

**West Vine Street School  
PTO Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, November 15, 9:30 am**

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**President's Report:**

Book Fair: Melissa Lestinsky reported that the total sales of the book fair topped \$3,000, of which our fundraising portion is 30%, approximately \$1,300. We may consider the spring book fair for a fundraiser as well, depending on what activities and programs we fund this year. Otherwise, we may extend the discount to families. The librarian was able to select books for the school as well.

Family Dining Out: Deb Pezzello reported that Westerly House of Pizza donated \$200 to the PTO from the October Family Dining Out night. There was discussion on where to hold the December Dining Out event. We will select a different restaurant in December and compare the proceeds to the October event. Then, a determination will be made if Westerly House of Pizza will be used again, or continue to work with a variety of restaurants.

**Box Tops, Other Collections:**

Melissa Lestinsky reported that Mrs. Bonet's class collected more than 400 Box Tops for the contest and had an ice-cream party on October 31<sup>st</sup>. In total, enough box tops were collected to raise \$300 for PTO activities. Collection of these box tops continues. Jennifer Fyke reported that Campbell's labels are also being collected and will be submitted to earn products for the classroom. Melissa has a wish list item from Mrs. Ribner. We also submitted paperwork to earn 1500 bonus points for school activities. Anne Watkins found someone in the Shriner's organization to collect pull-tabs. Ed Haberek continues to collect and recycle the ink jets for an additional fundraising opportunity. The PTO newsletter (to be published in December), will include a listing of these opportunities.

**Directory:**

Melissa thanked Jen Fyke for her work on the directory. It was printed and distributed to families in October.

**Food Drive/Community Meeting:**

Dawn Johannsen was not at the meeting, but asked Melissa to thank everyone for their participation in the food drive for the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center's Thanksgiving Food Baskets. The number of food items was greater than last year and the information will be presented at the Community meeting this afternoon. Vicki Andersen from the PNC is scheduled to be here to receive the items and thank the school for their contributions. The PNC's emergency food list is growing, as there is great need in the community. It was decided that we will take a similar approach to collecting food items for the 100<sup>th</sup> Day of School Celebration in February, assigning food items to each grade level so we can get a good variety of food to help stock the Neighborhood Center's pantry. Dawn will coordinate this collection as well. Mrs. Brown suggested that the school could possibly do a Community Meeting again in February.

Tapes for Education: McQuades is running a special promotion for schools called, "Tapes for Education". Melissa asked a volunteer to investigate this and report to the group. Stacey Cassata volunteered to look into this program.

**Pennies for Patients:** Anne Watkins will coordinate this program in which students bring in their spare change for the Leukemia Lymphoma Society. There is a kit to follow and Melissa will forward it to Anne. It is a set time in February or March, and concludes after a six-week time frame. Chelsea Groton Bank typically permits the PTO to process the money in their coin machine.

**Mini Grants:**

**USCG Band:** The Coast Guard Band has an educational outreach program in February and will come to the school to perform on February 26 or February 29. The ensemble will be a horn trio. There is no cost for this event.

**Shakespeare – Pinocchio:** This 55-minute performance from a theatre company from Waterbury is coming to the school in January for a morning performance. There is a cost for this event.

**Nature Center – Kindergarten:** Kindergarten teachers requested \$360 total (\$90 per classroom) to host the Nature Center to discuss seasons and how animals prepare for the winter to tie into their science curriculum. This project was approved.

**Mystic Ballet:** Krissa Anderson will look into the Ballet program, both the Mystic Ballet and another ballet company she is familiar with through her school.

**Secretary's Report:** Secretary Jennifer Fyke presented the minutes of the October Board meeting.

**Treasurer's Report:** Esther Denis-Vrins presented the Treasurer's Report. She reported that we have a robust balance in the savings and checking account and we should plan for the year how we are going to fund activities.

**Teacher's Report:** Mrs. Southard reported that school is participating in the "Decorate Your Door" contest and will go with the Jan Brett book theme. The contest is being judged on December 10<sup>th</sup> and winners will be notified on December 13<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Southard thanked the PTO on behalf of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers for the notebooks we purchased for their field trip to the Nature Center. She confirmed that Leslie Johnson is coming to the school for the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade writing project and will spend 10 days here. The cost of the project is approximately \$3,000. There is also a request to purchase a "stop light" for the multipurpose room for lunch periods.

**Principal's Report:** Mrs. Brown reported that Parent-Teacher conferences were successful. The reporting period closes today and teachers are in the process of inputting the information into the computer. There will be a "sing-a-long" in December for students. Literacy Night is scheduled at the High School tonight at 6:30; childcare will be provided.

**Other:**

Deb Pezzello researched the Night of Giving at the Crystal Mall, which is scheduled for this Sunday. After much discussion, it was decided that we would not participate in the event this year. Our thanks to Deb for looking into the possibility.

Anne Watkins and Krissa Anderson will look into some other possibilities for cultural programming during the school day (Anne knows someone who does a recycling play for children and Krissa knows a Native American storyteller.)

Michelle Joyce has a contact at the Mystic Aquarium and will look into the possibility of a free program that brings the Touch Tank to the school. She will also check with the School Nurse on any restrictions or health issues.

Ed Haberek, our newly elected First Selectman, invited the school to sign up for tours of the Town Hall. He will be present to show students around the facilities.

Teacher Wish List for the Holidays: Melissa Lestinsky will work with the teachers to put together a wish list for the classroom for the holidays, if parents are interested in gifting the classroom at the holidays.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 6 at 9:30 am in the Multipurpose Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Crowley Fyke  
Secretary, West Vine Street School PTO