



Willard PTO Meeting

Wednesday March 2nd, 2022, 7:00pm
via Zoom, per Pandemic Regulations

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3542037976?pwd=VGJlMFVSeU5jUnVXb2tQRVgxOEplQT09>

Meeting ID: 354 203 7976

Passcode: 406490

1. Call to Order. Meeting called to order at 7:06

Stephanie thanked everyone for joining the evening meetings. She is very grateful and happy for everyone's participation.

2. Report: Superintendent (Dr. Ed Condon)

Dr. Condon was not in attendance but several issues were spoken to:

Diane stated the biggest news is probably the mask optional which she will speak to.

Katie reported on the board meeting: The news about "masks optional" came together very quickly but thoughtfully in her opinion. The board decided to side with the recommendations coming from the Board of Health and the Governor. There are 2 classrooms at Lincoln which will be masking due to outbreaks, so there are situations where masks will be needed.

3. Report: Principal (Diane Wood and Christine Gerges)

"Masks Optional" is the big news. Ms. Wood reported that students are a bit perplexed in some cases, happy in others and are dealing with the changes in stride. The school is filled with excitement and some anxiety so the teachers and administration are being very thoughtful in sharing that students may sometimes choose to wear masks and sometimes choose not to and that these decisions are very personal and varied. Students are able to make their own choices and those choices may change based on the situation.

Students are still maintaining 3ft apart precautions and 6ft at lunch. Lunch set up is staying the same for the time being. This will be revisited after Spring Break.

Q: Will the 4 lunch periods be maintained? A: Most likely we will stay with the current schedule through the end of the year. Diane reported that changes will continue to be made through the end of the year and will be communicated as new information becomes available.

Diane and Casey met to discuss reinstating some outside PTO activities and hopefully even some indoor activities.

Q: In the future, do you think we will ever go back to the previous 1 hour lunch schedule? A: At this time, the numbers cannot be sustained safely. In the future, if we are able to safely have that many students together, we will go back to the one hour lunch.

Stephanie was proud of how the community received the news and responded. Diane agreed and reported she has heard very little negative comments and is happy that the information sent out and suggestions were perhaps taken to heart.

Thank you for dinner during the parent/teacher conferences. It is so nice to have dinner on Thursday after a long day. Thank you specifically to Anne who makes it so special.

Conferences are Thursday and Friday. These can still be scheduled by contacting Silvia.

Report cards are now available in PowerSchool for all students. Directions will be resent out on how to access these reports.

On Friday March 4, summer school sign up opens.

Yearbooks are here! The school is working on a way to perhaps hand these out in a special way and allow signatures.

During conferences, 3rd/4th grade will be student led once again. This is meant to encourage students and let them know that parents are supportive and working together with teachers to help them reach their potentials.

Erin's Law discussion will be via video this year. The presentation is based around safe and unsafe touch in an age appropriate way and what to do if you are presented with a situation that feels unsafe.

4. Report: Presidents (Stephanie VanDerSchie and Anna Parks)

School supply company responded. Bulky objects like hand sanitizer, paper towel, etc can be sent straight to school. This will need to be organized by PTO but will help parents navigate the first day of school.

Big Hearts/Little Hands committee from 2020 is back on board and is working toward a video and a delivery for local care centers.

Kindly Wizards is putting together a slide show for Ms. McCleese and is looking for someone who could help put together a presentation.

We need a fundraising crew for the fall to kick off planning for the Fun Run. There are several other positions open and Anna is advertising in multiple locations asking people if they would like to volunteer. She would like to reach more parents who may not have volunteered previously and may not know what is available. Diane suggested a flyer and perhaps something like a job fair where different positions could be highlighted and explained. There was discussion on how to reach those parents who may be hesitant and let them know there is a place for everyone and encourage new ideas and PTO positions. Diane is hopeful next year she can welcome parents back in the building!

5. Report: Secretary (Erin Llanes)

Minutes from February have been sent, I did not receive any corrections. Stephanie moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Anna.

6. Report: Treasurer (Carrie Ryan and Ursula Canli)

We are in the black right now. We have some fundraising upcoming. No significant changes.

7. Report: Vice President of Volunteers (Rachel Dardis)

No report.

8. Report: Vice Presidents of Technology (Ginny Sara)

No report.

9. Report: Vice President of Communications (Gretchen Radach)

No report.

10. Report: School Board Liaison (Katie Avalos)

The safety audit that was started before covid includes a Behavioral Threat Assessment Team. This group is thoughtfully looking at how to respond to situations where students may feel unsafe.

Dr. Hawley gave a presentation on the science curriculum and the fact that it is being looked at and updated for the next school year. The science pilot programs are exciting and new. STEM is being looked at closely and integrated.

11. Committee Reports

Please provide a brief update (no longer than five minutes) for the following committees:

- **Girls On The Run** (Sara Smith)

Sara is so excited this program is coming back to Willard this year. Girls on the Run is a national program so some of this is scheduled by them. The program will be hosted on Mondays and Wednesdays at 3:15 for 8 weeks. The schedule is set by the national group and passed on to each school. At the end of the program there is a run downtown Chicago which is always so fun. The team is limited to 15 students and Sara is concerned about not everyone having equal opportunity to sign up. Stephanie suggested another team sign up because they could meet together and at the same time so it shouldn't task the group too much. Sara reported that for 2 teams, they would need 4 coaches each day which may be hard to maintain.

The program is paid for by those who sign up and then some may come back to the school for anything that needs to be paid for, such as snacks for example. Sara is looking into it.

One spot needs to be held for a student suggested by Ms. McCleese.

- **Hospitality Dinner** (Anne Mastropietro) provided via email and copied below

We are all set to provide an Italian dinner for teachers this Thursday evening during conferences.

Hopefully, we will be able to host the traditional potluck luncheon for the teachers (usually in May, I think). I need to confirm the date.

We are still in need of additional committee members - two of the four of us will no longer have children at Willard next year. I did submit a blurb for the Weekly Wizard but got no response. I will start posting on the FB pages.

- **G4G** (Lindsay McIntyre) provided via email and copied below

Green4Good is busy partnering with Lincoln and Roosevelt for the community bike exchange as well as preparing for Earth Day.

The **community bike exchange** is Saturday, April 9th from 10 am to 1 pm at Roosevelt. More information is coming, but families / individuals will be able to drop off bikes and scooters in advance of the event. Broken bikes and good used bike accessories will also be accepted (any "leftovers" will be donated to Working Bikes). Right now we only need donations ... most volunteer shifts will likely be covered.

Earth Day - yay! Although we're out of school on the actual day (4/22), we'll be doing fun activities all week. Below are the ideas that we have brainstormed and hope to finalize in the next week or so:

- **Walk/bike to school week** (with t-shirt ties again!); note - we don't have school on Earth Day 4/22 so this will be a 4-day event
 - **Cloth mask recycling drive** (students to drop off their cloth masks in the office for textile recycling)
 - **Videos of parents reading environmentally-friendly books available to teachers** via a google drive (a fun resource for teachers to be able to access whenever they need a quick break ... also a way for parents to be "in" in the classroom)
 - **Electronic earth day scavenger hunt** available through the Wizard Weekly and posted on Seesaw by teachers; something to do the day kids are out of school
 - Lastly, we are in need of 100% cotton t-shirts (the fewer logos the better) to restock our t-shirt ties supply. Will you let Lindsay know if you have any that she can pick up
- **Fundraising** (Meredith Maienza) present at meeting but also provided via email, copied below

For the Wolves Willard family day, we have sold 55 tickets thus far which is \$457 in funds for the PTO.

I'm partnering with Panda Express to do another fundraising event. Details are still pending. I'd also like to do the fundraiser that Lincoln is doing with Sugar Beet. I'll reach out this week for that. I'd like to do a summer send off fundraiser, and am open to ideas. That's it for now, just a brief update.

- **C4K** (Kelly O'Keefe)

Maureen was curious about a speaker fee if she was going to be speaking on her book, The Conscious Parent, and Kelly was wondering if that was an option to pay her. The amount quoted was \$250. The budget for C4K is \$500, looking at the provided budget. Stephanie suggested asking if she would do it for a slightly lower rate, such as \$175 or \$200. The discussion will continue off line and they will get back to Kelly by the weekend.

Kelly wonders if she can include info on the book in the Wizard Weekly because she wants parents to be prepared and excited when and if we do book Maureen as a speaker. Kelly will continue to plan and discuss with Stephanie, Anna and Diane as the program progresses.

13. New Business

Q: Why are we not having a science fair this year? A: There are a lot of volunteers and behind the scenes work involved that cannot be safely navigated this year.

Q: Could a parent launch a science type fair outside of school? A: Diane would like to know more about how this would work and how much the school would be expected to be involved.

14. Public Comment

15. Adjournment at 8:05pm.

*** Next meeting: April 6th, 8:45am ***