

Walker PTA meeting: Wednesday, August 21, 2019 @ 7:00pm  
Location: Walker School

**Attendees:**

Nicki Devine	Terry Velan	James Gray	Mya Wilkins	Sarita Smith
Liz Ribeiro	Darlana Simmons	Anita Geevarghese	Katie Shonk	Michelle Redmond-Henley
Donna Su	Raechel Alexander	Michaela Marchi	Courtney Ivaska	Dasie Johnson
Erin Saculti	Carla Green	Inbal Fraiman	Cecilie Ryan	Stacey Masliansky
Lori Coombs	Jon Levell	Courtney Shapiro	Anu Singh	Clive Archer

**Principal's Announcements:**

- One of my first goals is to learn every student and parent name
- I worked as Principal at Hamilton Elementary for 8 years and genuinely miss the parents because of the connections I made. I am looking forward to making those connections with all of you!
- Please email me with anything (at [grayj2@district65.net](mailto:grayj2@district65.net)). I will get back to you within 48 hours (except on weekends).
- It's been only 2 days on the job and I'm diving in!
- I don't have an open door policy because I can't commit to having the time to meet without it scheduled. But I have a link on my email to set up meetings and you can always talk to Beverly to set one up.
- I will send out a welcome email by Friday evening. I look forward to seeing everyone on Monday morning!

**Parent Questions/Comments:**

- A parent heard that there's a gap between new parents and veteran parents and that the last principal had issues fixing this.
  - It feels that communication is key, esp. between parents and teachers. It's always important to approach your child's teacher first if there's an issue.
  - As for the community, I need to observe more - I don't know the answer yet, but I might by the next meeting.
- Last year the bells were off by 2 min (9:02am & 3:37pm). Can this be fixed? It caused some issues in the morning when people would drop off at 8:50am, but there wasn't staff out b/c the school clocks were behind.
  - Yes! I can fix that.

**Teacher Announcements:**

- From Ms. Arceneaux: SEED Registration has just been opened. There have been several parents who participated in this past year and loved it and we encourage more (especially) Walker parents to join as a means to help move the equity work forward in the district and our school.
  - SEED is a peer-led professional development program that promotes change through self-reflection, and interpersonal dialogue builds capacity for more equitable curriculum, campuses, workplaces and communities.
  - No cost but a time commitment - 10 sessions that meet for 3 hours once a month
  - Joaquin Stephenson is going to make sure it's available through email and on the District 65 website on the equity page.
  - They offer it to teachers first, but it can fill up quick.
  - Ms. Arceneaux or Ms. Maldonado can answer any questions

**Executive Committee Announcements**

- School Grounds Beautification Project Update
  - We voted in June to spend up to \$5,000 for 3 12' picnic tables for the courtyard. It's been approved and the money has been given to Building & Grounds. They are supposed to pour concrete slabs for the tables to rest on and then have the tables installed. We are trying to push them to have this done by the Back to School BBQ. They have also said that they are going to fix the muddy path and the benches that are on the grounds.
    - Mr. Gray will be the squeaky wheel to push to get this done.

- Lunch Debt Donations Update
  - Thank you to all who donated to close the gap of funds we needed to pay off all of our students' lunch debt at Walker! We exceeded our goal and raised \$980!

#### Equity Committee:

- We're excited to have a committee!
- One goal our team has is to get some structured equity programming to our school.
- Next Steps Proposal:
  - We have the opportunity to join the Next Steps program. The goal is to equip our community with some tools to close the gap of equity.
  - This year's theme is anti-racism using Dr. Kendi's book *How to be an Antiracist*
  - There will be 3 large group presentations and 3 small group discussions
    - It would be great to get people from our Walker community (parents & staff) to go and then bring the knowledge back to our school.
  - Presentations are held throughout the year.
  - You don't have to read the book to participate
  - Anybody can be a part of it
  - The commitment is the 6 sessions, but you don't have to attend all of them.
  - It doesn't cost any money to go. But all the schools participating pay funds (the Walker PTA would pay \$600-\$1100) to help cover all the costs of hosting the events (childcare, books, marketing, etc.)
- Question: Are the other schools still doing Courageous Conversations along with this program?
  - Yes, Next Steps isn't a replacement
  - We're still looking into setting up Courageous Conversations again at Walker.
- We wanted to gage parent opinion on this program, but we figured people would be in favor, so we've already built in the \$600 into our new budget.

#### Treasurer Update

- We ended last year with \$7,800 in gross excess - We did very well last year.
- New 2019/2020 Budget
  - Leaving the Whole Foods Donation and Jon Kimmel Foundation as line items (we received donations from these groups last year. We're not expecting them this year, but we wanted to keep them as a line item in case they come again in the future.)
  - Our Parent's Night Out and Walkerfest events have done well in the past years, so we're comfortable in having these better numbers.
  - Field day expenses pay for the bounce house and D.I.M.E.'s Mr. Marcus
  - Teacher Support has been used to give the teachers a gift at the end of the school year (we've done gift cards in the past) or used to buy the school a larger gift (like a new rug for the library). We're looking to do something a little different this year - maybe move it to the beginning of the year. We should communicate this to parents in case they want to donate more to their teacher.
  - Teacher Grants is so teachers can apply for projects/experiences for their classrooms (not furniture - we've found that teachers can get items for their classrooms through money-raising websites).
  - Our new budget shows us at a breakeven, but we hope to have a surplus.
  - Chess Club is vended out, so there is no cost for the club.
    - The club will still run the tournament because it brings in money through concessions and is a great community building experience.
  - Green Team: The cost for the bottle cap benches is already covered and the district covers all costs for Green Team activities so it doesn't need to be a line item in our budget.
- Lawn signs will be sold at the BBQ. \$10 per sign. We have sold 40 already.
- Tax return has been filed.
- School Supplies:
  - 185 kids have paid so far. We need to get to 270 to hit 70% like last year.
  - Can pay online or at the BBQ

- The PTA is going to make a one time gift from the supplies surplus to buy all teachers the most common supplies bought (tissues & wipes)
- Teachers get \$620
- There shouldn't be any supplies list for the parents, just a one time payment (except for Kindergarten for the nap mats)
- There seems to be some confusion - some teachers are asking for supplies mid year when it should come out of their budget. We will address this and make sure there's more transparency.

### **Enrichment Update**

- Every vendor we work with offers scholarships. The Angel Fund also goes towards scholarships. To apply for them, contact Dr. Chambers. Free & Reduced Lunch students are guaranteed one scholarship per year. Chess will be offered Mon (done by the vendor - scholarships are available) and Tuesday (this is a more casual time, just come and play for fun. We need parent volunteers to help run this one).
- All of the Enrichment info will be sent home on the first week of school.
- The Enrichment committee is made up of 9 parents
- All should have received an email about the Fall schedule.
- Next week Beverly will send out another one with links and prices, including other programs offered but not run by the PTA.
- Paper flyers will be sent home Friday.
- Y.O.U. is changing a bit - 3rd-5th grade is offered new enrichments Mon-Thurs, a-la-cart.
- We have some great free options: Girls Coding, Knitting Club, Photography Club, Math Club, Boys/Girls Running Strong, Mural Club (new in the Winter)
- We are looking for parent volunteers for Robotics and Chess.

### **Community Service Update:**

- Our Fall Project: Collecting gently used sports equipment to go to local kids
- Our Winter Project: Kits for the Homeless (bags of toiletries and non perishable food items). We will have an event to get together to make the kits out of the items donated)
- Our Spring Project: Bernie's Book Bank
- Walker will always get the first chance to take from what's donated.

### **PAC Update:**

- Over the summer we worked on making a presentation to share the results of the survey with the community.
- We presented the results to the district already.

### **Traffic/Safety Committee:**

- Please remember not to park on Central Park (this is a drop off lane). Drop off starts at 8:50am. Only park in actual parking spots in the back lot. You can also park on Davis, Arcadia and Central Park NORTH of Church.

### **New Business:**

- **Vote on 2019/2020 Budget:** Motion to vote yes on the budget (by Mya), Courtney 2nd it, all voted in favor. Budget Passed

### **Volunteer Needs:**

- PTA Back to School Coffee - donate breakfast treats
  - You can bring treats with you in the morning
  - We already have coffee being donated
  - We will have all volunteer sign-ups for our events and room parents
- Back to School BBQ & Enrichment Fair (signup link will come out soon)
  - Please bring a dish to share!! We need to stress the potluck part of this event, because last year we didn't have a bunch.

### **Important Dates**

- First Day of School: August 26th
- PTA Back to School Coffee: August 26th, 9:05am, Walker Cafeteria
- Labor Day - No School: Sept. 2nd
- Picture Day: Sept. 4th
- Back to School BBQ & Enrichment Fair: Sept. 5th, 5:30pm-7pm
- Deadline to register for Fall Enrichments: Sept. 6th
- Enrichment Classes begin: Sept. 9th
- Band & Orchestra Beginner Info Night: Sept. 9th, 7pm at Chute
- Next PTA Meeting: Sept. 11th, 7pm

### **Adjournment**

Mark your calendars! Our next meeting: Wednesday, September 11th at 7pm in Walker Cafeteria