

**Washington High School PTA
Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2016**

President Jane Hutchins called the meeting to order at 9:06 AM.

The meeting began with introductions of officers and of those in attendance.

Welcome by Dr. Grant. He and Mr. Ballard introduced new staff members as they were able to join the meeting or via photos on powerpoint for those unable to join us.

Executive Committee Report:

Secretary – Jen Boettger submitted the May 2016 minutes for approval. Tammy Fox made a motion to approve, seconded by Kate Hogg. Minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer – Lijun Chadima submitted the Treasurer's report. There was some conversation regarding the lighting in the display cases as it was unexpected expense, but was covered from unspent monies from other lines. Lijun presented the 2016-17 budget for approval. Dina Dusek made a motion to approve, seconded by Leah Ferring. The budget was approved.

Counseling Update – Dean Blanchard

- See Addendum #1 for more detail.

Dr. Grant

Dr. Grant has spent his first weeks at WHS focusing on these goals:

- Taking lots of intentional time to get to know the traditions and values of WHS. Based on feedback he's received, leadership, recognition opportunities inc. retreats, orgs, assemblies, etc. are valued by the WHS community. Another aspect is making sure we celebrate all students.
- Classroom Instruction – Constantly looking at instruction that lends itself to learning versus playing the "game" of school (point/grade driven).
- Getting the school ready for the recruitment and retention of the next principal. That process starts in December. There will be several groups involved that will create a broad cross section of the Wash community.
- Enforcing timeliness to curb tardiness and improve accountability. He is looking for advice from department chairs on how best to tackle this.

Committee Reports:

Volunteer Coordinator – Kate Hogg

- Passed out Volunteer Disclosure Statement forms to those she still needs.

Membership/Blue Chip – Kate Hogg

- 69 donations so far \$11,951 slightly behind the \$12,000 this time last year.

- Membership is up. 114 paid as of today – many are 2 in a family which is different than last year. Looking good.
- Had presence at Open House last night for membership recruitment.

Hospitality – Julia Weston

- 4 events thus far; staff breakfast, tasl, freshman orientation, and open house.
- Next up: Oct 3, 11, 19 for teacher conferences. Sign-up Genius to come.

Cookie Sales – Jane Hutchins for Jana Nassif

- 4 sales slated for 2016-2017; Halloween, Christmas, Valentine’s Day, May Day.
- There was some discussion about whether the cookies are violating district policy regarding healthy food. Members in attendance strongly felt that since this is only 4x per year, that the cookies sales can and should continue to be an exception to the policy. Dr. Grant doesn’t entirely agree and thinks this should have further exploration.

Display Cases – Peggy Green

- Cleaned the cases prior to school beginning thanks to Peggy Green, Kate Hogg and Sashi Solomon. They now have new LED lights. Next time for cleaning is before Mo Show. Volunteers always welcome. Sashi has agreed to continue to spearhead this effort when Peggy steps down after MoShow.

Post Prom – Melissa Kiliper-Ernst

- Committee is all set. Last year’s fantastic post prom left them lots of seed money for this year. First letter will go out this fall. Anyone who wants to be involved is welcome to contact Melissa.

Legislative – Lori Lane

- Time to start keeping an eye on candidates and becoming informed of their platforms.

College Connection – Lori Lane

- College Connection is an event before winter break where we bring back recent grads to come in and represent their respective colleges. Lunch is offered to sophomores and juniors participating. It is a nice event to allow current Wash students a chance to reconnect with their graduated friends, have an opportunity to ask questions about the various schools, and get direct feedback from their peers. The 2016 event is tentatively planned for Wed 12/20, 2 days before break.

Audit Committee – Lijun Chadima for Heather Friedman

- Heather is organizing the meeting of the audit committee. Usually made up of one senior, junior, and soph parent. Their job is to audit the PTA treasurer’s book.

Warrior Closet – Jane Hutchins

- No longer taking donations over the summer and are going to try to be more stringent on the acceptance of donations. Committee will work on streamlining the process so that we make sure to only get and accept the things we know that we will be appropriate and of use to the students. Amy Faulkner is our contact at WHS. Questions about what is appropriate and when items can be dropped off can be directed to her at afualkner@cr.k12.ia.us
- More info on the web: <http://crwash.cr.k12.ia.us/our-school/pta/warriorcloset/>

Old Business:

- None

New Business

- Jenny Woods presented an opportunity for WHS to partner with HACAP to potentially provide a food pantry for our students and their families in need. We've been presented with a grant of 3,300.00 which could be used to purchase the food in bulk.
 - Questions and discussion followed.
 - If adopted, this would augment the grab and go snacks in the Warrior Closet.
 - If you would like to be involved in this exploration, please contact Jenny Woods at woodsfamily6@gmail.com.
 - For more info, please see Addendum #2.

Q & A – with Dr. Grant

Meeting adjourned at 11:28 AM.

Jen Boettger
PTA Secretary

ADDENDUM 1

Counseling Update for PTA, September, 2016

Parents should read and understand the drop policy for classes that are listed on page 40 of the Parent-Student Handbook. The first drop period, which ends at three weeks, removes the class entirely, the second drop at eleven weeks shows on the transcript as an “W” no matter the grade, and the third drop allowed through the seventeenth week records as an F if that is the grade being earned. Parents should also know and understand the pass/fail policy explained as a bulleted point on page 40 of the handbook.

Students have until the Sept. 16 deadline to register for the October 22 ACT test. The fall test dates are primarily for seniors that have not yet taken a college admissions test, seniors that want to try to improve upon their score, or for students in other grades that just want to practice. The ACT is also offered on December 10, with a November 4 deadline to register. The first Sat I or SAT Subject Tests are given on October 1, with a September 13 regular late registration deadline. The SAT is again offered on November 5 with a registration deadline of October 7. Register on-line at www.actstudent.org (ACT) or www.sat.org/register (SAT). Either test suffices as a college admission test, **you do NOT have to take them both.**

We are planning on taking a short trip out west in about two weeks. We are going to visit several schools in Colorado including the University of Colorado, Colorado State University, Colorado School of Mines, University of Denver, the Air Force Academy, and Colorado College. This yearly trip is possible due to the much appreciated financial support from our PTA.

Jen Byers is the lead on the joint PTA, Counseling Wellness Program. It will cover sexual health, healthy lifestyles, and mental health, but it has been broadened to coincide with national theme months and is incorporating our Student Senate, SADD, and JEL organizations as partners in conducting activities for education and awareness. The counseling office is working on brochure describing the program for anyone who would like more information.

We suggest that your best line of communication for student progress is POWER SCHOOL. You can see missing assignments by clicking on the student's grade in PS. Parents can usually diagnose a student's problem in a class by checking attendance, grade, and quality of assignments as accessed through clicking on the grade. CANVAS is another tool that parents and students can use to keep track of individual classes. Parents can access CANVAS by going to the district website, <http://www.cr.k12.ia.us/>, where they will find the information needed to setup their own login account.

Please check the daily announcements on the school web site for colleges visiting WHS. Students can get a pass from the counseling secretary.

The Eastern Iowa College Fair will be held on the Kirkwood campus on Sept. 16, from 9am-11:30am. It is an opportunity for students to meet and talk with over 100 institutions.

Please check out our counseling web site linked to <http://washington.cr.k12.ia.us/>, under the people then counselor tab. You can find information on counselors, academic expectations, courses, college visits, scholarships, career academies, volunteer opportunities, health programming, how to write a resume, cover letter, balance a budget, etc. We link to college search programs, college search websites, the Iowa Regents Admission Index, the Common Application, NCAA Eligibility Center, the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), and www.IHaveAPlanIowa.gov which provides a great interest inventory.

Iowa Assessments

This is taken by **all grades except the seniors.**

It is given once a year in the spring. Check your calendar for dates.

The scores are included on transcripts and contribute to the picture of a student's capabilities. This test also determines whether a student needs to be in a class designed for remediating deficient scores.

PSAT (A College Board test provided once a year in October on a specific date)

This is taken by sophomores, for practice only. Juniors take it for **qualifying for the National Merit Scholarship program, or for practice**. It is usually taken only by the top quarter of the class. Registration will start in the counseling office on October 3 for the October 19 test.

This is a practice college admissions test. The cost is approximately \$20. Sophomores make take the test for practice and the district will pay the test fee.

ACT (an ACT Corporation test with mandated national test dates, offered six times during the year)

This test is a **college admission test** taken by juniors, usually in the spring of the year (Feb., April, or June). Seniors may take it in September, October or December if they had not taken it in their junior year or if they are trying for a better score.

It has the option of taking a writing test which colleges may or may not insist on having. It is acceptable to every college as the admission test that they require.

The cost is \$42.5 or \$58.50 depending on inclusion of the writing test. Web site www.actstudent.org

SAT (a College Board test with mandated national test dates, offered seven times during the year)

It is a **college admission test** taken by juniors, usually in the spring of the year (March, May, or June). Seniors would take it in Oct., Nov, or Dec. if they had not taken a test in their junior year or if they wanted to get a better score.

It has an optional essay writing test.

It is acceptable to every college as the admission test they require.

The cost is \$45.00 for the SAT or \$57 for the SAT with Essay. Web site www.sat.org/register

SAT Subject Tests (Formerly known as SAT II's, College Board tests with mandated national test dates, offered seven times a year)

This is a test taken by juniors and seniors, only when a select college has subject or achievement tests as part of their admission requirements. A student can take up to three Subject tests on any national test date. This would be in addition to a college admission test (SAT/ACT). It is offered the same seven dates as the SAT. The cost is \$26.00 plus \$20 for each test taken. Foreign Language tests are not offered at every testing. Web site www.sat.org/register .

ADDENDUM 2

Food Pantry Potential Program at WHS

WHS PTA members have been looking into the possibility of creating a monthly food pantry in partnership with HACAP (Hawkeye Area Community Action Plan). HACAP has a food reservoir in Hiawatha that provides food at deep discounts to area pantries like Metro Catholic Outreach.

With an eye toward having a PTA vote in October about whether to adopt a WHS food pantry program, here is some background on what we have learned so far.

In August, WHS counselor Jen Byers learned that HACAP is seeking food pantry partnerships between the agency and area middle school and high schools. Given that 43 percent of WHS kids qualify for free and reduced lunch, Jen thought the program might be of interest to WHS and its PTA. She put PTA President Jane Hutchins in contact with HACAP.

HACAP's Greg Goodell then met with school vice principals Val Nyberg and Darius Ballard; teacher Amy Faulkner (whose Check and Connect classroom houses the Warrior Closet); and PTA members Hutchins, Becky Lindwall and Jenny Woods, whose church works with HACAP.

At the meeting, WHS representatives learned that HACAP is offering three \$3,300 grants to PTAs this year. That grant could be used to purchase bulk food from HACAP, with the aim of providing students healthful food to take home at least one weekend a month.

The purpose of giving food to students at school would be to allow them direct access to food, regardless of whether their families frequent food pantries or not. The middle-school/high-school pantry idea is modeled after the HACAP BackPack program, which sends non-perishable food home on weekends with children through sixth grade. McKinley participates in that program, which is government funded. The program does not extend to older kids.

The food ordered would include healthful staples like wheat pastas, red sauce, pinto beans, peanut butter and cereal. The HACAP price list we were provided indicates that we could provide all of those items in a shoe-box sized box at about \$3 per filled box. With a goal of providing for 100 kids a month, the grant would cover about 100 kids a month through May.

HACAP pantry requirements for partners are as follows:

1. Clean and pest-free environment
2. A lockable storage area
3. A food distribution program that is at least once a month
4. A distribution method that prioritizes the dignity of its recipients
5. A 30-day notice to discontinue the program

The PTA's prior experience with food pantry items was before spring break, when General Mills delivered a range of non-perishable food that was packaged and distributed in bags to more than 50 students who signed up to receive it.

Currently, the Warrior Closet offers non-perishable snacks like granola bars and fruit snacks to students. Those snacks are in the Closet on a day-to-day basis. This food would be secured elsewhere until distributed, which would be on a monthly basis to start out. It could also cover some Closet snacks that are now purchased at market prices by donors.

If we propose and adopt this program in October, PTA would be responsible for ordering the food, picking it up and distributing it. The high school would store it in a designated room. Potential partners in receiving deliveries from PTA drivers and preparing food boxes include students from ADAstra, Student Senate and IJAG.

With many questions still on the table before we move to a vote, we want to encourage anyone who is interested in this program to contact Jenny Woods after this meeting. Questions that you would like about the program itself may be put to Jane Hutchins at jane@hutchinsdesign.com or Becky Lindwall at becky_lindwall@icloud.com.