★ WHITTIER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTA: GENERAL MEETING ★

General Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Call to Order: The general meeting of the Whittier Elementary School PTA was called to order by Co-President Kristin Waszak at 7:02 p.m.

Attendance: 25 members/guests present: Kristin Waszak, Liz Stimes, Audra Robbins, Lauren Kunkel, Sara Prendergast, Di Ander, Principal Brian Bolton, Amy Van Howe, Marina Kunesh, Jenn McDonald, Carol Avila, Christin LaLonde, Jada Coleman, Meg Herr, Lauren Schpero, Lisa Novak, Heather Frank, Laura Milstead, Sarah Williams, Val Basile, Kelsey Blazaitis, Lauren Wilson, Michelle Kafer, Elaine Rogalla, and Jim Hoff.

PTA Mission: The Whittier PTA's mission is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. Our mission requires that diversity, equity, and inclusion be central to our work and used in our day-to-day decisions and actions. The Whittier PTA strives to create a kind, responsive culture where all feel welcome.

Executive Board Introductions:

The 2026–2027 Executive Board introduced themselves:

- Co-Presidents: Kristin Waszak and Liz Stimes
- Co-Vice Presidents: Audra Robbins and Lauren Kunkel
- Treasurer: Sara Prendergast
- Secretary: Di Ander
- Principal Brian Bolton introduced himself and welcomed and thanked those in attendance.

New Business: No new business was presented.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: The minutes of the May 19, 2026 general meeting were approved as presented.

Guest Speakers: None.

Treasurer's Report: 2025–2026 Audit Report

- On behalf of the Audit Committee, Amy Van Howe moved to approve the 2025–2026 Audit Report. As the motion came from a committee, no second was required. The motion was passed.
- Treasurer Sara Prendergast presented the August financial report and reviewed the PTA's current cash balance. The financial report is attached at the bottom of these minutes.
- Members were reminded that expense reimbursement procedures, forms, and the PTA budget are available in the References > Volunteer Resources section of the PTA website. Expense paperwork may be submitted to the PTA bin inside the Whittier office.
- Members were also reminded to use the PTA's tax-exempt documentation when making purchases. The PTA does not reimburse sales tax except for approved exceptions (including Costco, Amazon, and Oriental Trading).

Secretary's Report: Secretary Di Ander reported that current Whittier PTA membership totals 157 members. If anyone would like to submit PTA information for inclusion in the newsletter (published on the 1st and 15th of each month at noon), information and/or graphics should be submitted to info@whittierschoolpta.org two days prior to the publication date. Updates to newsletter organization, frequency, and formatting were also shared.

Co-Vice Presidents' Report: Co-Vice Presidents Audra Robbins and Lauren Kunkel reported the following:

- The Kindergarten Playdate was successfully held and received positive feedback.
- Birthday Board volunteer sign-ups are available, with four volunteer slots available each month.
- The former "Room Parent" role has been renamed Classroom Liaison. Volunteers were randomly selected from the applicant pool and assignments were distributed.
- Classroom Liaisons will coordinate Halloween classroom parties and communicate with classroom volunteers.
- Walk/Bike/Roll to School Day is scheduled for October 7. The PTA plans to recognize participating students and celebrate the national initiative.

Co-Presidents' Report: Co-Presidents Kristin Waszak and Liz Stimes provided the following updates:

- Volunteers are still needed for the Family Fun and Fun Fair committees. The Reflections Committee Chair position has been filled.
- The PTA will host a Whittier Fall Fest in place of the Fun Run this year.
- The PTA is conducting a Mum Sale fundraiser.
- The Green Team is collecting gently used children's Halloween costumes for a free community costume pop-up.
- A Vintage Charm pop-up is planned for December 12 from 5:00–7:00 p.m.
- A new Holiday Shop will be offered this school year.
- Gladis Provisions will return to Whittier on October 2, with a portion of sales benefiting the Whittier PTA.
- Do-Rite Donuts will also be available for preordered pickup on October 2.

Principal's Report: Principal Brian Bolton thanked the Whittier community for a warm welcome and shared the school's 2026–2027 theme: "All In, Every Day." Mr. Bolton provided updates regarding:

- ParentSquare and the weekly What's Up at Whittier newsletter.
- Successful beginning-of-year Meet and Greets and Curriculum Night.
- The Jaguar Jackpot student recognition program.
- The launch of the new Hot Lunch program.
- Classroom and school safety discussions, including age-appropriate "see something, say something" messaging. A PTA safety presentation is planned for a future meeting.
- Upcoming field trips:
    - September 16 – Second Grade: Morton Arboretum
    - September 23 – Fifth Grade: Art Institute of Chicago
    - October 6 – Fifth Grade: Outdoor Education
- Parent-Teacher Conferences scheduled for October 20 and October 22.
- The 2026–2027 Whittier Teacher Wishlist was presented and discussed for review (also linked in announcements section).

Committee Reports:

Fall Experiences Committee Chairs: Audra Robbins & Jenny Maslowski

- Nineteen fall Experiences were announced and posted on Givebacks, in a PTA email, and in a flyer that was sent home with students. Funds raised through Experiences support the fall fundraiser.

Fall Fundraiser Committee Chairs: Meggie Ward & Meg Johns

- Tickets will be available through the day of the event. Additional student volunteers from Herrick and Downers Grove North are being sought to assist with event stations.

Dine-Out/Family Fun Committee Chairs: Liz Stimes & Elaine Rogalla

- The first Dine-Out Night will be held at Lantern Pizza. Dine-Out Night proceeds support Family Fun events. The committee is also seeking an additional Family Fun co-chair.

Masterpiece of the Month Committee Chairs: Val Basile & Alana Miller

- The committee requested consideration of allowing two parent volunteers per classroom to assist with instruction and materials. Principal Bolton will follow up with teachers. The committee is also considering opportunities to broaden representation among the artists featured in the program.

Playground Equipment Committee Chair: Kari Fredrich

- Donations of playground equipment are welcome and may be dropped off at the school office.

Reading Games Committee Chair: Lauren Kunkel

- Reading Games is open to students in grades 3–8 and is scheduled for February 20, 2027. Teams read selected books and participate in a book-based trivia competition. Each team is supported by a parent volunteer.

Reflections Committee Chair: Michelle Kafer

- Reflections is a National PTA arts program. This year's theme is "What My Culture Means to Me."

Walking Club Committee Chairs: Andi Wiklund & Sarah Patterson

- Walking Club will again provide students with opportunities to walk laps during recess and earn tickets toward prizes. Parent volunteer positions for the program have been filled.

Whittier Wear Committee Chairs: Aubrey Southall & Lisa Novak

- A Whittier Wear-and-Share will be held during Parent-Teacher Conferences on October 20th and 22nd.

Hospitality and Teacher Appreciation Committee Chair: Di Ander

- The Hospitality Committee will provide dinner for teachers during one of the fall Parent-Teacher Conference dates. Additional volunteers and committee members are welcome, reach out to info@whittierschoolpta.org if interested.

AuthorFest Committee Chair: Aubrey Southall

- The committee is planning for an April AuthorFest, with dates to be finalized.

Variety Show Committee Chairs: Katy Anderman & Lauren Kunkel

- The Variety Show is scheduled for March 6, 2027 at 10:00 a.m. at the Tivoli Theatre. Students will participate as performers, emcees, and stage crew. The event is free to attend.

Holiday Shop Committee Chairs: Amy Van Howe & Monica Guilfoyle

- The PTA will introduce a Holiday Shop this year in partnership with Holiday Treasures. Merchandise will range in price from approximately $0.50 to $15, with a portion of sales benefiting the Whittier PTA.

Spring Fundraiser Committee Chairs: Marina Kunesh & Kristen Ginger

- The Spring Fundraiser is scheduled for April 23, 2027. The location and theme will be announced at a later date.

Green Team Committee Chair: Michelle Weed

- The Green Team is collecting gently used children's Halloween costumes for the community costume exchange. Collection bins are available at designated community drop-off locations.

Announcements

Teacher Wishlist:

- The 2026–2027 Teacher Wishlist was presented for consideration. The proposed allocation totals $4,089.53 in PTA funds for Teacher Wishlist items. In accordance with the Whittier PTA bylaws governing donations exceeding $500, the proposed allocation will be posted and remain available for review for at least 30 days before a motion for approval may be considered. The proposal will be eligible for consideration at a subsequent general meeting following completion of the required 30-day period.

Next Meeting:

- The next general PTA meeting is scheduled for October 27, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Attachments: August Budget Update

Whittier Elementary School PTA
Financial Statement 08/01/2026 - 08/31/2026

INCOME		08/31/2026	2026 - 2027 BUDGET	DIFFERENCE	NOTES	Committee?
	FAMILY FUN NIGHTS			1,558.61		Yes
	FALL FUNDRAISER		15,000.00	(15,000.00)		Yes
	SPRING FUNDRAISER	(400.00)	17,000.00	(17,400.00)		Yes
TOTAL FUNDRAISING		**(400.00)**	**32,000.00**	**(32,400.00)**		
DONATIONS						
	GENERAL DONATION			0.00		No
	WHITTIER LEAP FUND			0.00		No
TOTAL DONATIONS		**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**		
OTHER INCOME						
	EXTRA DIRECTORIES & ADS			0.00		Yes
	FUN LUNCH			0.00		Yes
	INTEREST INCOME	64.61		64.61		No
	MISC INCOME	2,600.00		2,600.00		No
	PTA DUES		3,750.00	(3,750.00)		No
	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS INCOME			0.00		No
	WHITTIER WEAR	600.00			Carry over to 2026-27 budget per 4/14/26 General Meeting Vote	
TOTAL OTHER INCOME		**3,264.61**	**3,750.00**	**(485.39)**		
"CARRYOVER FROM PRIOR YEAR			13,165.00	(13,165.00)		
TOTAL INCOME		**2,864.61**	**48,915.00**	**(46,050.39)**		

EXPENSES		08/31/2026	2026 - 2027 BUDGET	DIFFERENCE	NOTES	
ORGANIZATIONAL EXPENSES						
	ACCOUNTING & BANK CHARGES	91.22	150.00	(58.78)		No - Exec
	ANNUAL INCORPORATION DUES		150.00	(150.00)		No - Exec
	DG PTA COUNCIL DUES		100.00	(100.00)		No - Exec
	DIRECTORY		450.00	(450.00)		Yes
	EXECUTIVE BOARD EXPENDITURES		300.00	(300.00)		No - Exec
	ILLINOIS CHARITABLE STATUS FEE		15.00	(15.00)		No - Exec
	ILLINOIS PTA PORTION OF DUES COLLECTED		1,200.00	(1,200.00)		No - Exec
	MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVES & VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION		500.00	(500.00)		
	PARENT EDUCATION EVENTS		250.00	(250.00)		
	PTA BONDING & LIABILITY INSURANCE	365.00	375.00	(10.00)		No - Exec
	PTA COUNCIL DINNER		100.00	(100.00)		No - Exec
	PTA SUPPLIES		200.00	(200.00)		No - Exec
	SITTING		250.00	(250.00)		No - Exec
	TAX PREPARATION		1,000.00	(1,000.00)		No - Exec
	WEBSITE	350.00	400.00	(50.00)		No - Exec
	WELCOME AND SUPPORT		500.00	(500.00)		Yes
TOTAL ORGANIZATIONAL EXPENSES		**806.22**	**5,940.00**	**(5,133.78)**		
SCHOOL EXPENSES						
	GREEN TEAM		1,500.00	(1,500.00)	Winter planters, Green Alliance Grant, Liners	Yes
	GUIDED READING		1,500.00	(1,500.00)		No - Principal?
	PRINCIPALS FUND		500.00	(500.00)		No - Principal
	HOSPITALITY & STAFF APPRECIATION		3,775.00	(3,775.00)		Yes
	TEACHER & STAFF RECOGNITION		3,000.00	(3,000.00)		No - Exec
TOTAL SCHOOL EXPENSES		**0.00**	**10,275.00**	**(10,275.00)**		
STUDENT EXPENSES						
	AUTHOR FEST		1,550.00	(1,550.00)		Yes
	BIRTHDAY BOARD		100.00	(100.00)		
	BIRTHDAY BOOKS		800.00	(800.00)		No - Principal
	CLASSROOM PARTIES		700.00	(700.00)		
	CLASSROOM PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT		750.00	(750.00)		Yes
	FALL FUNDRAISER 2026		1,300.00	(1,300.00)		Yes
	FAMILY FUN	1,558.61	1,500.00	58.61		
	FIELD DAY		150.00	(150.00)		Yes
	FIELD DAY LUNCH		1,650.00	(1,650.00)		Yes
	FIELD TRIPS	1,463.33	5,000.00	(3,536.67)		No - Principal
	FINE ARTS FIELD TRIP		5,000.00	(5,000.00)		No - Principal
	FUN FAIR		1,500.00	(1,500.00)		Yes
	MATH & SCIENCE NIGHTS		700.00	(700.00)		Yes
	MISCELLANEOUS STUDENT EXPENSES		450.00	(450.00)		No - Exec
	MONTHLY MASTERPIECE		200.00	(200.00)		Yes
	PRINCIPAL APPRECIATION LUNCH		25.00	(25.00)		
	PROGRAMS & ASSEMBLIES	1,580.00	4,000.00	(2,420.00)		No - Principal
	REFLECTIONS		100.00	(100.00)		Yes
	SAFETY PATROL		1,000.00	(1,000.00)		No - Principal
	SCHOLARSHIP		2,000.00	(2,000.00)		Yes
	SUMMER MATH CLUB		200.00	(200.00)		Yes
	TAKE HOME FOLDERS K-6	393.12	700.00	(306.88)		No - Principal
	VARIETY SHOW		1,975.00	(1,975.00)		Yes
	WALKING CLUB		350.00	(350.00)		Yes
	WHITTIER WEAR INITIAL STOCK		1,000.00	(1,000.00)		Yes
TOTAL STUDENT EXPENSES		**4,995.06**	**32,700.00**	**(27,704.94)**		
UNBUDGETED EXPENSES						
	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS		0.00	0.00		
	TEACHER WISH LIST		0.00	0.00		
	WHITTIER LEAP EXPENSES		0.00	0.00		
TOTAL UNBUDGETED EXPENSES		**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**		
TOTAL EXPENSES		**5,801.28**	**48,915.00**	**(43,113.72)**		
NET INCOME		**(2,936.67)**	**0.00**	**(2,936.67)**		

71,596.60	**Cash Balance 08/31/2026**	*<< Should always match Quicken ending bal*
(7,935.29)	*Less Family Fun*	
(4,752.37)	*Less Money earmarked for School Improvement Projects*	
0.00	*Less Teacher Wish List Approved*	
0.00	*Less Approved 2026 - 2027 Expenses not yet paid*	
58,908.94	**Net Available Cash Balance 08/31/2026**	