



Westside School

THE WPO
(WESTSIDE PARENT ORGANIZATION)
HANDBOOK

WELCOME!

The Westside Parent Organization (WPO) welcomes you to the Westside community. Every Westside parent is automatically a member of the WPO. As a group, we are here to enrich our children's school. We help provide opportunities for community-building and parent involvement. Everybody is encouraged to participate in volunteer opportunities such as meetings, committees and events, and together we will have another memorable year.

The WPO consists of every parent of a Westside student and is facilitated by elected officers (see below). One function of the WPO is organizing and funding special events throughout the year, accomplished through committee work. WPO officers and committees are already at work planning for the months ahead. As you can see from the WPO events, activities and projects, we have another active year coming up and there is a place for you.

WPO OFFICERS

The WPO officers are elected annually in the spring by the general membership.

Below is a list of offices:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Room Parent Coordinator
- Member at Large
- Past President (*sometimes the past president sits on the committee*)

Please check the website for the current WPO Officers and their contact information.

WPO GENERAL MEETINGS

The WPO will hold a couple meetings during the school year. In addition to an advertised topic, WPO meetings may include a report from the Head of School, committee announcements and discussions of issues relevant to parents and their students.

The WPO officers meet periodically during the year. In addition to providing volunteer support for school-related activities, the WPO also sponsors many events, activities and services.

WPO EVENTS, ACTIVITIES & SERVICES

Parents and children alike look forward with much anticipation to participating in the following events. Many parents enjoy volunteering because it provides a powerful sense of community. Participating in a committee is fun, and meetings are often hosted at volunteers' homes where conversation and hospitality flow freely. Currently the WPO plans to sponsor the following events, fundraisers, activities and services.

WPO Sponsored Events

Movie Nights	Various Times
Halloween Fest	October
Family Dance	Various Times
Teacher Appreciation Week	May
Field Day	June

All of these events, activities, and projects require volunteer time by parents and students. They simply cannot happen without you! Some jobs require extended time commitments, others very little time, but all are extremely valuable to the overall success of the programs and events that are provided at Westside School.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Volunteering at Westside sends the message to your children that you care about them and their school. Each time you volunteer - in the classroom or for an event - it is rewarding to both you and your child.

There are many opportunities for involvement, at varying levels ranging from one hour of help in the classroom to chairing the auction for the year. One of the best ways to build community at school is to be involved.

Here are some ideas for involvement:

Attend

- WPO general meetings
- All-school events
- Grade-level events

Volunteer

- On a WPO committee
- At WPO events
- At Grade-level events
- In the classroom

HOW TO VOLUNTEER

- Offer help to your student's teacher
 - Talk to the Volunteer Coordinator.
 - Contact a Committee Chair directly
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METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

WPO Parent Communication Folders

These folders are located in the office inside the main school. They are for parent to parent communication such as committee work, volunteer related information and personal correspondence (birthday invitations, thank you notes, photos, etc.). Please check these folders periodically.

Westside Update

A must read! This newsletter is sent by email every Thursday. It provides a current calendar of events, an update of what's happening at Westside and an in-depth look at what's going on or what's interesting at the school. Fliers and attachments are sometimes included with the Westside Update.

This Week at Westside

Every Friday, you will receive a short email about the next week and upcoming activities.

Westside Website

The address is www.westsideschool.org. Check it out! The parent/student network on the website is accessible only to Westside families. Teachers will provide classroom information here. To access this section, you will need a username and a password. Call the office if you need this information.

Westside Facebook/Twitter

Are you a technology addict? Then become a facebook fan of Westside School and/or follow us on Twitter! These two methods of communication will give you brief updates on Westside. Follow the links on www.westsideschool.org.

Bulletin Board

WPO information, volunteer sign-up sheets and other information is posted on the bulletin board located inside the school office or on our website.

If you want to publish information on the bulletin board, please contact a WPO officer. If you would like to publish information in the Update, please contact the marketing & development director.

COMMITTEES & CHAIRS

The WPO has many committees, and each committee has a volunteer chairperson. We attempt to fill these positions in the spring for the following year. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please contact either the current committee chairperson or the Volunteer Coordinator.

Each committee needs volunteers to help accomplish the work of that committee. If you are interested in serving on a particular committee, you can:

- Contact the Volunteer Coordinator
- Offer help directly to a particular committee chair at any point during the year.

WPO committees are listed below:

- Halloween Festival, the Saturday before Halloween
 - Family Movie Night
 - Family Dance, varies
 - Teacher Appreciation Week, May
 - Field Day
 - Scholastic Book Order Chair
 - Pizza Day
 - Toner Cartridge Recycling
 - Library Help
 - Room Parents
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WPO ACTIVITIES & FUNDRAISERS

The Westside Parent Organization sponsors a variety of family events and activities throughout the year. Most are free of charge, but some are fundraisers.

Any money made from these events goes to sponsor extra opportunities for teacher development (beyond what the school already offers), pay for assemblies and fund other WPO sponsored events and projects. We hope all families will participate, by volunteering and attending, as it is truly a great time when the whole Westside Community comes together to celebrate! Following is a brief description of most of the events and activities.

WPO FUNDRAISERS

Pizza Day

Pizza Day is one of our biggest fund-raisers. The WPO coordinates this fun “hot lunch” that the students love, and it gives us parents a day off from making a full lunch. The children are encouraged to wear their Westside colors, and many times pizza day falls on an assembly day – which makes it even more special! So, even if your child doesn’t eat pizza, have them wear their colors and get in the school spirit!

Halloween Fest

Our Halloween Festival is a Westside tradition. It is spooky, but not scary, and is appropriate for all ages. Children and adults are encouraged to come in costume to show off their stuff! It is a fund-raiser; tickets are purchased and used to play the games and activities. It’s just a ton of fun!

Logo Wear

Wear Westside wear and be seen! This is a great opportunity for your child to dress in comfortable clothing and support Westside at the same time. We have a great selection of gear online - <http://www.westsideschool.org/parents.htm>.

Toner Cartridge Recycling

If you use equipment at your home or office that uses toner cartridges, please bring them in to school so that we can send them in for recycling. A collection bin is located inside the school. Bring in empty cartridges and used cell phones; any and all sizes of color or black cartridges are accepted. Please try to include the shipping materials for large copier or laser cartridges. We get a little bit of money for each cartridge we recycle, and by the end of the year it can add up to a nice amount.

Family Movie Night

Pack up your family and join other Westside families in the school gym for Family Movie Night. A family appropriate movie will be projected on the wall for everyone's viewing pleasure. Bring whatever you need to get comfortable – blankets, pillows, lawn chairs, etc. Concessions, including popcorn, candy and beverages will be available to purchase. All ages welcome, see you at the movies!

Scholastic Book Orders

Scholastic Books provides quality books for our children at extremely competitive prices. When we order books through Scholastic, we not only get a good deal, but the school earns credits with which to buy books for our classrooms and library. The WPO committee chair for Scholastics Book orders will work with a volunteer from each class to coordinate these monthly orders.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Family Dance

This fun event is a great time for the whole family to put on your favorite dancing shoes and come out for a night of fun and socializing.

Winterfest

Held in December, parents and grandparents get to assemble to enjoy the beautiful music prepared by music teacher, Cathy Chutich, and performed by the students of Westside School. This is a special evening for all to enjoy.

Teacher Appreciation Week

Teacher Appreciation week is a week of celebration of the teachers, staff and assistants at Westside. Something special is planned for each day, and students are encouraged to participate and show their appreciation for their teacher.

Spring Fling

Similar to Winterfest, we all get to enjoy the sights and sounds of our children performing a special spring concert, specially prepared by music teacher, Cathy Chutich.

Field Day

It's a time to play! Field Day is a fun day for parents and students to get outside and play organized games, eat pizza and celebrate the end of the school year.

SCHOOL FUNDRAISING

The development committee reports to the Board of Directors and is responsible for making up the difference between the operating budget (the cost of running the school) and the income from tuition.

Committee Members

- Board Development Chair
- Outgoing Chair
- Annual Giving Chairs
- WPO President
- Room Parent Coordinator
- Director of Development
- Auction Chair
- Other Community Members as needed

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE FUNDRAISERS

The Development Committee sponsors the following two fundraisers that provide essential support for operating budget expenses such as faculty salaries, financial aid, and the enriched curriculum enjoyed by our students.

Annual Giving 100% Participation Campaign

Tax-deductible donations to this campaign bridge the very real gap between tuition and the full cost of a student's education at Westside School. The school asks every family to view this effort as a #1 priority and contribute each year to the best of their abilities.

Auction

The annual Westside auction is an event that the entire Westside community looks forward to each year. Participating in this event is a great way to build community and contribute to the school.
