



**Washington School PTO Meeting  
January 16, 2018  
Meeting Minutes**

**Board Members in Attendance**

Ginny Miller, President  
Katie Mahan, Vice President  
Cari Menchaca, VP Communications  
Jill Fonte, Recording Secretary  
Laura Seawards, Financial Secretary  
Heath Stewart, Treasurer  
Kristie Chapman, Board Member  
Brady Charette, Board Member  
Gillian Hall, Member  
Kim Kotnick, Member  
Judy Linares, Member

**Parents in Attendance**

Stephanie Armstrong  
Marcus Chevitarese  
Jamie Crystal  
Irlanda B. Gomez G.  
Tara Haaland-Ford  
Cathy Nueshal  
Stephanie Riordan  
Jose Luis Dias Salazar  
Shannon Schroeder  
Tricia Schmidt  
Kristen Stewart  
Anna Stump

**Staff in Attendance**

Principal Sierra Loughridge  
Ken Greenberg  
Justin Mack  
Barry Nitikman

**Call to Order**

Ginny Miller

Ginny Miller called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm. Attendance was confirmed.

**Appreciations**

Ginny Miller

Special thanks to Sean McLaughlin for fixing the broken shed that was a distraction to many students.

Thanks to Katie Mahan for coordinating parent contributions for staff holiday gifts. Providing a link for online donations made it really easy for everyone to donate, and people were very generous.

Thanks for being flexible after the mudslide. We had to cancel some events, including Student of the Month (still happening for kindergarten), but we were able to continue with the Geography Bee and Spelling Bee.

January 19 was the transfer deadline. The first round of approved transfer requests will be announced by mid-February for the first round. At the time of this meeting, GATE lottery entrance was still open and is coordinated by the district office.

Principal Loughridge will be talking to the ELAC community about a change coming to testing. The CELT test is being replaced with the LPAC test. 4-6th will be tested in February. K-3 will be tested at the same times as the other students in those grades.

Kindergarten families need to complete open enrollment because the lottery limit is at 26 students and as of this meeting it doesn't look like we have that many and decisions need to be made soon. If you don't live in the district you do need to get a transfer for kindergarten. Monroe is the closest bet for Transitional Kindergarten (TK). If there are enough people with children eligible for this, it is possible Washington will start a TK class.

**Safety Plan**

Kim Kotnick

Principal Loughridge Sierra and Kim Kotnick have started on the safety plan.

Washington is an evacuation center and we would like as many people in the community as possible to be CERT Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) trained. Each teacher has a full roster for the grade and some have the entire school roster. We can train at any time; it can be done on a Saturday and can be done over 2 or 3 Saturdays. It would be neat to have it culminate in an all school drill. It's important to have our staff and family members trained so we all have some peace of mind. We are already getting feedback on last year's safety plan, and that feedback will be incorporated into the updated plan. Goal is to have the safety plan presented to the school board in March.

Kim proposed that we identify someone to help train families, perhaps with families with younger children so the knowledge gained can benefit the community for a longer duration.

**Montecito Mudslide/SB Support Network**

Principal Loughridge, Anna Stump, Tara Haaland-Ford

Principal Loughridge gave special thanks to the six Washington moms who created the SignUp Genius to provide anonymous help to families in need. It is an excellent way for people who need help to get help and for people who are able to provide help, to provide it. The greatest need is housing and donations/gift cards - many people delayed returning home because their emotional state has been so impacted. This has just started but it will be a long haul and there will be many ongoing needs. No one comprehended how many needs there would be. People are being encouraged to think about the basics first (getting a loaner car, whatever it takes to get your family to school.) This is designed to support all Montecito residents in need as a result of this disaster. This is an excellent bridge because some of the large national non-profits won't be poised to give out the funds raised for a number of weeks. They thanked the room for supporting their efforts and they have so far helped dozens of families. One example of people's generosity is someone delivered a car from San Luis Obispo. They are handling new items only. There are other organizations like the Unity Shoppe who are accepting used items.

The mudslide impacted our entire community and there are lots of kids who knew people personally. FSA will set up in the garden on Friday with art supplies, etc. There have been kids who have been upset. We want kids who want to talk about this to have a resource for support. If kids come home and show art they designed for MUS, that's why. MUS reopens at SB City College on Thursday.

**Treasurers Report**

Heath Stewart



Our unreserved balance (money we spend on normal basis) \$113, 700 as of this meeting. Reserves are just over \$50,000 and Capital Improvement is just over \$50,000. We've paid August to November for Asst, PE, Comp Sci Teachers. Heath said we have funds to pay December, January, February...then we get tight.

This is good timing for Move-a-Thon. Since everyone is pretty tapped out from donating, we need to find a new Move-a-Thon sponsor. Our current business sponsors are maxed and we might need to look outside SB County otherwise we will come up shy of our goal. To get on the Move-a-Thon shirt, it's \$750; sponsors also get a logo on the marquis and a banner on Shoreline Drive. Beyond getting on the shirt, which accommodates 16 sponsors, we need additional sponsors. We currently have 13 sponsors but will also need more. Sarah Farrar is heading up this key fundraiser. Anna said they have secured break dancers who will be bringing their own linoleum who will be the celebration instead of BMX this year. "Move and Groove" is the theme for 2018.

Heath provided an overview of the large line items on the budget:

Pride resulted in \$171,000 with recurring payments (\$211k in pledges; \$5,200 haven't paid; we have some one-offs we are following up on)

Move-a-Thon has a projected income of \$77,500; expenses of \$7,500 (same as last year).

Party Book so far has income of \$3,500 but we are expecting \$31,000; Man Day is missing from that and raised \$5,825. We may want to take a fresh look at Man Day for the future.

Winter Gala has a projected income of \$52,000 with \$15,000 expenses (\$37,000 profit).

### **Fundraising Committee**

Gillian Hall

Gillian Hall provided an update from the Fundraising committee; has been working with Sarah for the Move-a-Thon. The intention is to give more structure to fundraising, which will be more apparent come next fall. The committee is aware of the potential shortfall and they will be working to coordinate across the different teams who are planning events. A focus will also be made on sustainable fundraising options.

Heath provided an update on the Garden Fund. There used to be a variety of different funds, many of which were combined and put into the general budget. The Garden Committee asked to keep a fund separately and they are good stewards of the funds. Heath said we had 6,769.57 in there at the time we dissolved all smaller funds into one larger fund. It's all the same in spirit, but this allows us to be strictly in compliance with the benefactor's intent. Heath made a motion to reinvoke the Garden Fund. It was seconded and passed.

### **STEM Lab**

Mr. Justin Mack

The STEM Lab teacher, Justin Mack, introduced himself. Mr. Mack has large plans for the STEM Lab, and he's very excited to be here and is happy with his space. He had to spend some funds on tables, but his big picture vision is to purchase items that can be used on an ongoing basis. If he spends 25 cents on each student each quarter, the total amount adds up quickly. He is very budget-sensitive and also grateful to have wonderful technology. He will continue to focus on technology instead of other physical supplies. But he wanted us to be aware that the funds go fast.

The spirit of STEM Lab is about providing a hands-on learning experience to design, to engineer, to assess, to rebuild, and this requires perishable products, so he hopes we will keep this in mind when it comes to making decisions about the budget. He introduced first graders to coding today. Kristie Chapman offered to do a

ParentSquare announcement for supplies that the STEM lab can utilize. Mr. Mack was very excited about having parents donate old Legos, blocks, dominoes and cups, etc. To avoid over-asking parents, Mr. Mack's request will be added to the weekly email distributed by Cari Menchaca. Heath made a motion that we move \$4,000 from Computer Science to the STEM Lab. It was seconded and approved.

Mr. Nitikman enthusiastically explained that for Lego Robotics, kids build a robot, then download an app on their phones, then control the robot from their phones. He provided some detail about how the kids play with this and how they work with the coding. There was a sense of excitement in the room about this program.

### **Committee Updates**

Ginny said they are starting the process of filling committee positions for next year and we encourage people to sign up. This school is the special place it is because all the parents work together. We need people who work in the classroom and who help out with the PTO.

Pride Update – we are working on gathering the rest of the funds and distributing thank you letters. Thank you to Tricia for all the good work in this area. It's been challenging because we are missing some addresses. The plan is to have tax letters out before the 1099 deadline. Tricia has graciously agreed to do her valuable administrative/finance role again next year.

We were fortunate to have rescheduled the **Annual Gala at the Canary Hotel** from February 10 **to April 14**, which will likely be better since businesses are suffering right now. Everyone is invited and we hope there will be a great turnout.

**Camping Trip** is Mother's Day Weekend. Jessica Barker has graciously agreed to head this up again.

**Science Night is April 26** and will be headed up by Jamie Crystal. Jamie will make a spreadsheet of all the vendors who will come share information and experiences. Melanie Hill and Jessie Sexton will help reach out to the vendors. Let Jamie know if you want to participate. Some vendors may come and provide a little more in-depth education with 20-minute presentations. We may make a vendor map indicating what is happening in each classroom. Brady Charette offered to get Monie's food truck again so people can purchase food; and provide food for all the workers. Everyone agreed that is a great idea and it should be positioned closer to the exhibits.

Principal Loughridge said we got a waiver for the 7 days missed. Even though we had many families and staff affected by the mudslide, we did not technically close. So the school year will not be extended.

Ginny mentioned that a couple of our banners were vandalized. They will be reprinted and put up soon.

### **Adjournment**

Ginny thanked everyone for attending and called the meeting to close at 7:39 pm.

Ginny Miller