



GENERAL MEETING MINUTES November 15, 2019

Call to Order: 12:02 p.m.

President Kit Spelce welcomed those in attendance, introducing herself and her co-president Kristin Paull who was unable to attend the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes from the October 25, 2019 General Meeting were presented for approval, copies having been provided. Cindy Blaydon moved to approve the minutes. Martha Pigott seconded the motion, which was approved.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: Principal Steve Ramsey spoke of the many activities currently taking place on campus involving various student groups, including The Nutcracker, band competitions, choir musical auditions, a drama department production, football playoffs, and the beginning of the basketball and wrestling seasons. During this time, with four weeks until the end of the semester, he emphasized the importance of helping students focus on milestones in order to maintain perspective during stressful times. He also stated that many seniors are completing their college applications at this time.

COUNSELOR'S REPORT: Counselor Heidi Sauer reminded those in attendance that AP exams should have been paid for and will be ordered today. Students taking one-semester AP courses, such as Economics or Government, in the spring semester will have an opportunity to officially register for those exams at a later time. At this point, 1,746 students have declared their intention of taking 4,454 AP exams. In addition, she asked parents to encourage their students to review their spring schedules in Skyward and make sure that they are correct. Any scheduling changes should be requested prior to winter break. In January, course selection and four-year planning will take place.

Seniors – Currently, 75% of the senior class have applied to at least one college, with 2,989 applications submitted thus far (an average of four per student).

Juniors – The junior class took the PSAT on October 16th, with results being available online starting December 11th. Junior parents were emailed today about the free ACT exam being given on March 24, 2020.

Sophomores – The sophomore parent meeting will be held in the spring. Via Naviance, the sophomore class participated in an intelligence-type test which will link to potential career and college major choices.

Freshmen – Counselors met with the freshman class in September to perform a learning-style inventory through Naviance. Freshman were also given a presentation on the various campus resources available to them.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Kathi Haralson, Eanes Education Foundation Executive Director: Ms. Haralson announced that one out of every ten Westlake High School teachers is funded by the Eanes Education Foundation (EEF). Fundraising totals for this year stand at \$400,000 with 21% campus participation for the high school. Last year's participation rate was 24.7%. She encouraged those present to please contribute to EEF at any level. She also spoke of the establishment of the WHS Alumni Association. Around 25 years ago, there was a Westlake Alumni Association, but it was not sustained and the membership data was lost. Two years ago, efforts were launched to re-establish the foundation in anticipation of the school's 50th anniversary. This year, on the Friday of homecoming weekend, a tailgate was held for all Westlake alumni prior to the homecoming football game. Another new tradition established this year was a brunch in honor of distinguished Westlake alumni. This year's honorees included the late Toody Byrd, Drew Brees, Rich Riley, and Alexis Jones. Ms. Haralson spoke of the advantages of an active alumni network for recent Westlake graduates as they seek opportunities for internships in college and post-education employment around the country. Membership levels start at \$25.

Dr. Kristy Sailors, Eanes Director of Instructional Technology: Dr. Sailors, who is new to the district this year, spoke of the technology changes that took place over the summer in response to a security issue identified at the elementary level. In order to address the issue, the Green iPad Restrictions were established, with the unintended consequence of creating challenges for teachers and upper-level students. Recognizing the hampering nature of the new restrictions on educational endeavors, Dr. Sailors is working with teachers to identify areas in which broadening some of the web filter categories would be both safe and effective. She said the greatest changes for students occurred at the elementary levels, with middle school and particularly high school students experiencing lesser impact. Dr. Sailors then took questions regarding the new technology policies.

Tiffany Hildreth, PTO Allocations Chair: Ms. Hildreth explained the role of the PTO and the allocations process in funding items requested by WHS staff (as opposed to staff positions). President Spelce provided a brief explanation of the allocations process whereby staff members submit requests for items which are then evaluated by Principal Ramsey and the PTO Executive Board and, where possible, fulfilled utilizing funds raised through the various PTO fundraisers. Ms. Hildreth spoke of the PTO's role in funding the outdoor classroom, a project which exemplifies the PTO's goal of funding projects and requests which will impact as many students as possible across diverse disciplines. Having provided a handout detailing many of the items funded and the departments supported, Ms. Hildreth reviewed these items for those in attendance and spoke of the ways in which they will benefit WHS teachers and students. Additional allocation requests will be reviewed in Spring 2020.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Copies of the Treasurer's Report having been provided for those in attendance, Treasurer Kori Phenegar announced that all fundraisers this year have exceeded budgeted expectations. She also spoke of the PTO's role in funding the outdoor classroom and the Fall 2019 allocations.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: President Spelce announced that the December PTO General Meeting has been cancelled. The next General Meeting will take place on January 24, 2020, where the

minutes from this meeting will be presented for approval. Thanking Diane Dealy for all of her hard work on the project, she shared that progress on the outdoor classroom is ahead of schedule and may be ready prior to the beginning of the spring semester.

President Spelce encouraged everyone present to express their gratitude to Texas Honey Ham for partnering with the Staff Appreciation Committee to provide lunch for the WHS staff yesterday. In December, Staff Appreciation will host their annual holiday cookie buffet, and \$25 gift cards will be given to each staff member. Volunteers will be collecting gift card and cash donations at drop-off locations on December 6th. Also, for the first time, donors can now choose and purchase gift cards online.

Pavers are still available for \$100 for any senior parents wishing to commemorate their student's graduation year. Pavers will be installed near the football stadium.

The PTO Executive Board is seeking a Treasurer-Elect for 2020-2021. Anyone interested in the position is encouraged to contact Presidents Spelce or Paull.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:01 p.m.