



WILLARD PTG

Communication | Enrichment | Community

Willard PTG Meeting

September 19, 2022

Attendance

Liz Colgan, Kaitlyn Whittier, Jon Smith, Robin Baughman, Jamie Ring, Tracy DeTora, Amy Casher, Jeanne Fahey, Susannah Benner, Diana Abata, Roo Garg, Kristen Lester, Jaime Patterson, Matt Lucey, Allison Green, Erinn Prebil, Yumi Suarez, Reem Alzahabi, Meagan MacNutt, Dan and Tiffany Apczynski, Preeti Gundecha, Colleen Currier, Miriam Crowley, Darcy Heintz Perkins

Presidents' Welcome and Recap –

One of our PTG goals for the year is to involve parents more in PTG efforts. Not just volunteering but actively participating in discussions and making suggestions for new activities/idea sharing. PTG goals are enrichment and community building for Willard families and students. We hope to begin linking minutes from our meetings to the Willard Weekly to help families feel more informed. Willard Wear is another way to show school spirit! Here's what has been happening so far this year:

- Staff appreciation committee hosted a welcome back breakfast- Thank you to the volunteers who assisted with that!
- Back to School Night/Open house PTG table generated volunteer sign ups, annual appeal contributions, and great discussions with parents.
- Willard Student Directory- Thank you to Candace Root who works on the directory every year!!! There's still time to purchase your directory.
- DEI and belonging director Andrew Nyamekye is providing wonderful newsletters – please check them out for resources, information and events. Thank you to Andrew for all of his efforts!!

Principal and Teacher Update- Matt Lucey and Jon Smith

Matt Lucey: 435 students at Willard this year. Corn, beans and squash visual when you enter are the backbone of the school- staff, parents, and students working together. 3 new staff members this year- special education, 5th grade teacher, physical education



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School improvement plan- delineates goals for the year. DEI and belonging efforts- what can we do as a community to ensure that all members of our community feel embraced and cared for and respected. For instance, world flags are visible in the cafeteria year-round. Continuing our special education efforts focused on language-based needs. Continuing our MTSS program (multi-tiered systems of support)- monitoring, resources, assessments are more uniform, and the program overall is robust. Student needs are better known through this program and those needs can be met.

Open circle (social emotional learning program) ended its operation via Wellesley College. Responsive classroom is new program being run in each classroom. Many overlaps between this and open circle program. Every morning Mr. Lucey greets and every afternoon he says goodbye to students by name to help them feel seen and that we know them personally. Introduction of the Fly five initiative - lesson based program that is focused on making students feel safe at school and making students aware of each others's needs.

Update on school safety training. Concord Public Schools are using the ALICE program and will work to teach classrooms responsiveness should a menacing or dangerous situation arise. ALL CALL is available in every classroom- every teacher/staff can respond and send school wide alerts concerning behavior or safety risks. With our district's approach, individual staff makes a decision on their own based on their training and circumstances in response to any given alert based on information available versus following a standard stay in classroom directive. Police are working with the teams to be aware of physical space (what would you do if you were in cafeteria, in third grade classroom, etc.). Staff have been trained by Concord police already this year and there will be preparedness exercises for children in the future, but we will not have traditional active event drills and instead focus on behaviors to follow/listening to teacher exercises. Concord Police has reaffirmed they will enter the building for any situation, always. Students with special accommodations are also explicitly planned for in these potential situations.

Back to school night was very well attended. First all school event since pre-Covid coming up with an all grade assembly.



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Safety for drop off and pick up reminder- never pass another vehicle in the drop off line!! Always have student exit on sidewalk side of the school. Use the crosswalk when crossing from parking lot. Teachers must know where kids are going- do not take your children out of line without teacher knowing. These reminders are to keep our children safe.

This weekend is Mighty Moose, Kicks for cancer/Sticks for cancer, Willard will be invited to wear pink on Friday and families are encouraged to participate in the many weekend activities.

Mr. Lucey raised a conversation about privacy of students and every child's right to an education. As a community, we must never discuss children who are not our own, ever. This is a shared responsibility amongst all parents and the PTG to model the behaviors we are teaching our children. It's critical that every child and family feel welcomed in our school and no parent should ever be made to feel that their child is a burden to a classroom or our school environment. Having a diverse community of students make us better. We should invite curiosity in our children, but we should also reinforce that everyone is doing their best.

Question was raised about the middle school project and what can we do as parents to support this project- how do we share information with Willard community? Due to inflation the project is over budget and while value engineering project has taken place, we don't yet have a solution. This week, the select board will ask for a Special Town Meeting to vote on extra budget. Parents can stay informed via middle school committee meetings and school committee meetings.

Jon Smith: On behalf of Willard Teachers, thank you to the PTG for providing funds at the beginning of the year to help teachers purchase school supplies. This tradition of support is really meaningful. The events that make up the school year, from book fair to spelling bee to science fair, are events that our kids look forward to. The kids who are at Willard are eager to be at school every day even moreso since COVID and the teachers are enthusiastic and as engaged as ever. Jon is always available to take comments or questions about activities that have to do with teacher support, etc.



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PTG Committee Updates

Treasurer's Report - Colleen Carrier

Fiscal year ended in July. Came out better than expected to our budget. A few outstanding items that did not come in. Already sold 150 directories. Annual appeal has already begun with several contributions to date.

Annual Appeal update – Robin Baughman/Yumi Suarez

Annual Appeal is the PTG's principal fundraiser, and offsets the need for smaller fundraisers that require more participation from families (i.e. selling cookie dough/wrapping paper etc.). This funding covers ALL student events and PTG contributions for teachers to use for classroom supplies/teacher appreciation efforts. We typically spend \$145 per student but please consider making a contribution of any amount. Initial email was sent out this week with more communications forthcoming.

Fundraising/Sponsorship - Susannah Benner

Student Directory - individuals can purchase the directory for class lists. Business ads have been sold for directory as well- very successful effort this year. Have raised \$5000 in sales so far this year.

In the fall (likely November), we will have a silent auction- hybrid approach is being explored. Most successful items are experiences that you can't go out and purchase on your own (pizza parties, principal for a day, home cooked meal).

Spring raffle basket effort- held at spring festival event. Each classroom sponsors a basket with a theme- information will be shared in the Spring.

Amazon Smile, Baystate textiles bin in parking lot, book fair sales, picture day, holiday cards via Minted are all other ways to fundraise for the PTG.

Social Committee events – Robin Baughman for Nicole Saia and Darcy Heintz Perkins



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Ice Cream Social will be held 2pm-3:30pm Sunday 9/25- Bedford Farms will be ice cream supplier. Looking for scooper volunteers and set up/clean-up crew.

Parent Social- parents only event held in the fall. Hoping to incorporate the silent auction into this event this year. Trying to determine if we have it at a home or at a venue as we did last year. Venue requires more logistical planning and potentially more costs- group discussion about using a volunteer home versus a venue and indoor versus outdoor given the time of year.

Picture Day - Megan MacNutt

Will be held on Tuesday, October 4th. Will be outside unless raining and will move inside. Looking for volunteer sign ups to help with day of needs. Retake day will be offered. You can order online and/or a flier will be sent home- Willard Weekly will have the link in upcoming editions.

Room Parents - Tracy DeTora and Colleen Currier

Still looking for a few room parents for 5 classrooms- Ms. Morris, Ms. Schofield/Cupp, Mrs. Reid, Mrs. Rivers, Mrs. Vaudrain. Room parents assist with coordinating classroom communications, class gifts, teacher requests. Teacher appreciation week will be handled by the appreciation committee this year to help reduce the asks to parents.

Upcoming Assemblies and Enrichment - Robin Baughman on behalf of Danielle McKenna and Amy Casher

These school events comprise the bulk of our PTG budget. First all school assembly is happening since March 2019!! Grade level enrichment is being scheduled- working with teachers to learn what is of interest to teachers and rethinking some opportunities based on curriculum.

Book Fair- Darcy Heintz-Perkins and Jamie Ring

Book fair is back to in-person! Will be held October 18th and half day on the 19th with evening hours for families on the 18th. We are working with the Silver Unicorn in Acton who has curated a wonderful selection of over 200 titles. Classrooms will have



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25-minute blocks of time to browse/purchase books and teachers and the library will have a chance to select “wish list” books for families and the PTG to donate. We know how much students look forward to the book fair and are excited to bring it back to Willard. We will need parent volunteers to help us at check out and for set up. Stay tuned for more information!

Meeting adjourned

Next meeting:
October 17th @ 7pm