



Minnewashta PTO

Meeting Minutes - August 17, 2026

Attendees: Kayla Lande, Stephanie Woodstrom, Jeff Gustafson, Ashley Crist, Kristen Coward, Bryn Atherton, Katelyn Honstad, Kali Sundquist, Cindy Address

Absent Board Members: Laura Richardson, Sarah Sirna

Call to order

- Kayla called the meeting to order
- The PTO welcomed new member Bryn Atherton.

June meeting minutes

- Steph presented the June meeting minutes for approval
- **Motion to approve seconded and carried**
- **Steph** to post meeting minutes to website

Board and leadership updates

President vacancy

- Laura vacated the remainder of her term as president due to family needs
- PTO bylaws state that the VP fills a vacancy in the president role. Because the VP position is also currently vacant, the bylaws do not provide a specific process for the current situation. The board agreed to use Robert's Rules of Order as guidance, inviting all named board members to vote on a new president.
- Kayla expressed interest in serving as president and is open to a two-year term.
- **The board voted unanimously to elect Kayla as president for a two-year term (7 votes in favor)**
- **The board voted unanimously to approve Laura as a member-at-large (7 votes in favor)**

Open board positions

- Current open executive roles: VP, Fundraising Chair, Communications Director
- Recruiting will continue for these positions.
- At a future meeting, the board will revisit role details in the bylaws, including:
 - Updating the board hierarchy/slate
 - Adding a formal communications director role description
 - Adding a member-at-large role description
 - Clarifying voting privileges for members-at-large
 - Determining if the number of member-at-large positions should be limited

Volunteer update

General volunteer recruitment

- Ashley provided an update on volunteer recruitment.

- The group discussed creating a “pinch-hitter” volunteer committee for parents willing to help with last-minute needs throughout the year. **Steph** will create a signup for parents interested in this option and add Laura Riemma to this group.
- Based on lessons from last year, volunteer requests should be as specific as possible about the task and time commitment.

Volunteer incentives

- Potential volunteer incentives discussed included:
 - Gift cards or coupons for Tonka Pride, Elsa’s store or other local business
 - Credits toward school expenses (e.g. school supplies or field trip funds)
 - A periodic raffle drawing for volunteers based on shifts served

Parent committees

- The board discussed several lessons learned from last year's parent committees:
 - Committee chairs should contact committee members early to gather ideas and encourage participation.
 - Carnival planning would benefit from additional early coordination between the City of Shorewood and vendors.
 - Tonka Serves volunteers need clearer guidance and coaching for managing students.
 - Parent communications should reiterate that events are not drop-offs.

Back-to-school activities

School supply kit organization

- School supply kits are expected to arrive this week. Kayla is waiting for confirmation from Molly and will notify the board when help is needed.
- **Cindy** to ask Carol for the latest class lists so kits can be organized by teacher.

Kindergarten/new family welcome – Tuesday, August 18, 6:00-7:30

- Kayla will bring Tonka Pride materials.
- Ashley will provide a digital PTO/volunteer signup option.
- Additional PTO members are welcome to help.

Open house and picture day – Wednesday, August 26

- **Steph** to create a signup for picture day volunteers (two volunteers per shift)
- The group discussed providing a simple lunch/treat for teachers during open house, potentially donut holes and fruit.
- Consider offering a “make and take” table at Open House
- **Steph** will create a signup for teacher assistance during the first week of school

Kindergarten assessments – September 1–2, 8:30-12:00

- PTO is welcome to have a presence in the commons. Support could include:
 - PTO membership information
 - Membership Toolkit information
 - Volunteer opportunities and signup
 - Skyward tutorials
- **Kali** to ask for pastry donations for the day

Hearing and vision screening – September 16

- **Steph** to create a signup for volunteers. Same times and numbers as last year.

- Lunch will be provided for volunteers; Jimmy John's was suggested.

Communications update

Membership toolkit and volunteer signups

- Teacher information has been updated.
- Volunteer opportunities currently posted include bus helpers, lunch helpers, and parent committees.
- **Steph** to send Jenny links to current volunteer opportunities.
- **Steph** to update the "Signups" button in the mobile app to read "Volunteer."
- **Kayla** to send Steph dates Tonka Pride at DCS.

District website

- **Steph** to request updates to the Minnewashta parents page, including:
 - Updating PTO contact information
 - Posting missing meeting minutes
 - Listing PTO meeting dates

PTO bulletin board

- Kayla requested ideas for information to feature on the PTO bulletin board.

Treasurer update

Budget preview

- [PTO YE 2025-2026 Profit and Loss Statement](#)
- Kristen provided a preliminary budget overview.
- Updates needed before the budget is finalized include:
 - Remove Read-a-Thon revenue for now. Fundraiser not yet executed.
 - Update enrichment allocations based on updated classroom headcounts
 - **Cindy** to provide current student counts by grade and total enrollment.
 - **Kristen** will tentatively include a \$10,000 allotment for "big-ticket item"
 - **Kristen, Jeff, and Kayla** will meet separately to finalize supplies budget.
- The board also discussed the appropriate level of PTO reserves. A potential target discussed was maintaining approximately \$10,000 in checking plus \$10,000 in savings. A broader discussion and decision will be needed.

Fundraising priorities and big-ticket items

- The board discussed the importance of identifying what the PTO is specifically fundraising for this year and gathering ideas from staff and students.
- A ninja course was identified as one option that has received positive interest from students and staff.
- **Steph** to review prior-year meeting minutes for ideas that have been suggested
- **Steph** to create a student suggestion box for the first week of school to gather ideas for PTO-funded improvements.

Classroom party update

- Kayla spoke with Kelsi Suardini about creating a more standardized approach to classroom parties. The goal is to reduce inequities between classrooms while making party planning simpler and easier for teachers to manage.
- Kelsi is interested in leading the effort. Suggestions for Kelsi include:
 - Present the approach during room parent orientation.

- Create a one-page guide for the room parent handbook.
- **Katelyn** will serve as Kelsi's PTO board resource/contact.

Principal update

- Cindy shared that Minnewashta has 12 new teachers joining the school this year.

Future meeting topics

- Bylaw updates
- Budget reserve plans
- Ducks for incoming kindergarteners and larger ducks for graduating fifth graders
- Decorating the duck for holidays
- Hosting another Spanish Book Fair
- Hosting a Spanish movie night

Next meeting

Tuesday, September 15, 6:00–8:00 p.m.

Upcoming/key dates

- **Week of August 17** – School supply kit organization
- **August 18** – Kindergarten/new family welcome, 6:00-7:30 pm
- **August 26** – Open house and picture day
- **September 1–2** – Kindergarten assessments, 8:30 am–noon
- **September 15** – Next PTO meeting, 6:00–8:00 pm
- **September 16** – Hearing & Vision screening

Helpful resources

- [Important dates](#)
- [Board contact information](#) – **Needs update**
- [Bylaws](#) – possibly not latest version