling in. There are no hard numbers yet, but it looks like we'll meet the budgeted income number (hopefully more).

The Direct Appeal is currently at about 42k, with some additional donations coming in since the "Danger: Programs at Risk" thermometer posters went up. The Appeal is still low in comparison with last year, though.

The last Dining for Dollars event (held at Pizzeria Avanti) generated \$250. Big congrats are due to Sabine Crawford for getting Spirit Wear in the black by about \$275 (first time this has happened).

Mel also reviewed the check register covering the period from February 19th, 2015 through March 18th, 2015. Auction expenses and checks for the 4th grade Columbia trip are the biggest expenditures.

*****MOTION**

Motion to approve the budget report and check register was brought by Tim Madsen

Motion was seconded by Jane Forbes

Motion approved unanimously

Life Lab Update

Jane Forbes reported on recent/upcoming Life Lab news.

The Life Lab Plant Sale fundraiser is set for April 17th and 18th (Friday after school/Saturday; 9-12). The goal is to try to get a lot of sales on Friday, since parents will be on campus anyway. The sale location will be at the kiosk near the dropoff area. All grade levels have been helping with plantings, and some donations have been coming in from local gardening companies. Jane needs some help from parents to take on planting seeds, since the greenhouse is full; Mr. Curley suggested that local high schools and/or nurseries also be approached about seed "housing." Publicity efforts will happen after students return from spring break. Jane will indicate which classes planted specific seeds to help drum up sales.

Stir Fry/salad days in Life Lab have been exposing so many kids to veggies, and more kids this year seem to be responding to and enjoying the food. Tim suggested that this information would be good to convey when bond/parcel taxes come up again, to highlight how Life Lab influences kids directly.

Global Citizens/PTA Grants

Deanah Rabiah reviewed how the Global Citizens Club will be helping at this year's International Night. Entertainment for the event has been solidified; the lineup will be slightly smaller than last year, and ranges from bagpipers to Watsonville Taiko. Zameen, Café Campesino, and possibly Mortal Dumpling, along with bake sale items, will be available for purchase. School-wide International Day will take place 4/14, and will highlight each class's country projects.

Grants: two have been received so far this year. The Wharf to Wharf race is funding (funding amount: about \$1500) a "run for fun" club for 3rd-5th graders, which will be coached by Coach Zell on Thursdays. A flyer detailing this running club will go out to 3rd-5th graders soon. A grant from Whole Foods for Life Lab to be coming in soon, as well (funding amount to be determined shortly).

Arts Committee Update

Mel Sweet (filling in for Sufi Fox and Terry McInerney) reported on some recent/upcoming arts-related events and news:

An extra-special thanks are due to Carrie Haber, Julie Graff, and Amy Wirth for their tireless work on the Art Auction. Kudos are due also to classroom art parents for all their work on the individual auction projects. And a final thanks go to Krista Holt and the 17 CATS who participated in the Wildcats and the Arts event

Artsonia orders for Mothers' Day gifts will need to be submitted by late April/early May.

Displays of Westlake student artists will happen at local libraries in April/May.

The Day of Dance event (celebrating the 20th anniversary of Westlake Arts programs this year) will take place on Friday, 4/24.

The 5th grade culminating art project will be installed after spring break.

Art Auction Recap

Carrie Haber gave a brief review of the 2015 Mahalo Luau and Art Auction. This year's event seemed much more fun, and definitely ran much more smoothly. Big thanks to all those who helped, and especially to Mel for helping with all the financial processes. Several parents present agreed: there was a good atmosphere, and a palpable sense of community at this year's event. Carrie cautioned that Westlake might outgrow the Elks space (couldn't sell as many tickets this year as we did at Hotel Paradox last year) eventually – this is something to consider when planning future auction events.

New Business/Program Updates

Jen Fritzsche provided updates on various programs/events.

The next PTA meeting is on the 4th (not 3rd) Thursday for both April and May. May's meeting will be the last meeting of the year. A parent suggested that the school community needs more email blasts about upcoming PTA meetings, ideally 3-4 days before. Another parent queried how many "likes" are there on the Westlake Facebook page? Jen: only about 100.

Jane Forbes thanked Amanda Jarosz from the Santa Cruz Garden Company for donations of potting soil.

Chair/Volunteer Needs: Angela Dobkin/Kimberly Sanford-Yi plan on taking over Enrichment programs for the upcoming year.

An after-school basketball enrichment program is in the works for 4th/5th graders. Lucy Navabpour is continuing with after-school pilates for 4th/5th graders.

The deadline for Waves newsletter submissions will be the Tuesday after return from spring break.

A bulletin board is going up on the lower campus; paper copies of WAVES, as well as pertinent PTA announcements, will be posted there.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.