

**WEST END SECONDARY SCHOOL PARENT ASSOCIATION  
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

*September 19, 2023*

**Agenda**

- Welcome back introduction and sharing goals and expectations for the year
- Co-President's Update
- Principal's Update
- Treasurer's Report
- Vice Presidents Updates
- Committees Updates
- Communication Secretary Update

I. Call to Order

Co-President Rebecca Weel called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

In attendance: Yvette Russell, Rebecca Weel, Max Alvarez, Trisha Bechard, Samantha Alvarez Benowitz, Karen Cape, Jill Gabin, Karyn Gooden, Jessica Jenkins, Jennifer Richey, Liz Sorem and Barry Waldman.

II. President's Update

The first PA meeting is on September 28 at 9:00 am. It will be in-person. We are not sure yet if it will be hybrid. That will be determined based on the President's Council Meeting. October election will be for 6th grade reps and HS Reps. 6th grade reps should ideally not have another older student at the school. For high school reps, there are 2 spots available.

Erin Banks is in a full-time job, so will need another committee lead or 2 co-leads for the spring benefit.

Potential Homecoming on October 13.

Discussion was held about holding parent education events. There was great interest in the past, but often not great attendance. There have been many speakers in the past around child development, growth mindset, etc. Mental health experts and/or speakers from Take 2 could be asked to speak about tech and teens.

A book club kickoff is being played by Ami Kantawala, who is coordinating with Karyn Gooden.

Discussion was held about reintroducing class parents or crew parents. Guidelines need to be in place. WhatsApp groups can be setup for Crews and events planned. Previous events for Middle School and High School were at Bryant Park Winter Carnival, Prohibition and Bodega 88.

Erica Johnson will be transitioning out of the 6th Grade rep role. Erica would like to find a way to support the arts at WESS in the way Marc Lovci is supporting sports.

Discussion was held about WESS Cares and what can be done to engage students, such as blood drives. Rebecca asked Max to come up with 5 possible events that we can discuss.

Teacher Appreciation Team plans events throughout the year for teachers including food, massages, etc. If anybody knows others that can/want to join that team, please let Rebecca know.

### III. Communication Secretary Update

New PA website will be launched by the PA meeting. Request was made to Karyn Gooden for Google calendar that can be linked, as in the past.

### IV. VP of Middle School Update

Dates for class socials will be rescheduled due to afterschool tryouts. There are plans for student and parent events this year.

### V. Treasurer Report

\$180,000 was transferred to Capital One for more interest. Payments were made for Passages and Graduation as deposits. \$732 in interest was already generated from the Capital One transfer.

There is a Google form that can be used for reimbursement.

\$93,000 is budgeted for family giving and \$100,000 for the spring benefit.

Request for EB members to submit receipts.

Plans to create an alumni group are underway by Karyn Gooden. Potentially this group can be contacted for family giving.

VI. Diversity and Inclusion Update

Discussing having the cultural festival in the fall this year. Last year it was done in March. Once the date is selected, the team will get student groups involved. November may be a good time for this event.

VII. VP at Large Update

The role could encompass philanthropy and fundraising events. Pandemic impacted the ability to hold events. Discussion was held on what possible events could be held. Events should be held that get parents in-person and at school where possible.

VIII. Principal's Report

Parent teacher conferences and back to school nights need to be on Zoom due to UFT rules. Other in-person meetings and events can be held. Coffee gatherings and other face-to-face events can be held and are important to meet teachers and administration.

The first PA meeting and Back to School night are on the day. Team is evaluating if PA meeting should be moved to increase attendance.

The school is having a hard time getting a high school Spanish teacher approved by the State Education Department. In the interim, students will be using an online-based teaching program until the approval comes through.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Barry Waldman, Recording Secretary