

**Minutes**  
**WWHS PTSA Meeting**  
**October 14, 2011**  
**7:30 PM, Media Center**

**I. SGA President's Report/Homecoming – Ari Kapner**

**Homecoming** Coordinated by the SGA and the 5<sup>th</sup> period Leadership Class (made up of sophomores, juniors and seniors). November 4 is the Homecoming game and November 5 is the dance. The school days leading up to the weekend are Spirit Days, with various events and activities:

**Hallway Decorations** Each class decorates a hallway, taking a different approach to the overall theme, which this year is science fiction movies. The freshmen are doing Star Wars, the sophomores Harry Potter, the juniors Pirates of the Caribbean and the seniors Indiana Jones. Monday and Tuesday nights of that week, after school until 10:00 p.m. are for decorating. Students are encouraged to come out and help their classes.

**Spirit Days** Each day has a different theme and students are encouraged to dress for the theme. There is no school on Monday (October 31). Tuesday is pajama day. Wednesday is sports jersey day. Thursday is Battle of the Classes day, so students wear their class t-shirts. Friday is blackout day (wear all black) in support of the football game that evening.

**Battle of the Classes** Thursday night (November 3). Each class has a team of students that competes in fun games against the teams from the other classes. Tryouts for the class teams will take place October 19 and 20 during lunch and after school.

**Homecoming Game** Friday night, November 4. Blackout attire is encouraged.

**Homecoming Dance** Saturday, November 5, in the school gym, 8:30-11:00 p.m. The SGA is seeking some parent volunteers for two-hour shifts. Along with the dance, there will be a photo booth and a separate room for casual conversation and hanging out (away from the music). The SGA will be looking to parents to borrow some furniture to comfortably equip that room. Additional donations or loans of spare holiday lights will also be sought to decorate the gym.

**II. President's Report – Robin Rosenblum**

A. **News Literacy Project Fall Forum** October 19, 7:30 p.m. EJ Dionne and David Brooks will be speaking, with moderator Jessica Yellin.

- B. **9/11 Memorial Paver** We are still a bit short on collections for this project to purchase either a paver or a brick at the memorial in New York to remember those citizens of Montgomery County who died on 9/11. Donations can be made on [www.pay4schoolstuffonline.com](http://www.pay4schoolstuffonline.com).
- C. **“Listen and Learn”** with new school Superintendent Dr. Joshua Starr has been rescheduled to November 16, 7:30-9:00 p.m. at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. This event, rescheduled from October 10, is an opportunity for parents and community members to meet Dr. Starr and to offer their views and perspectives on what is working well in MCPS and what the school system can do to improve. Dr. Starr has a keen interest in hearing directly from parents as he sets his priorities for the school system. This is also an opportunity for parents to learn more about his educational philosophy and leadership style. Childcare and interpretation services will be provided.

### III. **President Elect’s Report – Cindy Campbell**

- A. **Teen Curfew** A resolution has been proposed at MCCPTA to support the Montgomery County Council’s pending (but indefinite at this time) legislation for a teen curfew. A counter-resolution is also expected to be proposed opposing the possible legislation. In preparation for a delegate vote later this month, the topic was raised for consideration so that our delegates to MCCPTA (Deb Lang and Jean Schlesinger) can represent Whitman PTSA appropriately. The board discussed the topic with Dr. Goodwin, and recommended to the PTSA membership that we should vote against both resolutions, on the grounds that this topic is not one that is appropriate for PTSA consideration. The board suggests that this topic is divisive and more of a social matter, not one that affects schooling or education and therefore not one that the PTSA should be involved with officially.

There was brief discussion of the recommendation. It was noted that Montgomery County police are in support of the curfew, so our voting in this matter would allow us to not officially have an opinion that might be counter to the police (who are so supportive and helpful at Whitman). It was acknowledged that most students would likely be opposed to the curfew—and we have 312 student members in the PTSA—while parents may be divided on the topic.

There was a motion to vote no for both resolutions. The motion was seconded and a voice vote passed.

- B. **Upcoming Speakers** Plans are underway to include a speakers for future PTSA meetings. Scheduled for the November 15<sup>th</sup> monthly PTSA meeting is

Sal Zambri, a Whitman parent who has a powerful presentation and video about the perils of distracted driving. Students will hear him speak earlier in the day, and then parents will hear his presentation after the PTSA meeting. For January's meeting, Kate Rizzi will speak about student executive function and organization. Future meeting presentations may address safe driving and details on student licenses. Ideas for other speakers or presentation topics are welcome.

#### **IV. Principal's Report – Dr. Alan Goodwin**

A moment of silence was held for William McQuain, the student from Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School, who was recently found murdered.

***Sports Team Highlights*** The girls' tennis team won the division title and is headed to the county competitions next. The soccer team is undefeated and the cross-country team won the tournament it hosted recently at Whitman.

***PSAT*** Held last week, with a good turnout of 90% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders. Scores may be back by early December. 9<sup>th</sup> graders took a practice PSAT that they self-scored and should have. Additional copies of the practice PSAT can be picked up at the Career Center.

***Homecoming*** It's a fun week and a busy week, but well timed this year after the end of the grading period. Parents are urged to be vigilant about after-dance parties, and to review the Homecoming Tips that are posted on the school website. The tips provide information on dance transportation, dress as well as behavior and parties.

***Parent Events*** Many great upcoming events, between the News Literacy Project's Fall Forum, Dr. Brad Sachs speaking on November 2 about the "Good-Enough Child," the musical on November 17, and the choral and instrumental music concerts in December. Many events fill the auditorium, so come early to ensure you get seats.

***Facilities*** The hedges in the front of the school building have been removed to eradicate rats.

***Stress*** Seniors in particular typically might experience a lot of stress in the fall as they combine schoolwork and activities with college applications. The school will try to prepare juniors and their parents better so they will take advantage of the summer to get much of the college application work done before the school year begins.

**V. Treasurer's Report – Mario Finelli**

The budget report was circulated. No additional information was discussed and there were no questions.

**VI. PTSA Board Members' Reports**

**A. Membership – Sheryl Steinberg**

As of October 14, the membership is at 823 families and 312 students. A few staff have also joined, and Robin Rosenblum will be speaking at an upcoming faculty luncheon to explain more about the PTSA and encourage more to join.

**B. Volunteers – Wendy Kuhn**

No new report. All events are staffed and doing a good job.

**C. The Montgomery County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations (MCCPTA) – Jean Schlesinger**

The other cluster rep for our cluster, Elise Brown Hughes, was also in attendance and introduced.

**D. Directory Update – Jay Kaufman**

Directories are at the printer and estimated delivery is four weeks (end of November or early December).

**VII. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

*Following the meeting, Dr. Goodwin presented information about the wide array of in-school academic interventions available to students at Whitman, and took questions from parents. Please see the Whitman website for more detailed information about academic interventions.*