

**Washington High School PTA  
Meeting Minutes  
January 10, 2017**

President Jane Hutchins called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

The meeting began with a presentation from Mr. Ian Kleman about the Expanding Opportunities (EO) and TASL programs here at WHS. Ian was followed by Sean Cornally who spoke about the The Iowa BIG School. Two BIG students, Peter Gruebel and Sophie Fox were also present and spoke.

**Executive Committee Report:**

**Secretary** – Jen Boettger submitted the December minutes for approval. Becky Lindwall made a motion to approve, seconded by Leah Ferring. Minutes were approved as written.

**Treasurer** – Lijun Chadima submitted Treasurer's report. There was conversation about the budget deficit. Blue Chip donations are down even though membership is up. Not being allowed to do Cookie Sales will also hurt our budgeted revenue.

**Counseling Report:** See addendum #1 from Dean Blanchard

**Principal Report:** See addendum #2 from Dr. Grant

**Committee Reports:**

**Membership/Blue Chip – Kate Hogg** Kate has been very busy reaching out to donors from last year but not this year which has resulted in some more gifts. Also has been reaching out to potential new donors in the freshman and sophomore classes. Kate also handed out receipts and plans to have a donation box at the

**Legislative – Lori Lane** No action from Des Moines

**College Connection – Lori Lane** Thanks to every 23 schools, 200+ wash students in atten need new chair

**Warrior Closet – Mary McEniry / Lesley Fleming** Needs belts, sweatshirts and backpacks.

**Website – Jen Boettger** Just an FYI that the PTA webpage has been updated. Allows non-member community access to our documents like minutes. Membership has access to the same documents and more on the shared Google folder.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** None

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

**Jen Boettger  
PTA Secretary**

**Addendum 1 – Counseling Report**

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We have been doing junior conferences since early December. We have completed many conferences with individual families. Those will continue through January and February.

We will soon be sending mid-year reports for those students who have applied to colleges using the Common Application. It would be helpful to the counselors if the students would let them know if they have ruled out some colleges so we don't prepare mid-year reports unnecessarily.

We will be conducting a college planning night on February 6<sup>th</sup>, in the Little Theater at 6:00 PM for freshmen and sophomore students and their parents. It is one hour designed to inform and explain which choices and actions now, will set the foundation for college choices later.

We will register freshmen for their sophomore year on January 24, 25, and 26. We will provide registration information to freshman parents the evening of January 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 6:00 PM, in the auditorium. We will register the sophomores for their junior year on January 31, February 1, 2, and 3. An opportunity for sophomore parents to be informed of the process would be the 5:30 PM session in the cafeteria on Tuesday, January 31. We will register juniors for their senior year on February 7, 8, 9, and 10. Parents have had and will continue to have the chance to give input through their individual junior conferences.

The FAFSA is the key to attaining financial support for college, based on need. Parents should know the priority deadlines of the colleges to which a student is applying. The expectation is now that the FAFSA will be done electronically. The College Planning Center on Boyson Road (1-877-272-4692) will schedule appointments with families to assist them in filling in the form and submitting it.

Our counseling page links to the FAFSA web site. Scholarship opportunities are routinely added to our web site, so be persistent in checking back. Encourage your student to listen closely to announcements also because we try to give local scholarship information at

that time.

Remember the drop policy for classes. Students can drop a class in the first three weeks of a trimester and regardless of the grade, it will not be placed on the transcript. A student may drop a class up through the 2<sup>nd</sup> week (second semester through February 2) and regardless of the grade, there is no record of the courses posted on the transcript. A student may drop a class up through the 12<sup>th</sup> week and it will be placed on the transcript as a “W” (no grade, no credit, no effect on grade point). A student may drop a class in the 13<sup>th</sup> through the 17<sup>th</sup> week of class (from April 9 through May 26) with the grade on the transcript being determined by the student’s grade at the drop point. A passing grade results in a “W” and a failing grade results in an “F”.

Many of our students will be taking the February 11<sup>th</sup> ACT test and even more on April 8<sup>th</sup> and June 10<sup>th</sup>. Juniors should get at least one ACT taken this year, typically in April, or June.

## Addendum 2 – Principal’s Report

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### Student Highlight

Victoria Eniola is being recognized by the Cedar Rapids Downtown Rotary with the MLK Service Above Self Award on Monday, January 16<sup>th</sup>. Polite, respectful, and diligent are words I would use to describe Victoria. She leads by example through quiet and modest mannerisms. She is an honest young woman whose positive attitude inspires her classmates and teammates. Victoria’s parents encourage her to be thoughtful and practical, and have worked hard to instill a sense of gratitude and hard work in their daughters. Victoria certainly embodies the spirit of hard work and determination, and isn’t afraid to dig in and do the hard work necessary to be successful. This year, Victoria is actually re-taking the first semester of 2 classes she completed last year. She wasn’t satisfied with the fall term grade she earned in both Pre-Calculus and AP US Government, so she decided to repeat those courses. Continuous improvement and growth are very important to Victoria. Victoria has been accepted to Iowa State and is applying to the University of Michigan as well. She interned at Michigan this summer in their Chemical Engineering department.

### Principal Search Process

The search is on to hire the next principal at Washington High School. In an effort to engage the entire WHS community in this process, CRCSD leadership and a national search firm will be holding several sessions next week (Tuesday 1/10/17 and Wednesday 1/11/17) at WHS. Each session is designed for the various stakeholders.

11:30 am – 1:00 pm Meeting with Committee WHS (2 student groups per day)

3:15 pm – 4:15 pm Meeting with WHS Staff

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm Meeting with Parents and Community Members

Stakeholders are asked to come ready to answer the following questions: 1. What is the best thing about Cedar Rapids and the area? 2. What is the best thing about Cedar Rapids High School (and district)? 3. What characteristics/qualities would you like to see in the new principal? 4. What issues should the incoming principal be aware of to help him/her be successful? It is important that many voices are heard at these sessions. For those unable to share input in person, there will be an email link sent afterward for you to provide feedback.

### School Meditation

I want to thank several staff members who have stepped forward to work on this vision for our building. **Adam Witte, Mark Hilton, Natalie Brown, Dr. Amy Jones, and Erika Derrick will be engaging in some professional learning in the coming weeks and months around this idea. Staff from McKinley Middle will also be engaging in this work, and we look to plan vertically for student needs.** We remain focused on addressing frequent violence and trauma exhibited by some of our students. We will be addressing some of these behaviors with suspension (out-of-school and in-school) and other traditional consequences when appropriate. However, I am convinced that we should remain vigilant at addressing deeper seeded issues that exist in our students’ lives. I am looking to incorporate some type of mindfulness and meditation before or during school. I think it will positively affect education including admin, teachers, students, truancy rates, suspension rates, overall stress reduction, etc. I have had meetings with district level facilitators and parent volunteers to brainstorm how this might be incorporated into our building. I have informed department chairs of this idea and look to release detailed plans once we are ready.

### Wellness and Fundraisers

I want to remind PTA along with other stakeholders to take note of the standing Board Policy restricting sales of all foods/beverages 30 minutes before, during and 30 minutes after meal services. Our school district is following a national policy which encourages students to consume appropriate calories and benefit from nutrient rich school meals. I have included three links that offer healthy alternatives for fundraising and school culture purposes.

<http://www.cr.k12.ia.us/our-district/wellness-fundraising/>

[http://www.cr.k12.ia.us/assets/1/6/A\\_\\_fundraising\\_for\\_Secondary\\_Schools.pdf](http://www.cr.k12.ia.us/assets/1/6/A__fundraising_for_Secondary_Schools.pdf)

[https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take\\_action/schools/snacks\\_and\\_beverages/fundraisers/](https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take_action/schools/snacks_and_beverages/fundraisers/)

### 2017-2018 Course Registration Process

We are starting the 2017-2018 course registration process with students in the coming weeks. Administrators and counselors have created course registration sheets/cards that will be disseminated and explained with students. We will be meeting with 8<sup>th</sup> graders and

non-public schools in the coming weeks. We have scheduled registration assemblies for our students to be held in the auditorium. Dean Blanchard has sent scheduling information to the LA teachers for each grade level.

- 9th Grade --Monday, Jan. 23rd (1:30pm-2:30pm)
- 10th Grade--Monday, Jan. 30th (1:30pm-2:30pm)
- 11th Grade--Monday, Feb. 6th (1:30pm-2:30pm)

There will be several changes and additions for next year that will explain to students. We will also schedule a staff meeting to make sure all adults are aware as well. One major change involves the Iowa Board of Education approval of the Chapter 12 Physical Education waiver for Cedar Rapids Community School District. This will be new to our school for the 2017-2018 school year. This requires all students enroll in PE one semester while eliminating the need for academic or athletic waivers. Students will be able to satisfy the state graduation requirement by taking at least 4 semesters of Physical Education. This will also help us to diversify and offer more physical education courses like Swimming or Fitness for Life (Yoga, Zumba, etc).

### **Post-Secondary Planning**

The counseling and administrative team have been working on the HS Continuum of Services model as we continue to review good practices. We believe students have a better chance at success by developing post-secondary plans early. We also think that increasing the number of adults that interact with students in this fashion is beneficial. We are planning to have several sessions during Warrior time with the 1st one being later this month.

### **Bear to Warrior Mentoring**

We are in the process of creating a mentorship program between McKinley Middle and Washington. This program is looking to initially pair 41 current 8th graders with current 10th or 11th graders. We are planning to use the MVP curriculum to train our HS students using a similar model seen in Big Brothers Big Sisters. It is our hope to give incoming 9th graders a more robust experience of what it means to be a Warriors and high school student in general.

### **2017 Hall of Fame**

The Hall of Fame Ceremony was outstanding last Friday. This was my first experience, and it was amazing. Grant Schultz and the WAHF committee did an outstanding job in selecting and organizing this celebration. The following individuals were inducted into the 2017 Warrior Athletic Hall of Fame:

Don Bear '88 - Swimming, Amanda Bartz Hood '96 – Basketball/Volleyball, Michael Herzberger '03 - Football/Soccer, Bennet Hammerberg '03 - Golf, Keenan Davis '09 - Football/Basketball/Track, Coach Frank Howell, and Dr. Ralph Plagman.

### **Personnel Updates**

1. Please welcome Hope Schroer to our school family. She is the newest member of our Autism program staff. She has experiences working with ARC of East Central Iowa as a direct support associate. While there, she was responsible for conducting one-on-one activities with clients with intellectual disabilities. Most recently, she worked at Four Oaks Autism Spectrum Program as a youth counselor. Her hobbies include photography for weddings/family imaging, hiking, and walking while also spending valuable time with her husband and two daughters. She will be a value added for our program and we are proud to call her a Warrior.
2. Curt Cavanaugh was a member of our staff and worked on the buildings/grounds team as a custodian. Curt will no longer be in the building as a school employee.
3. We are sad and happy for new developments for Rebecca Briggs. She will be working with the VITAL Work-based Learning Program at Kirkwood Community College. This opportunity will give her the ability to work with Special Education students at the community college level. We appreciate her hard work and dedication as a Jobs Coach here at Washington.