

Walker PTA meeting: Wednesday, November 14, 2018 @ 7:00pm  
Location: Walker School

**Attendees:**

Jenna Arceneaux	Michelle Henley	Donna Su
Edie Hertel	Carla Green	Nicki Devine
Lisa Levine	Inbal Fraiman	Claudine G.
Kelli Kaul	Darlena Simmons	Raechel Alexander
Courtney Shapiro	Erin Saculti	

**Principal's Announcements**

- Thank you to our staff who are running their own enrichment clubs/classes for our students – Ms. Levine with Math Olympiad, Ms. Snyder with Drama Club (hasn't been finalized yet) & Ms. Maldonado with Robotics Club! We are very lucky to have these enrichments at our school
- Thank you to the service committee with their hard work on the coat drive! It was great!
- Thank you to all the parents and staff that are working on the Kindness Campus Program. The kick-off is this Friday.
- This coming Monday we are having a Native American Powwow Event for the whole school.
- Lastly, a big thank you to all the parents and staff that put in so much time and effort to make Walker great!

**Parent Questions/Comments**

**Teacher Announcements**

- Ms. Hertel – Battle 2.0 Program
  - This is the new Battle of the Books
  - Some changes to the program across the District
  - Meant to increase enthusiasm for reading in 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> graders
  - Participant numbers have been going down – some reasons why is that kids are already reading for fun and are too busy with other activities.
  - Looked at it through different lenses to see what changes should be made
  - It's called Battle 2.0 for now, until we get feedback and ideas from the kids
  - It's going to be part of the library curriculum, so all kids will participate in at least one book
  - We are giving them more choices for how they report their responses to their reading (not just reports)
  - Wide variety in books
  - Kids will build teams themselves. Hoping for teams of 3. We have over 60 students signed up so far for this year.
  - They will no longer battle other school, but there will be mini battles at the Evanston Library
  - Parents are invited to join teachers in the school battle – the kids battle against teachers & parents.
  - The District isn't giving more towards the budget for books, but have paid supporting teachers to spend lunch with the kids to help them work on their projects. But all students have access to the books on-line.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> graders are doing the Blue Stem Award (kids read 4 books from the list and fill out a sheet about each one. If they complete it then they get to go to a pizza and voting party.
- After-School Care, Clara K. has some concerns
  - If possible to replace the woodchips on the playground with rubber chips
  - Fix bench and broken table outside by 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> playground (some kids like to color and is hard to do)
  - Student Council's goal this year is beautification of the school. They have only met once so far, but Ms. Arceneaux will bring these comments to the group.
- Please make sure to announce to staff when new pick-up procedures start – some are confused. And possibly go over all the procedures of drop-off/pick-up as a refresher.

**Executive Committee Announcements**

- Book Fair Recap – Went great and was super successful
- Fall Harvest Dance Recap – Kids had a fun time. Thank you to all the volunteers! We made \$827. Next dance is in January, so spread the word!
  - Got some feedback from the Dance – concern that some kids couldn't afford to go – We will never turn anyone away! Please let your students know they can always go to Ms. Lumpkin and we'll put their name on the pre-paid list.
  - Something to consider to get more community to come:
    - Go to other school's events, make connections and invite them to our events.
    - Use PTA Council – share our successes and invite other schools to come

### **Treasurer Update**

- PTA dues. We are killing it. Above budget
- Chess. Right where we should be. The expenses even include the t shirts, which we won't have going forward.
- Lego. Killing it. They will have more expenses rolling in, so budget surplus will be smaller.
- Whole Foods bonus income of \$400. The PTA Council gave the option for us to donate the money to the Equity Fund, but we're going to hold onto the funds for now.
  - PNO location – the committee has exhausted their search (finding they are all priced about the same) so they are back at 5 & Dime. We're thinking that the Whole Foods money can be the back-up funds for the venue expenses if the liquor sales don't make up the difference.
- \$250 in Angel donations that we didn't budget
- Book Fair did awesome! Made \$2,242.02. Exceeded budget surplus by \$250
- Residency. Included \$580 as expense, even though that is carrying over from last year.
- We have a few receivables that I am following up on, nothing I don't think we can't collect.
- No updates on school supplies.

### **Spirit wear**

- Hoping to roll out an order form including sweatshirts and the shirts we have sold already this year (the baseball tees)

### **Safety Patrol/Parking Update (Raechel Alexander)**

- Last time we spoke – we had just presented at the Village of Skokie Board Meeting.
- As a direct result, on October 24, the Traffic Safety Committee (myself, Erin Rams and Courtney Shapiro) had a walk through on Central Park Avenue with:
  - Village of Skokie (Erik Cook, Director of Engineering and Samantha Maximilian, Traffic Engineer),
  - Skokie Police Department (Chief Anthony Scarpelli and fellow officer),
  - District 65 (Raphael Obafemi, Chief Financial and Operations Officer)
  - Walker Elementary School (Ginger Lumpkin, Principal and April Likhite, Teacher)
- We discussed several possibilities, including:
  - clearer, more consistent signage in addition to the recently installed crosswalk sign provided by the Village;
  - increased signage maintenance (i.e. trimming trees) that are obstructing several traffic signs around Walker;
  - continued support from Skokie Police;
  - painting the street, curbs and crosswalk to raise more awareness of these areas;
  - potentially moving the crosswalk to the north side of the street;
  - potentially making Central Park Avenue one way going North to South during specific times of the day;
  - additional safety personnel provided by the School and/or District or safety management by school/district personnel.
- It was made clear by the Village of Skokie and the Skokie Police Department that before any considerations toward developing a proposal that MAY include some/all of the above, they would require the School and District to have a plan in place and a commitment that would actively outline their participation in the long-term solution.

- So where are we now. Long and the short of it: Things rest in the hands of the School, District, Village and SPD.
- The Traffic Committee, while diligently standing by to help create a plan, can no longer physically support the safety efforts, as made clear by the Skokie PD. We were basically told we cannot direct traffic nor provide safe passage in a crosswalk (too much liability).
- Do not dismay! I think a lot has been accomplished.
- Just to recap where we've come: Since June of 2018, the Traffic Safety Committee has been dedicated to helping Walker Elementary School find a long-term solution. To date, the Committee has:
  - brought together the Village of Skokie and Skokie Police Department into a productive conversation with Walker Elementary School and District 65;
  - recommended and implemented a new drop-off procedure by enforcing the current signage around the school, which has resulted in eliminating double and triple parking on Central Park Avenue and garnered extremely positive feedback from parents/caregivers;
  - proposed a new pick-up procedure that is awaiting implementation by the school;
  - provided physical support, since September 20, guiding cars into the drop-off/pick-up zone, welcoming parents/caregivers and students to Walker encouraging them to drop-off quickly, and provided safe passage to pedestrians in the crosswalk during the afternoon drop-off; Basically, gave everyone a taste of what it could be like.
  - provided support, at our own discretion, to the school's newly created Student Safety Patrol, and recommend that the School make further investment in personnel to make sure that the patrol students not only stay safe, but understand their role in safety;
  - created and managed a parent volunteer system that asked for volunteers to cover both drop-off and pick-up;
  - created a Traffic Safety page on the Walker PTA website;
  - presented our case publicly, speaking at a Village of Skokie Board Meeting, which resulted in increased communication between the Village of Skokie, Skokie Police, the School and the District;
  - encouraged parents to reach out to the Village via email and phone, which resulted in a new crosswalk sign on Central Park Avenue and the reinstating of a digital speed sign on Church Street.
- So where does this leave the pick-up procedure. Again, it is in a holding pattern. As parents/caregivers you can help inspire implementation. I think those of us that utilize Central Park Ave are most impacted—especially parents/caregivers that must make eye contact to pick up their students—can agree that things are much safer and run, for the most part, smoothly. So, use your voice. Send emails, make calls. Talk to Ms. Lumpkin, reach out to Goren.
- I want to thank the members of the Traffic Safety Committee—Erin Rams, Courtney Shapiro, Courtney Ivaska, Petra Sheaffova and Kenneth Mantel—you all are amazing.
- I also want to thank the handful of parent volunteers that helped us on occasion: Kathy Ryan, Jennifer Karter, Robin Saldanha, Donna Su, Cecile Ryan.
- Will post on Facebook an update on the new procedure and a memo will go out in the next Friday Folder about how the parent volunteers can no longer be out directing traffic.
- The system is still there and the cones and bus staff will be the presence to help reinforce.
- The drop-off/pickup system is tabled for now because it will need more support and planning with teachers and staff
- If parents want to do anything to move the city along to making improvements, we need to contact the city. Erik Cook is a good person to contact.
- There is a grant out there to get funds to have a regular officer present, but we missed the deadline (we didn't know of this grant at that time). It would be nice to have an officer present at pick-up because we don't want the system being erased when bad weather happens.
- King Arts has the school resource officers help with their traffic (since their office is located at the school).
  - Since they are a District resource, can we use them too? Esp. since the school hours are different than ours.
  - They have been very accommodating when Ms. Lumpkin has needed their assistance
- There are some schools that are worse off than we are. A lot of parents across the District are concerned about this. PTA Council can possibly do Traffic as a topic of a future meeting, possibly February.

- For the back parking lot, we have to share the same resources. When an officer is out there, people usually act the way they should act. The triple parking is bad back there!

#### **Enrichment Committee Update**

- Enrichment info went out in the Friday folder, digital folder, and PTA website.
- There is a link to apply for scholarships
- The Registration deadline is Mon. Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>
- Winter Sessions starts Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>
- For Spring Session, there's talk of some more parent ran programs and Spanish should be back.
- A parent asked for Minecraft class to be brought back
- Some 2<sup>nd</sup> graders felt unchallenged/bored in Spanish and Lego because they were geared more towards the Kindergarteners (in the K-2 classes).

#### **PTA Council Update**

- Thank you Walker for hosting our last meeting on STEAM!
- On Jan 17<sup>th</sup>, we're having a Summer Camp Fair at King Arts for all families in the District.

#### **New Business - None**

#### **Volunteer Needs**

- PTA Movie Night, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> 6:30pm-8:30pm
  - Free, community building event
  - Please plan on coming!
  - Set-up for the Chess tournament for the next day will happen right after event.
  - Please send in any movie suggestions
  - We will hopefully be showing the movie in the Auditorium and have the gym open for kids to run around and play.
- Chess Tournament at Walker, Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> – a sign-up link will go out soon

#### **Important Dates**

- No School: Wednesday-Friday Nov. 21-23, Thanksgiving Break
- Coffee with Ms. Lumpkin: Friday, Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>, 9am
- Early Dismissal: Wednesday, Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>, 12:05pm
- PTA Movie Night: Friday Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm-8:30pm
- Chess Tournament at Walker: Saturday, Dec. 8th

#### **Adjournment**

Our next meeting: Wednesday, December 12th at 7pm in Walker Cafeteria