

Westridge PTA meeting minutes – September 8, 2023

Members present: Jillian Lare, Courtney Peterson, Keaton Pulver, Hallie Wemmie, Amy Seidelman, Jennie Hogan, Jennifer Drucker, Tamara Tjeerdsma, Tyson Heuton, Jillian Robbins, Sally Crowley, Rachel Loret de Mola, Janine Bauer, Christa Kirsch-Paulson.
Online: Sara Rhein, Alyssa Clabaugh, Alyssa Ragner, Emily Woiwood

Call to order: Meeting called to order at 9:20 a.m.

Treasurer's report: Keaton Pulver provided financial report with checking balance at \$5081.42, money market at \$43,673.96 for a total \$48,755.38. Teacher reimbursements have been coming in and have already paid out \$1,800 towards those. With the new giveback platform for payments, 6th grade activities funds are coming in through there also.

Principal's report: Mrs. Tjeerdsma is here today to provide an update for members. She is thankful for the collaborative and engaging efforts thus far this year. This year's school improvement plan is looking towards family engagement as a pillar this year, so the many things in motion right now are quite exciting. Staff will be going through learning cycles this year related to literacy which is an area of targeted improvement this year. Mr. Heuton shared that regarding literacy goals, a new method is being used that connects literacy and writing exercises together directly. The school also has a coach for this new curriculum and resources for implementation. Literacy night next week will be an amazing experience for our students and families to engage in literacy events together.

Teacher's report: Jillian Robbins provided an update to members. The year is off to a great start and everyone is looking forward to literacy night. Jillian also summarized some of the ways that teachers have been able to benefit from the \$20,000 given to the school from the PTA funds in a previous year. One of the goals was to purchase things that could be used long-term. Some of the many things purchased are new whiteboards, headphones, word mapping resources, timers, sensory tubes, books, storage carts, story works, Generation Genius science program, new calculators for 6th grade instructional books for ESOL, library shelves, reading comprehension manuals, furniture in SPED, STEAM shelving units and VR membership, coding materials, laminator and the list goes on!

Jillian reported that teachers loved the back to school lunches and are thankful for that. The new homeroom parent online signup seems to be working well. There are a lot of new teachers this year and the teacher reimbursements have been wonderful to set up new classrooms. Regarding the outdoor classroom use, it seems to be being fully utilized during periods of nice weather. Teachers are discussing a signup to utilize this space. Reading and Math screenings are coming up September 18.

Secretary's report: May 2023 meeting minutes were provided to members. Jillian Robbins motions to approve minutes, seconded by Amy Seidelman.

Current business:

Book fair: Rachel Loret de Mola thanks all who have helped with this effort including the teacher breakfast. A few volunteers are still needed to run shifts at the book fair next week. Everything is ready to go!

Garden: The garden is in full swing. In early October the garden will be prepared for winter. They will be adding a pollinator patch and will do some winter planting with the students. Updates will be in WR weekly.

WR gear: Sales start Monday and will last two weeks. There are a few changes from last year.

Booster Pack: Kelsi Salmon reported that volunteer drivers have been secured through part of October but will need more in upcoming weeks.

Hospitality: Back to school teacher lunches seemed to have gone well and in November they will begin to plan conference dinners for the teachers.

Homeroom parents: Alyssa Clabaugh was on zoom and updated that homeroom parents have been secured for all rooms except 2D at this time. She is working to get everything organized and teachers have been notified who their homeroom parent is so that Fall party planning can commence.

Yearbooks: are on sale! Jennifer Drucker asked that people upload photos from school and school events to the Tree Ring website. Alyssa Clabaugh will remind homeroom parents to have parents be taking and uploading photos during parties.

Family Events: A Halloween type event will take place on October 20 from 6-8 pm. Hallie Wemmie asks that anyone interested in hosting a trunk for the trunk or treat or volunteering in any capacity please get in touch with her or sign up online. Links to that have been posted in the Westridge Weekly, social media platforms and emails from Mrs. Tjeerdsma. More details on this event to come.

Other: There was a question about Talking Canvas and if we will do that this year. The PTA president discussed how Talking Canvas was replaced with a different program run by Olivia Meuret (currently out on maternity leave) and is now a program where parents read a specific book to the class and walk through some related activities with the kids. It seems organized and volunteers seem to prefer how straightforward the directions are. There is a question regarding will teachers be sending out signups for this?

Sally Crowley reminded the members of the Tiger Gala coming up on September 14, which is a major fundraising effort for the district. Anyone interested can reach out to Sally or find information online.

Fundraising update: There were no volunteers to run the fundraiser this year so the executive team will run an online fundraiser in October similar to what was done last year. The fundraiser money fuels everything that is in the regular budget and is very important to be successful or cuts will have to be made in the future. In recent years fundraising has not been enough to cover yearly expenses. PTA had been using a combination of reserves and fundraising but some of the reserves were decided to be given as a large chunk to the teachers and building a couple of years ago. PTA is looking for anyone willing to help with these efforts. Currently looking for connections to secure corporate matches. Look for a lot more information in the coming weeks.

Important dates/upcoming events:

September 12 – Literacy Night

September 19 – Picture Day

September 22 – Fall parties

October 9 – no school

October 10 – PTA meeting; 6:15 pm in the Westridge Community Room

October 20 – Westridge family Trunk or Treat event

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 10:06 a.m.