

**Winnetka District 36 Central PTO**  
**Minutes - January 6, 2017**

**Welcome: Jenny Keller**

- Present for the meeting: Jenny Keller, Shannon Preda, Brie Root, Jen Baker, Kymm Junker, Brooke Helmstetter, Julie Eldring, Jen Weiler, Trisha Kocanda
- Jenny is on the Calendar Committee as a parent representative – Meeting next week to confirm next year's calendar (2017-2018). Working to align it to the New Trier calendar. It has not determined if the start date will be before or after Labor Day...probably before. The Holiday Break will start later next year (right before Christmas). Trisha commented that it is highly regulated by the state and union.

**Secretary: Shannon Preda**

- Minutes from December approved.

**Treasurer's Report: Julie Eldring**

- Accountant has finalized the audit

**VP Communications Report: Brie Root**

- No report

**Superintendent Report: Trisha Kocanda**

- MLK - Day of Service nationally so the schools are supporting that initiative. Each school is celebrating it in their own way. Schools came up with how they are going to carry out service.
- Wil come to speech at Skokie and Washburn on MLK.
- Board meeting this month will have a work session looking at curriculum. Staff has worked hard on aligning and revising the reading curriculum specifically. Had core reading materials already development but have added in the areas of word study, phonics, spelling, vocab, and grammar. Have identified additional books and materials and focused on the K – 8 being aligned with the standards in this areas. All of these new materials will be presented to the board this month.
- Staff Professional Development: Teachers College coming back in the August for a week. One of the highest quality professional learning. Foundation has partially funded these professional learning opportunities.
- Greg Kerr is retiring at the end of this year. Currently conducting a search and will have a recommendation to the board as early as next month.
- Greg Kerr will come next month to the Central PTO Meeting to discuss donations. There has been more of an interest in individual parents being sponsors of particular items. Good fundraising strategy but we want to make sure it doesn't create a competitive environment. Speaking with principals first then PTO. He will talk about some of the financial decisions they board will be making between now and March. We can also discuss furniture purchases, PTO

- supported vs district supported (ie. Skokie Washburne PTO on hold for purchasing furniture for Washburne).
- Board election is April 2, Caucus slated 3 candidates: Nat Roberts (Hubbard Woods), Steve Cirulis (Crow Island), Scott Conine (Greeley). 4<sup>th</sup> Candidate, John Griffin (Crow Island), also submitted his paperwork to be considered as an independent candidate.
  - Kendra Wallace, Dana Crumbley, and Betsey Owens are rolling off. There will be a mentorship program with the outgoing members. There is a turn over meeting in April. New President will be determined after the new candidates are in place.
  - Enrollment Balancing:
    - Last community outreach / input session was last night.
    - About 125 community members attended the last 3 sessions.
    - Meetings Structure: Video on why the problem exists, review of options, what has been done so far. Committee members at each station to hear feedback from community members. Exit survey to collect information as people leave. There will be a summary of this information given to the committee before their next meeting.
    - Panel of staff was able to interact with the committee, all captured in a Educational Impact Report that will also be given to the committee.
    - The committee will meet on Jan 12 and 17 as a committee and then present their recommendation to the board Jan 24
    - Board will deliberate a bit then will vote no later than March. Board could vote in February also.
  - Lead testing in water – We went through testing last year and it was clear. Had 2 drinking fountains tested at HW should very trace amounts, not at levels that was actionable by the EPA. Tribune is running an article about lead in water and that our district will be named. The reporter let district respond...District had already began replacing the old pipes proactively and one of the fountains that tested positive has the new PTO funded filter on it. Kids are safe and water is safe! District will be checking for lead every year although it is not mandated. Winnetka was one of the only districts to arrange testing proactively.
  - Linda Yonke, NT Superintendent is retiring. Paul Sally has been named as new Superintendent.
    - At Superintendents' meeting Linda discussed use of ERB in freshman placement. She feels it is being used out of context and to compare our schools and it is not the determining factor in the placement of our students. They have other means that are used in placement. We are still giving it but Linda has not ordered the per district report on the ERB. All the NT District Superintendents agree that this is the right thing to do and will have a united response. None of the schools use the ERB for educational planning. Winnetka and Sunset Ridge were the only schools that shared the testing information with their districts. Individual districts will still get the information on how our students are placed (courses, levels, grades) because this research based.

- Poorest predictor of success is standardized test scores. Strongest predictor is grades.
- Difference (this year) is Linda did not order the reports by district. She will get them on each student. Winnetka will get the information each student. FOYA – Freedom of information act request comes out yearly and goes out to all the districts. All NT superintendents will have a coordinated response. Response / communications from Superintendents will come out right around when the testing information is mailed out.
- Trisha went to DC in December and join a group of rural and urban superintendents from east coast and west coast to look at the predictors of long-term success at the K-8 level. Standardized test scores are low predictor of success and can actually misplace and inhibit student growth and development. Research shows that when kids are involved in an extracurricular activity, it is a good indicator of their connection with school and how they perform in school. Looking at other researched based things and how they predict success: Service based learning, 3<sup>rd</sup> graders needing to read at grade level, and play-based minutes in K.

**Crow Island Report –Jen Baker, CI PTO President**

- Still some questions about whether 4<sup>th</sup> grade or K will be moved. If 4<sup>th</sup> grade moves, the PTO will do a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade graduation.
- Teacher Gift Fund: teachers love it, more participation every year but ended up calling / e-mailing about 100 families at the end. HW shared that they collect all donations / costs one time at the beginning of the year.
- Parent / teacher party late February. Will raise money for the STEAM program at CI. STEAM staff put together a wish list as fundraising targets.
- Effects of 4<sup>th</sup> grade going to Skokie: PTO implications include officers will not have kids at CI, K parents are a feeder for PTO
- Jen had great feedback from parents on the last EB meeting. Parents were really happy to hear the discussions about the educational effects of each option.
- PTO MLK Project: Partnering with Refugee One to make welcome bags for refugee children. Each grade is going to make something to go into the bag. PTO funded \$900 in books to put into bags.

**Greeley Report: Kymm Junker, Greeley PTO President**

- 2 refillable water machines installed over break. The PTO funded one and the 4<sup>th</sup> grade class gifted the other.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Graders are putting together a Greeley Has Got Talent Show that will run around Valentine's Day.

**Hubbard Woods Report: Brooke Helmstetter, HW PTO President**

- HW put in a second water cooler at the beginning of the yaer.
- Parent / Teacher party the 1<sup>st</sup> week of February at Happy Inn

- MLK: Partnering with Kindness Connection- Sponsored by a combination of PTO funds and HW School funds.
- Teacher Brunch right before break. Presented staff with their holiday gifts at the brunch.

**Skokie-Washburne Report – Kim Melancon and Jenn Weiler, PTO Co-Chairs**

- Gift Fund went over well at Skokie / Washburne – 75% participation rate. PTO put 2k toward it as well.
- Jan 20 – Washburne Wipe Out Party. Planning going well.
- Request from Dave to support MLK service day. Ask for \$5000, PTO discussed and decided to donate ½ (\$2500). Money will go towards student identified organizations: Lurie Children’s Hospital and Heartland Alliance (assists refugees settling in Chicago)
- Discussion re: school service projects and using PTO funds to support. CI has a budget for Community Outreach in PTO budget.

**Next Meeting:**

Friday, Feb 3, 2017, 9:15am, Skokie School Community Room