

**Washtenaw International PTO Meeting Minutes**  
**6:30pm Mon. 12/9/2019**  
**Media Center, Washtenaw International**

In attendance: Lisa Brown (President; G10 Victoria); Rashonda Arnold (Treasury Team; G11 John, G8 Christina & G6 Angela); Anne Hooghart (Recording Secretary; G8 Kasey & G7 Cassidy); Sue Barker (Treasury Team; G9 Melody); Shonda Brewer (Communications Chair; G10 Calista); Ruby Daily (G9 Kail); Rosette La (G10 Anh-Tu); Shannon Baer (G7 Jeremiah); Sara Gentry (teacher representative; G6 Elise); Nhu Do (principal)

Meeting was called to order at 6:42pm.

1. Welcome –

Lisa B. welcomed everyone and noted that last month's meeting was cancelled due to a snowstorm. It was moved (Shonda) and seconded (Sue) to approve the minutes of 10/14 PTO meeting was tabled until distributed for review.

2. Treasurer's Report –

Sue B. distributed and explained treasurer reports from September, October, and November 2019, including some corrections made after the fact.

Moved (Anne) and seconded (Shannon) to approve the corrected treasurer's report from Sept. 2019 as written & distributed. Motion passed unanimously.

Moved (Ruby) and seconded (Rosette) to approve the corrections made to the Oct. 2019 treasurer's report as written & distributed. Motion passed unanimously.

Moved (Rosette) and seconded (Ruby) to approve the Nov. 2019 treasurer's report as written & distributed. Motion passed unanimously.

The total revenue (after expenses for T-shirts) from the Membership Drive was \$4417.  
The PTO's account balance as of the end of November is \$31,211.75.

3. Principal's Report –

a. **Parent University/Diversity-Equity-Inclusion Movie Night -**

Features PBS series *Race: The Power of an Illusion*. The first night of this 3-part series (Tues. 12/3) was not well attended. Decided to act on feedback to publicize early & often. The next one (part 2 of the series) is scheduled for Tuesday 1/21/2020 (6:30-8:30pm), but there was a suggestion to hold this during the Day of Service on Mon. 1/20 instead (to avoid having 3 special events in 1 week). The 3<sup>rd</sup> one is scheduled for Wed. 3/18/2020.

b. **Day of Service –** On Monday 1/20/2019, Washtenaw International will have a local, national, and international focus. Mr. Fox will be taking the lead on these efforts.

Will need donations of denim for the Sole Hope project.

Ms. Do invited feedback about timing. Consensus was that morning and afternoon options would probably work best to allow students to also attend other local MLK Day activities.

c. **SAT Preparation Sessions –** All juniors are expected to come to school on late-start days to take part in this free (PTO-supported) offering of college-admission-test preparation.

d. **College Prep Strategies –** Washtenaw International's student body has a large number of students of color, families qualifying for free/reduced lunch, children of immigrants, and first-

generation college students. Such students are more likely to have after-school jobs or other responsibilities, so the school is aiming to reduce the amount of homework required of students. The goal is an average of the following amounts of homework time each night:

Grades 6-8: 1 hr./night or less

Grades 9-10: 1.5 hrs./night or less

Grades 11-12: 2 hrs./night or less

Did straw poll of the parents in attendance about how much time their students spend on homework each night.

Discussed concerns about teacher feedback arriving later than the 14-day window to redo assignments. It was clarified that the 2-week redo timeframe begins once the student gets back their graded assignment from the teacher; there is no redo option if the assignment is handed in late or not submitted.

One parent emphasized that her son is not able to self-manage at this point in his life, and having more homework would give parents more opportunity to teach organizational skills. There is an IB course in 9<sup>th</sup> grade dedicated to teaching organizational skills, and one of the counselors is leading an after-school activity focused on these skills.

Now that WIMA students no longer have advisory class, there seems to be less opportunity for these skills to be explicitly taught. Ms. Do explained that advisory was cut due to issues with the transportation provided by Ypsilanti School District.

### 3. Teacher Representative Report (Ms. Sara Gentry, Math Dept.) –

- a. **End of Semester** – Final opportunities (exams, projects, etc.) to improve grades are occurring this month in year-long classes, and in January for semester-long courses.
- b. **EDJI Day on Wed. 12/4** – Students spent 2.5 hours in mixed-class groups led by students. Focus was on “able-ism.” A feedback link was circulated in the Dean’s Notes.
- c. **National Honor Society** – Making diaper bags for “New Mom Kits” for Ozone House. Aiming to complete the project by Wed. 12/11. Donations for formula, etc. would be gratefully accepted through 12/11. Explained that students in grades 10 & 11 with a GPA of 3.5 or above are invited to apply for membership. Once admitted, NHS members are required to maintain their GPA and complete service-hour projects (individual/group tutoring, etc.). Discussion of recent changes to the CAS (service) requirements; parents should be receiving clarifications about the changes soon. NHS tutoring is open to all 6<sup>th</sup>- to 9<sup>th</sup>-grade students for academic support from NHS juniors/seniors every Tuesday and Thursday morning starting at 7:15 am in room 506.
- d. **Thank You** – Ms. Gentry stated how much the whole staff appreciated the Meals at P-T Conferences, and are always grateful for the way that the PTO and families express so much appreciation for the teachers!

### 4. Current/New Business -

- a. **Holiday Baskets** – Donations can be dropped off on Tues. 12/10. Baskets will be assembled on Wed. 12/11, starting at 9:30am. Volunteers still needed.
- b. **WIPTO Family Game Night** – Evening of Thurs. 1/23. Discussed what types of games to offer. Ideas included: chess tournament, karaoke, escape room, Dungeons & Dragons, Pokemon or other card game tournament, Wii, board games, Bingo, volleyball, Dance Dance Revolution/Let’s Dance, etc. Need to have a meeting with the organizers (Tamara &

Kathy).

- c. **School Carnival** – Evening of Friday 5/29. The day after Commencement. Since the idea is to have STUGO/student clubs take a major role (setup, cleanup, etc.), we need to set it at a time/place that's accessible for students. Ruby, Tamara, & Kathy are taking the lead on this event. Ideas for low-cost or no-cost activities include: Photo booth; dunk tank; balloon dart-board. Discussion of whether pursuing the idea of holding a raffle would be feasible. Will set up a committee meeting in the next 2 weeks (with Mr. Giddings, STUGO advisor).
- d. **Teacher Wish Lists** – Will be sending out requests to teachers. Aiming to post for families in early 2020.
- e. **WIMA Chili Cookoff** – 5<sup>th</sup> annual took place on Thurs. 11/21. It was attended by a small but enthusiastic group of teachers, students, and their families. They voted for the best of the 4 types of chili, and the winner was 6<sup>th</sup>-grade parent Tony Wolf, for his Tex-Mex Chili & Cornbread!

#### 7. Other Business –

**Homecoming** – Took place on 10/26 at Ann Arbor Sheraton. Attendance was a bit lower than last year, but students had a lot of fun.

Next official PTO meeting: Monday 1/13 at 6:30pm.  
Meeting adjourned at 8:22pm.