

Westlake PTA Meeting

November 20, 2014

Board Members and teachers in attendance:

Clyde Curley, Principal	Sufi Fox, PTA Arts Co-Chair
Jen Fritzsche, PTA President	Terry McInerney, PTA Arts Co-Chair
Tim Madsen, PTA Vice President	Adrienne Cramer, Teacher
Mel Sweet, PTA Treasurer	Kristen Lenz, Teacher
Anna Turner, PTA Secretary	Jane Forbes, Life Lab Coordinator
Papaya Van Dyke, PTA Parliamentarian	

Approximate attendance: 13 people

Meeting called to order at 6:45 p.m.

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

Review of Last Meeting's Minutes by Anna Turner

Secretary, Anna Turner, reviewed the minutes of the last PTA meeting, which was held on October 16, 2014.

***** MOTION**

Motion to approve the minutes was brought by Sufi Fox

Motion was seconded by Papaya Van Dyke

Minutes were approved as presented unanimously

Treasurer's Report by Mel Sweet

Mel provided and reviewed the check register, a copy of which is attached. The check register includes checks written from October 16, 2014 to November 20, 2014. Mel also highlighted specific checks, including one for state PTA dues and one covering the cost of the school directory.

Mel also reviewed the budget report, a copy of which is attached. The Direct Appeal has raised \$35,000 to date; this total is slightly lower than what was collected by this time last year (\$39,000). A big holiday push will come right after Thanksgiving break, when new appeal letters will be sent home with students in their homework folders. The lower total might also be attributed to the fact that no corporate matching funds have yet been received; the new online matching portal means some delays, most likely.

An audit into PTA finances is in process and is almost finished. H. Babcock is working on it.

The Drive for Schools fundraiser raised \$6,780, thanks especially to event chair Cristine Chopra.

*****MOTION**

Motion to approve the budget report and check register was brought by Anna Turner

Motion was seconded by Jen Fritzsche

Motion approved unanimously

Principal's Report

Mr. Curley reported on ongoing and upcoming events:

Santa Cruz High School resumed classes today. There have been positive developing leads in the investigation into the gun threat. The district is trying to use this experience to fine-tune emergency response and general communication systems; there are always improvements to be made (phone calls and emails being missed, etc). Staff members are going through records to double check that SCCS has contact info for all students. At Westlake, Carrie Haber is working with Mr. Curley to merge our Google group with our Yahoo group to get full coverage. Classes will be practicing drills, including lockdown and shelter in place; no "code red" drill is done with kids, but is reviewed by staff. The community meeting on 11/19 was fairly well attended, and many were reassured by the strong partnership between SCCS staff and SCPD. Mr. Curley encouraged all parents to contact him with questions/concerns about safety anytime.

The first full year of Walk to Read has just been completed. Initial results: the number of students performing below grade level is shrinking, and the number of students reading at or above grade level is increasing. The winter trimester will start on the Thursday after Thanksgiving break. Program evaluation is ongoing, one of the core questions being: is the program really exponentially improving numbers, or could this be done in another, less disruptive way for students? Based on a few grade-level meetings recently, targeted reading by grade level is virtually impossible to do without breaking each class into groups, so Walk to Read is doing its job well.

Some upcoming events that were mentioned: The SCHS Band will be performing for the entire school on 11/21.

The Cool Cat jar in the library has been filled! Pajama day/dance party to happen on the Thursday before winter break.

Clarification: Thursday before Winter Break is NOT a minimum day.

Parent-Teacher conferences will be taking place next Monday, Tuesday.

Arts Committee Update

Dorothy Franks gave a special thanks for Family Arts Night coordinators. The event raised \$680 in profit.

Westlake's intermediate band will be marching in the Downtown parade on 12/6 with its Bayview cohort.

K-3 music performances will take place in regular classrooms on 12/11-17.

4th/5th graders will attend a SC Symphony performance of *Peter and the Wolf* in December.

5th grade culminating project is being discussed/planned with art teacher Julie Nolte.

Carrie Haber gave an update on the Art Cards fundraiser. Permission slips for Artsonia went home on Monday in homework folders. There are 171 people left to get permission from. 75% of the students' art is up on website, and can be ordered online. The Art Cards volunteers will work regularly with art teachers to confirm which art will show up on Artsonia, and which items will "show" the best. By the end of the year, the goal is to have 3-4 art pieces per student available on Artsonia. Parents can submit their own kids' homemade pieces of art for scanning/uploading to the website, as well.

Life Lab Update

Jane Forbes talked a bit about the Westlake Environmental Club. The club has found a grant opportunity, which asks students to turn recycled milk/juice bottles into art pieces. \$1000 and \$2500 prizes are available. Kids in the club are in charge of obtaining the bottles.

The Life Lab garden is doing well. Some of the planting beds are very old and falling apart. Two new beds have been installed, and lumber is on site for the construction of four additional beds. The cost is approximately \$80/bed to replace. The next Life Lab work day (hopefully comprised mostly of adults) will focus on replacing as many beds as possible, and might piggyback on to the Goodwill Truck donation day (May 1st). Jane hopes that the beds can be replaced before the end of the school year.

A plant sale will take place in the Spring; this will be the biggest fundraiser for Life Lab of the year. The sale will be planned in coordination with the PTA.

New Business/Program Updates

Scholastic Book Fair: Jen Fritzsche reported that librarian Kathy Griffith will be opening the Book Fair during both parent-teacher conference days (to allow parents to do some early, uninterrupted shopping). This is a trial this year to see if there are many (any?) additional buyers on those extra days.

Sweatshirts: These are currently being sorted and the goal is to get them to classrooms on 11/21. If that doesn't happen, perhaps teachers can help distribute them at conferences. Extras will go on sale on Westlake's website.

Movie Night: next one is in January (on the Friday of a holiday weekend). Movie: possibly *Monsters University*.

Dining for Dollars: next restaurant (TBD) will host in January.

Chair/Volunteer needs

eScrip, Boxtops, the Valentine's Dance, and Enrichment Programs still need chairs. Tim Madsen suggested creating a simple blurb/image about available chair positions and sending this along to teachers for inclusion in their regular newsletters; more people will likely read this and respond. Those present agree this is worth pursuing.

Spirit wear sales: Sabine Crawford needs help on Fridays at the gazebo.

The Winter Artisan Fair is coming up on 12/6 from 10am-3pm. 30 vendors have registered – many are new to the event this year, and are not part of Westlake community. All artisans are donating something to be raffled; raffle items will be bundled in some cases. Baked goods and Low 'n Slow food truck will be on site. See Signup Genius for volunteer opportunities.

Report on PTA-sponsored Candidate Forum

Tim Madsen reported that about 70 people attended the recent forum. Hopefully this event will happen again in two years. Tim also reminded those in attendance that the district Budget Advisory Committee exists to provide input/oversight to budget process for all schools in district. December 9th is the next meeting of this committee – it would be good to get more parents involved so that schools can better reflect students' needs and so that parents can understand where money goes and why.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.