

# Lakewood PTO Meeting Minutes

**Date:** September 11th 2025, 5pm

**Location:** Lakewood Elementary School

**Overview:** To review and approve the budget for the 2025-2026 school year and upcoming events, volunteer needs and role clarity within the PTO.

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## Attendee List:

Erin El Issa [elissa.erin17@gmail.com](mailto:elissa.erin17@gmail.com)

Helen Wright Helen Wright

Sarah Sands [sbaum@med.umich.edu](mailto:sbaum@med.umich.edu)

Jodi Hecker [heckerj21@gmail.com](mailto:heckerj21@gmail.com)

Airess Stewart Airess Stewart

Brian Goff [bryanagoff@gmail.com](mailto:bryanagoff@gmail.com)

Pam Sica

Aketzaly Ramirez-Lopez

Kim

Kathryn McCormick

Laura Duren

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## Meeting Agenda Overview:

1. Introductions and nominations
2. Budget
3. Fall Festival
4. Hispanic Heritage Festival
5. Funrun
6. Open Discussion

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## Introduction and Nominations

- Brian Goff Nominated Helen Wright as Volunteer Coordinator.
- Airess Stewart seconds the nomination.
- Votes: 10 yes, 0 no, 0 abstains. The motion passes.

## Budget Overview [Budget Report 2025-09-19\\_13-21-43-839.pdf](#)

### FINANCIAL REVIEW

- Starting balance: \$34,698.74

- Summer Income: \$4,246.26: (PTOC fundraiser, Grocery store rebates, employer matches, T-shirt sales and direct donations from POP).
- Summer expenses: \$3,532.29(Supplies, admin, outdoor space).
  - Outstanding check for outdoor space: \$6,973.10
- Current Balance: \$28,509.61

#### TEACHER DISCRETIONARY FUNDS

- Total discretionary budget: \$8,900 down from \$12,000 in previous year.
- The new system for the discretionary fund means that receipts are required before reimbursement. Some staff members may feel discouraged to use funds. No teachers present at the PTO meeting to comment on changes however the changes have been communicated at a teachers meeting with no negative comments.
- \$300 per full-time teacher (\$350 for new teachers)

#### BUDGET REVIEW

- Income Highlights.
  - Direct donations: \$2,000
  - PTO Thrift Shop: \$10,000
    - This amount is unpredictable as we can not guarantee the checks will be delivered before the end of the school year.
  - Grocery rebates: \$500
  - Events: \$33,650 (after expenses)
- Expense Highlights.
  - Events and Initiatives: \$4,900
  - Discretionary totals: \$12,440
  - Field Trips: \$10,000 (down from \$14,00 last year)
    - Per student amount will be equal for all students compared to other years where 5th graders receive extra funds. A student run fundraiser was suggested to help cover costs for the extra field trip expenses that 5th grade has.
    - Grants for bussing are available and should be researched ASAP.
  - Undesignated Slush fund: \$2,578.25
    - A new category compiled of emergency funds and past year budget expenses
    - This gives flexibility in the budget if we go over budget in other categories.
  - Staff Appreciation: \$2,100
  - Outdoor learning space: \$10,000 (already spent)
  - Administrative expenses (restricted): \$1,650.00
- Budget Balanced at \$55,000

#### BUDGET NOTES:

- Depending on the success of our fundraisers there is potential to increase the budget for field trips and discretionary funds.

- Explore other fundraising platforms for events like the Fun Run and Read-a-thon to cut costs.

#### BUDGET VOTE

- Erin El Issa motioned to pass the proposed budget.
- Jodi Hecker seconds the proposal.
- Votes: 10 yes, 0 no, 0 abstained. The motion passes.

#### **Fall Festival: OCTOBER 24th**

- Budget: \$400 has been donated from Meijer. Amanda will utilize this before using PTO Fall Festival funds. PTO funds for the fall festival are \$650.
- Culture Corner: There was lots of positive feedback from last year and the plan this year is to keep the Kermes the same. Suggestions were made to communicate Menu items and costs ahead of time so families can come prepared.
- Food Visibility: The planning team will need to figure out the logistics of keeping the soup station and Kermes closer together so everything feels more integrated.
- Amanda, Helen and Yolanda will meet prior to the next PTO meeting to discuss event planning and site layout.

#### **Hispanic Heritage Festival: September 15th**

- Planned by the Hispanic Lakewood families. The mamas have been working hard to prepare for the event by making/donating food and putting together dances for the students and the Mamas.
- The event will include food, student and mama dances, piñatas, cultural displays and crafts.
- The event is free and will have students volunteering from the Student Union.

#### **Fun Run**

- Brian Goff will lead this event. Further planning is needed to determine the fundraising platform we will use to avoid paying third party fees (previous years platform took 25%)
- There is a need for prize/participation fairness across all grades.

#### **Open Discussion:**

- Grade Level reps: Clarity surrounding roles and responsibilities; the PTO may not reinstate grade level reps unless tasks are defined more clearly.
- Open Positions: 2nd Volunteer coordinator, social media/communications chair, fundraising chair
- before/aftercare: AAPS is shutting down some before/after care programs. Lakewood aftercare exceeds enrollment and before care is one short of the minimum but without risk of shutting down.
- Outdoor Learning Space: The equipment has been delivered and awaiting assembly.
- State school lunch program: Budget uncertainty at the state level will impact free lunches starting in October. Parents are encouraged to contact legislators regarding the state budget and school meal funding.