

Wellesley High School
PTSO General Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 13, 2023 at 6:00pm

General Meeting Attendees

Executive Board Attendees: Jamie Chisum, Meridith Edmonds, Melissa Mack, Megan Dyer, Kristen Toffer, Niki Ofenloch, Amanda Turner

Administrative, Faculty & Community Attendees: Craig Mack

Parent & Guardian Attendees: There was not a quorum of 10+ non-executive board members (3 parents/guardians were in attendance)

Student Attendees: Sophia Pavano, Cam Lynch, Sami Juma

PTSO Business

- Melissa welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- There was not a quorum of 10+ non-executive board members in attendance, therefore we were unable to vote on the minutes from the Oct 27 and Nov 29 PTSO General Meetings. Minutes will be voted on at the PTSO general meeting in Jan (provided there is a quorum present).

Treasurer's report

- Kristen presented the FY24 budget vs actuals. Of note, the PTSO has received just over \$50k in donations, approximately \$15k short of the \$65k revenue target. We have received several matching corporate gifts, which are always welcomed and appreciated.

Update from Principal Chisum

- Everyone is working hard to stay focused before winter break. This can be a very stressful time for seniors, particularly those who applied early decision to colleges.
- The 2024/2025 school budget was presented at the Dec 12 school committee meeting and it included a number of WHS cuts. The cuts are in response to declining enrollment, as previously predicted in the town's enrollment forecast. Most departments will see a .6 cut (a full-time teacher is 1.0), reducing a full-time teacher to a .4 part-time role and putting them below the .5 threshold required to receive benefits. Those impacted would most likely be younger teachers with less seniority (per contract agreements), and the school had some initial conversations with those teachers. The administration is waiting for visibility into upcoming retirements, voluntary departures, etc, which will affect final decisions. News of cuts have impacted staff emotionally, particularly coming off of recent contract negotiations. The administration will do their best to balance fiscal responsibilities with the need to serve students with a range of needs.
- Craig Mack and Jamie reviewed a number of factors behind declining enrollment numbers, including changing demographics in Wellesley.
- Winter sports have started

WHS MCAS results

- Jamie noted that WPS MCAS data was recently presented at the school committee. He then shared MCAS data specific to WHS, including an overview of the MCAS test, accountability metrics and scores, WHS achievement and growth results, peer district comparisons, chronic absenteeism concerns, and next steps.
- For additional detail on WHS MCAS results, see the meeting recording at www.whsptso.org/meeting-calendar.
- Chronic absenteeism continues to be a challenge at WHS. A student is considered chronically absent if they miss 10%+ of school days (18+ days); it does not matter if absences are excused. The administration is partnering with multiple groups in Wellesley to bring a speaker on this topic in the spring.

Presentation by the 2026 Class Officers

- 2026 class officers Sophia Pavano, Cam Lynch, and Sami Juma did a wonderful job providing insight into life as a sophomore at WHS, including both highlights (class activities/events, learning to drive, more confidence at school) and challenges (harder to make JV sports teams, increased academic pressure, higher expectations, more challenging classes, and larger scale projects).
- Upcoming class events include a Movie Night, class merchandise, a spring formal at Elm Bank, and a spikeball tournament.
- They ended by sharing what they wish parents knew: Push your kids but let them be themselves – be supportive of your kids taking classes that interest them. Help your kids maintain balance between school, friends, and extracurriculars (all are equally important!) Finally, help your student take advantage of all the resources that are available, including peer tutors, labs, and guidance counselors.

Adjourned 7:23pm

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Turner, PTSO Secretary

A recording of this meeting is available on the PTSO website at www.whsptso.org/meeting-calendar.