
PTO BOARD MEETING

Present

Honora Gerbeck (Co-President), Tracey Harrah (Co-President), Pontea Smithson (Treasurer), Christina Hammond (Secretary), Jenn von Stauffenberg (Communications), Sarah Martin (Enrichment), Amy McFarland (Building Leadership Team Liaison), Megan Livingston (Jogathon Chair), Kristen Mills (Kindergarten Representative), Magda Pratt (1st Grade Representative), Margaret Reeves (3rd Grade Representative), Lori Sinclair (4th Grade Representative), Whitney Skarbek (Principal), Katie Brase (School Counselor), Paige Clark, Casey Schmidt, Deborah Kummerow, Rebecca Barker, Kristin Jackson, Lauren Love, Shalynn Howard, Christy Remedios, Lisa Sipprell, Teresa Yette, The Wetzels, Monique Osius, Maria Gaydos, Annie Graebner, Wendy Corelis, Leif Dalan, Jen, Michael Greer, Caitlin Kogan, Van, Ashley Heiskanen, Emily Wooton

Approval of PTO Board Meeting Minutes from August 17, 2021

Pontea Smithson motioned to approve the 8/17/2021 PTO Meeting Minutes. Honora Gerbeck seconded the motion. Tracey Harrah and Christina Hammond replied to approve the motion with a majority.

Welcome (Honora and Tracey)

Principal Update and Questions (Ms. Skarbek)

Lunch Supervision: Thank you to everyone who volunteered for lunch supervision. We are in the process of hiring people to fill those positions.

Volunteers: Currently in phase of “mission critical” – is this something that has to happen? Trying to limit extra people in the building and on campus. Really hoping to open it up at some point this year and bring more families and volunteers into the building.

Lunch: We have 40 seats under the covered outdoor area; received 20 extra folding tables and extra chairs. When it’s sunny, students are eating picnic style and 6 feet apart. When it rains and the ground is wet, we will fill as many as we can in the covered outdoor area with 40 students and we should be able to socially distance inside more than 6 feet so there should be fewer than 30 students inside, meaning we can space students further apart. All windows and doors are open that can be open. Priority to any students who need to eat outside for health reasons.

Arrival: Arrival is going better. Continue to pull all the way forward to let your child out - that helps speed things up. If your student is not ready to get out of the car yet, paying attention to your student exiting the car and pulling forward. Thank you to those of you who are already doing that and have kids ready to jump out and go.

Dismissal: Dismissal is going better. We are down to about 8-10 minutes (2:30pm). The biggest issue is the back up onto Day Road and Madison Ave. by 2pm. You can arrive at 2:25pm/2:30pm and you will go quickly through the line now. We are cleared out by 2:35pm.

Update: Things are going smoothly. Kids are happy and playing together. Reminders given all the time to social distance. Seeing happy kids working together, learning how to work together in groups and collaboratively again. It's joyful to see.

Questions/Responses:

- Do we encourage kids to bring rain jackets, etc.? For the most part, the students will be outside, definitely rain jackets and boots. If the field gets really wet, we will close the field down so we don't get soaking wet/muddy.
- Is there a space for rain boots or should students wear them all day? This is a personal choice. I would ask the classroom teacher – teachers might have personal preferences on where to keep the boots if your child wants to change into rain boots.
- Bikes - Is anything helping or not helping? As long as parents are staying by the flagpole for pickup (flagpole side is preferred so there is one area; this also helps in case there is a substitute). The kids are doing great with checking in with an adult.
- Dogs – how far are dogs allowed in or not? Dogs need to be on a leash no longer than 6 feet. We do have students who are afraid of dogs so being cautious to keep your dog away from students and the general population is really important because we want everyone to feel safe. Dogs should be well-mannered.

Appreciation: So grateful to be here and to be in the Wilkes community. It's a special place because of our staff and parent community. I am a BHS graduate. I spent 18 years of my life here and then moved from CA. I have a 1st grader in Mrs. Darling's class and we are really loving being here. Thank you for creating such a welcoming community on the parent side.

Counselor Introduction and Update (Ms. Brase)

Introduction: I am from Colorado originally. I have been here 22 years and it's great. I have 2 kids, was a Wilkes parent, and my kids are now a Junior and an 8th grader. Previously, I worked at Poulsbo Elementary and before that I was a counselor at a middle school in Bremerton.

I am working with Whitney Skarbek and Sue Constan to see what has our school been used to, where we want to go from here, what it looks like now with remote learning and coming back.

As a school counselor, there are 3 tiers. The first tier is the whole school efforts (for everybody), tier 2 is for a little bit more needs, and tier 3 is for our highest needs. I will do whole school/classroom teaching, small groups, and some individual one-on-one connection with kids. I am also managing 504 Plans.

Current and Upcoming Plans: I am currently in the classrooms introducing myself, letting students know who I am and what the counselor does. I will be scheduling for K, 1st, and 2nd with Kelso's choices and I will be scheduling bullying lessons for 3rd and 4th. October is anti-bullying month. January – Great Kindness Challenge. February - All We Need Is Love Day.

Connection/Communication: I welcome hearing from you! There are so many ways we can go - mindfulness, emotional regulation, anxiety. Information is key for me about your student – pick up the phone any time you want to. I love hearing from the community.

PTO has worked closely with Sue Constan supporting school efforts; PTO loves helping out with these initiatives if volunteers are needed.

Jogathon

The Jogathon is back. We took a year off last year and the details for this year are still to be determined. It will not be the event that we've had before with lots of parents at the school cheering - that's not something we can do right now, but we can still bring the community building piece to the fundraiser and make it something fun to participate in as teams, classmates, the whole school.

Fundraising goal \$65,000. When we reach our goal, free yearbooks for every student at Wilkes. This is something we've done in the past and we love to offer. The funds go into PTO budget which supports a lot of things at Wilkes that aren't covered by other funds – the extras that make Wilkes such a nice place for our kids to be learning and growing (ex. field trips, assemblies, etc.). This looks different in this current situation - this year is different than last year. We are optimistic that we will have opportunities and we want to be able to seize those opportunities when they come up.

Dates: Kickoff date is 10/1. Fundraising window will run until 10/22. Information and details will be coming.

Megan Livingston – Jogathon is a fun way to support our school. It is so important to have these funds for our staff, teachers, Whitney to do the amazing things they do. It's interesting to see how little actually filters down from the funds from the state. The Jogathon is a great way to bolster that; we offset that. We will be pushing out information on 10/1, if you can help your student and families get the word out. We will have spirit wear and costumes. The goal is to have fun. We will have some friendly competition but it's really meant for everyone, whether it's in person at PE or virtually, it's on and we are going to have fun.

Tracey Harrah – Wilkes has been so supportive of the Jogathon, it's so much fun, Whitney was telling us the other day that the students were stopping her in the hall and asking if we are having the Jogathon. It's great for supporting the school and PTO.

Honora Gerbeck – We took the year off last year. In years past, our fundraising was funding the next school year. By taking a year off, we've pivoted to fundraising for the school year we are in. We feel good about that change but it makes it more imperative because the funds we raise are the dollars that will fund what we want and need for this year.

Board Positions

- We need a 2nd Grade Representative
- Assistant Treasurer: Our treasurer, Pontea, would love it if there is someone in our community who is proficient in QuickBooks and could help with the QuickBooks. If you or someone you know has that expertise, please let us know. The position of Assistant Treasurer is one that we haven't filled in the recent past but the Treasurer role is a job that more than one person can hold. Whitney Skarbek suggested (through chat) that Lori Sinclair may be able to possibly help with QuickBooks.

Back to School Coffee at Carly's Rolling Bay Café

- It was wonderful to meet people new to the school and reconnect with people. It was a nice day out and potentially we might do something like this again in the future. It is tricky to navigate what we can and should be doing in-person, but it is really nice to meet up face-to-face. Thank you to Wilkes' parent, Carly, for letting us use her space to gather outside safely.

Lunch Supervision/Volunteer Appreciation

- Huge thank you to everyone who helped out with lunch supervision. There will be new hires so lunch supervision volunteers will not be needed but it has been very appreciated. We look forward to more opportunities for volunteering in the future. Thank you to our volunteer community for always being ready to step up!

Questions/Responses

- How open does everyone feel to reimagining past events to see if there are safe ways to do them, using the field, etc., or if we just can't do that right now? If there are ideas or need help coordinating, I'd be happy to do that.
 - Whitney Skarbek – Trying to think carefully about what assemblies and community events look like. Currently, with being in “mission critical,” we can't gather our entire school community or be together for more than 15 minutes so until things kind of loosen up, we will have to get creative about what that looks like. It is something we can think about as we get into October and after the Jogathon. It's on my mind and things I'm thinking about include continuing the community building piece and thinking about how to do that. I would love to work with PTO on any ideas you may have and work with the district office on how we can make it safe for everybody.

- Do we have contact information for the new parents and families so class reps can reach out to them and offer help there?
 - Honora – I am working on that this week. I'm pulling what I can from the directory and I will get together with Sheila. A significant number of people opt out unintentionally. Jenn also needs that list for communications. When you go in the directory, you can search by grade level, teacher last name, etc., so that will return some results and will give you a partial list but we are definitely missing some people on that so it might be good to hold off until Sheila gets back to us.
- Additional fundraising opportunity like a “giving tree” fund?
 - Honora – We have a wonderful community and pretty strong track record with being able to fundraise. For this year, we are going with Jogathon. We are pretty optimistic based on previous years. There has been talk of moving toward a central fundraising effort for all the schools, for example, a button for donating when you do ABC registration. It's definitely a discussion among the PTOs. For now, for this year, we have a good system in place and experienced people who have done it several times in the past and I feel good about it for this year but ideas are being discussed and I'd love to find out more about that idea.
 - Megan – Background: We've gone from an opportunity where it was very focused on a small group of people giving at an auction to the Jogathon that is a whole school opportunity for community connection that we were really missing before. Everyone was able to go and cheer at the Jogathon so it was really good for community building. I think we need to decide as a community, is it through this type of fundraiser or a separate activity? As someone who has been running this, it would be nice to have a button and to be able to ask for that. The words used (“giving tree”) highlights families in need. We do have families that reach out in different ways and the PTO does devote money to support families in need. I would love to see something more unified where the whole district has one purpose. Would love to know more about that idea.

Voting In New Members

- Voting in: Jenn von Stauffenberg (Communications) and Sarah Martin (Enrichment)
- Tracey motioned for Jenn von Stauffenberg (Communications) and Sarah Martin (Enrichment); Amy McFarland and Pontea Smithson seconded. Motion passed.
- Welcome and thank you for taking on these roles!

Guest Speakers

- If you have a guest speaker suggestions (parent resources, things pertaining to school, other suggestions), please email ptowilkes@gmail.com.

Next Meeting

- Meeting adjourned at 10am
- Next Meeting: **October 15, 2021 at 9am**