



WHITTIER
greenleaf
NEWSLETTER



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WHITTIER ELEMENTARY
715 NORTH HARVEY
OAK PARK, ILLINOIS 60302
708.524.3080
www.op97.org/whittier

Welcome Back from the PTO!

We hope you are all off to a great start at Whittier for the 2019/2020 school year!

We're Shesel Washington and Shailushi Ritchie, your new PTO co-presidents. Shesel is mom to her own Wildcat, Josette, a third grader. Shailushi also has a third grader, Lex. Her Whittier alum, Isha, is now a sixth grader.

The PTO is responsible for countless programs and events throughout the school year to enhance our children's experience. Please refer to our PTO Program and Events page for that information.

Some of our goals for the PTO this year are the following:

- Promote family engagement at Whittier.
- Promote Wildcat Pride.
- Promote a more positive school culture that celebrates and supports diversity.

And of course we all look forward to working with our principal, Mr. Patrick Robinson, and the new staff!

We are looking forward to seeing you all at the Back to School Picnic! Thank you to Luis Barrera and all that have stepped in to help to make this event possible!

The PTO is already very busy, working hard and has a full calendar planned for this year! We need your help, whether it is volunteering your time, making a financial contribution, or both!

Remember, this is YOUR PTO! The PTO is comprised of volunteer parents, guardians and teachers! EVERY Whittier family and all staff are a part of our PTO.

We eagerly welcome your feedback and participation. Please look out for a regular form in the Tuesday News where you can provide feedback to the PTO.

We look forward to another great year with you!

Sincerely,
Shesel Washington and Shailushi Ritchie

shesel.washington@gmail.com/
shailushi@gmail.com

Get Involved!

Everyone is welcome to participate, volunteer, and contribute in any way that works for you and your family.

Volunteering is a great way to make a positive difference in every child's Whittier experience, including your own! And, it's also a lot of fun for the adults and a good way to get to know your fellow parents/guardians.

Whether helping at a one-day event or on a long-term project, at home or in the building we are grateful for your involvement!

Learn more about volunteering for Whittier PTO by:
Attending our PTO Meetings the first Tuesday of the month at 7PM (free babysitting on site!)

Signing up for specific events and programs on our website at whittierpto.org—click on the Get Involved tab and look for the Signup.com button.

Liking our Whittier PTO Facebook page!

Filling out an online volunteer form on our website if you would like more information, or are interested helping out generally throughout the year.

Please contact London Black for more information about volunteering: london.c.black@gmail.com

GET TO KNOW YOUR PTO

Curious about a PTO program or project? Find one of these friendly folks!

PTO Leadership Team

Co-Presidents
Shesel Washington
Shailushi Ritchie

Co-Treasurers
James Overbeck
Destinie Brannigan

Secretary
Abigail Hodges

Co-VPs Communication

Kirsten Jackson
David Gulbransen

Co-VPs DivCo
Kate Cares
Munirah Curtis

VP Enrichment
Lauren Castro

VP Fundraising
Jamia Ponder

Co-VP Green Team
Nicki Huels
Cathi Ward

VP Parent Engagement
London Black

Wellness Committee
Patricia Engebretson
Elizabeth McVey
Kelly Witt

VP Wise
Maureen Spain

Teacher/PTO Liaison
Sondra Nelson

Principal
Patrick Robinson

Past Presidents
Brigitte Bostrom
Sofia Villafuerte-Daly

Recognition
Teacher Appreciation Dinners
Maureen Spain

Luncheon
Shelly Gustavson
Kelly Sculles
Jennifer O'Rourke

Fundraisers
Amazon Smile
Shayla Bell

Art to Remember
Terri McConville

Birthday Books
Terri McConville

Book Fair
Brigitte Bostrom

Box Tops
Kellie McGinnis

Fun Run Committee
Shayla Bell (chair)
Elizabeth Carrier
Elizabeth McVey
Kelly Witt

Trivia Night
Padmini Kanive

Restaurant Night
Krystina Ryan

Spring Silent Auction
Edith Gomero

Whittier Wear
Christine Diedrich

Events & Activities

Back to School Picnic
Luis Barrera

End of the Year Picnic
Betsy Hart

Ethnic Fest
Shesel Washington (temp)

Fall Harvest Dance
Terri McConville
Elizabeth Cruz

Olympic Day
Julie Burwell

School Kits
Rehka Rajkumar

Whittier at the Movies
Shannon Kazyak
Christine Diedrich

World Language
Lori Robert

Yearbook
Mary Furman

Green Team / Wellness Garden

Nicki Peters
Suzanne Griffin

Beautification
Justin Witt
Greg Diedrich

Communications

Communications
Stacey McCord
Olivia Schreiner

Facebook
Suzanne Griffin

Greenleaf News
Julie Burwell

Website
Leslie Stevens
Saria Lofton

WANT TO JOIN THE FUN?

VIEW OPEN ROLES

(AND GET INVOLVED!)

tinyurl.com/PTOopenings

The Whittier PTO: Your Parent, Teacher Organization

Did you know that most of the programs and activities at Whittier outside the basic educational curriculum are sponsored and funded by the PTO?

Here is a brief summary of what your PTO does!

The PTO supports and funds many academic endeavors such as:

After-school homework helpers
Other programs that support learning

PTO funds are responsible for bringing cultural enrichment programs to Whittier:

Opera for the Young
Hubbard Street Dance
Theatrical performances
Author visits
Library subscriptions
One Book, One School
Camp Edwards Scholarships
WISE (Whittier IS Enriched) scholarships

Oak Park Education Foundation programs like:

Science Alliance
Geared Up
Art Start
Architecture Adventure

The PTO provides support within your child's classroom,

like: \$100 gift for each teacher for beginning-of-year classroom supplies
\$5,000 each school year for teacher grants (ex.: Froebel blocks; individual dry erase boards, magnetic tiles; science supplies; file folder games; and multi-sensory materials)
One field trip bus ride per 2 classrooms

The PTO sponsors community events such as:

Back-to-school and spring picnics
Family Nights
Pumpkin Festival
Turkey Trot
Olympic Day

Funds are also used to recognize school staff, teachers and students.

Teacher dinners during conferences
Teacher appreciation events
Retirement gifts
5th grade luncheon
PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports).

The PTO also sponsors the education and enrichment efforts of the Wellness Committee and the Green Team, as well as the annual Service Day.

The PTO is able to fund most of these programs through its fundraising efforts throughout the school year, like:

The Fun Run
Trivia Night
The Fun Fair and Auction
The Fall and Spring Book Fairs
Art to Remember
WISE classes
Restaurant/Shopping Nights

Whittier World Language Lunchtime Enrichment Classes

Whittier's PTO is proud to sponsor our World Language lunchtime enrichment classes again this year!

Students in grades 2-5 can sign up to learn a foreign language, such as French, German, American Sign Language, or Hindi (new this year!).

The program will take place once a week during lunch hour and will run from October to March, for a total of 20 classes.

Look for the informational flyer with more details in your student's backpack in September!

Contact our World Language chair, Lori Robert at lori.robert@gmail.com with any questions.

Get Ready for Whittier Wear



Sales are open!

Grab a newly designed Whittier t-shirts for men, women, children, and toddlers. Just \$15 per shirt.

Sales end Wednesday, September 19. Shirts will be delivered about 2 weeks later.

Place your order at
www.customink.com/fundraising/whittierschool



Let's Get Ready to Run, Wildcats! Wednesday, October 2nd

The Whittier Fun Run is a walk/run-a-thon fundraiser. Kids come out to the ball field with their class and grade level peers and run/walk laps, exercising to fun tunes. Students gather pledges toward a \$50 per child goal. Our collective goal is to raise \$16,000 to support programs all year.

The PTO relies on this event to generate funds to support a wide range of programs. The PTO subsidizes the cost of field trip bus rides, provides annual teacher grants and funds enrichment like Hubbard Street Theater and Opera for the Young, Homework Help, our after school program (WISE) and Camp Edwards scholarships, library subscriptions, One Book-One School, school picnics, Olympic Day & Wellness food tastings. All these things are only possible with outstanding community support. Donations are tax deductible since our PTO is a 501(c)3.

Fliers will be coming home with info. Ready to get started? You can register now on our new platform at www.getmovinfundhub.com and select "Register As Parent" and use the School Identifier: **5d2f47547adff**

Create your online account by September 21 and your child's classroom teacher will provide an "experience coupon" in class such as choosing a song or game for the class, bringing a favorite toy to school or wearing pjs to school! If you can't create an account online, reach out to funrun@whittierpto.org for support.

We will continue to take pledges until October 18, so keep sending them in until then. Doing so also gets your child a chance to win prizes for themselves and their class!



2018 Fun Run participants



nurse's note

Dear Whittier Families,

I hope the school year is off to a great start! I am thrilled to be serving you and your children this school year.

In order to have a productive and enjoyable year we must keep our students safe and healthy. The following information will help us achieve this together.

If your child has any special health care needs and/or you anticipate a need for **medications at school** please be sure to have a "Prescription Authorization Form" completed.

All medications, including over the counter medications, require this form to be completed by a physician. Some orders may also require a completed action plan.

Please contact me as soon as possible to be sure the proper forms are completed. All health forms are available on our district website.

All kindergarten and new students to Whittier are required to have a completed "Certificate of Child Health Examination" submitted at the beginning of the school year.

The physical exam must be dated on or after August 28, 2018. **Students who do not have this examination submitted by October 15, 2019 will be excluded from school until they are in compliance.**

REMINDER: Parents must complete and sign the "health history" section before submitting health examination form to the health office. **Kindergarten students and students new to Illinois schools are**

required to submit proof of an eye exam by an optometrist or physician (such as an ophthalmologist) no later than October 15th, 2019.

Proof of a recent (within the last year) **dental exam must be submitted for all kindergarten and second grade students.** These forms need to be submitted to the school health office on or before May 15, 2020.

Regular and consistent attendance is imperative for your child to succeed in school. However, **do not send your child to school with any of the following symptoms:**

- Constant coughing
- Constant "runny" nose - especially with yellow or green mucous
- A temperature of 100 degrees or higher
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Rashes or any scratching for unknown reasons
- Watery, itchy eyes with drainage

All students must be without fever or vomiting (without medication) for 24 hours before coming back to school after an illness.

REMINDER: Handwashing is the first line of defense for keeping our students and staff healthy. Encourage frequent hand washing at home and at school.

Nuts and nut products are NOT allowed in any classroom. This includes products

that are labeled "*processed in a facility that shares equipment with nut products*".

Do not send nuts or nut products as a snack for your child to eat. In addition, there is **NO food sharing between students allowed** at any time during school. Snack and celebration foods allowed in classrooms include:

- Fresh Fruit
- Fresh Vegetables
- Pretzels
- Packaged Popcorn

It is extremely important that I am made aware of any and all health concerns that your child may have. If this information was not given during registration please contact me at hwinkelhake@op97.org as soon as possible. Remember to continually update me on changes in your child's health.

Please know that as your school nurse, I am here to help. I will always make decisions based on what is best and safest for your child and all of the students at our school. Feel free to contact me at any time if you have questions or concerns.

Thank you,
Hilary Winkelhake, RN
Whittier School Nurse
hwinkelhake@op97.org
708-524-3076

Support the Arts

Have any of the following? Donate to Ms. Connell!

- *wipes * hand sanitizer * non-scented lotion * tissues * milk jug rings * bottle caps
- * wine corks * pop tabs * knitting yarn * any small, cool, weird trinkets & items

Or, lend a hand to hang art around the school by writing hconnell@op97.org

Garden Cat Club 2019

Memories have been made in the garden all spring and summer long!

Before the school year ended in June, many classrooms and our WISE Sugarbeet Schoolhouse class planted in our garden. The Garden Cat Club hosted several summer meet ups including a student inspired litter clean-up night, popsicle night, and a potluck gathering.

Weekly family volunteers gathered, watered, weeded, and harvested all summer long. Some of our favorites from this summer included beautiful sunflowers, strawberries, broccoli, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, zucchinis, beets, lettuces, snap peas and green beans.

We planted a pollinator garden and families even found caterpillars growing on our dill plants studying the life cycle of butterflies. More to come in the garden this Fall as teachers will continue gardening with their classrooms!



Service Day 2019

Last Spring we had to delay our Service Day due to the snow and rain!

This didn't stop our parent volunteers from brightening up our blacktop. A very special thank you to Justin Witt and Olivia Schreiner for repainting the USA map, classroom line up circles and four squares. We hope you enjoy the extra color on your way back to school!



Oh, how our



garden grows!



Save as much as \$207* per year per child packing a Zero Waste lunch!



Low Waste Lunches Save Money

The majority of Whittier's landfill trash at lunchtime is from pre-packaged, single serve items and plastic ziplock bags. These are convenient but are costing you money in addition to creating landfill.

*The cost of a peanut butter and jelly lunch, with juice, applesauce, cheese sticks, and yogurt, reflective of the prices from Jewel Osco and internet food retailers as of August 2016.

1

BUY BULK

Per unit cost is lower.

2

PACK FOOD AND DRINK IN REUSABLE CONTAINERS

3

PACK A RAINBOW

Check the back for some great healthy lunch tips!

Savings from using bulk



\$68.80 saved
Block Cheese vs.
Prepackaged
Cheese Sticks



\$39.56 saved
32 oz. Tub vs. Yogurt
Tubes



\$10.32 saved
128 oz. bottle vs.
Capri Sun juice
pouches



\$6.83 saved Ziploc
reusable containers
vs. Ziploc bags

Tips for Packing a Healthy Lunch

1

PACK A RAINBOW

Include different colors of fruits and veggies

Eat a **RAINBOW** every day! By including different colors of fruits and veggies in a lunch, you will eat a variety of vitamins and minerals to keep you healthy. Red, green, purple, yellow, green... each color provides your child with unique and important nutrients.



2

CREATE BALANCE

Try to pack foods from most of the food groups

Create **BALANCE** in your lunch with the different food groups. It is important to try to pack foods from most of the food groups in each lunch. Including a protein (like meats, beans, or nuts), a grain (like whole grain bread or crackers), a dairy food (like milk, cheese, or yogurt), and a fruit and/or a vegetable in your child's lunch will provide them with plenty of energy to get through the school day.

3

STAY HYDRATED

With water - many kids don't get enough

STAY HYDRATED with **WATER**. Many kids don't get enough water, which can result in feelings of exhaustion and overheating. By packing a reusable water bottle in your child's backpack, your child can stay hydrated all day long. Whittier has water fountains throughout the school (including in the minigym) where your child can refill their bottle as needed.



4

KEEP FOOD SAFE

Perishable foods need to stay cold

Make sure your food is **SAFE**. If you do pack perishable foods in your child's lunch box, be sure to include a reusable ice pack. Perishable foods, like meat, cheese, and yogurt, need to stay cold. If these foods get too warm for too long, they could make your child sick.

Whittier DivCo

What is DivCo?

The Whittier Diversity Committee is one of the committees on the Whittier PTO. Each school in District 97 has a diversity committee that does varied events related to diversity and inclusion—ranging from lectures, providing educational sessions about resources, discussion groups on race and equity, and hosting inclusive playdates.

The Whittier Diversity Committee is for you and what you feel is important as it relates to diversity and inclusion. Please check us out, join, or volunteer.

Stay tuned for the next general meeting.

Whittier 101 Session

Please join our teachers and staff for this very informative and eye-opening talk. We will discuss questions related school discipline, educational supports, social justice, and school culture.

When: Saturday, September 14, 2019 from 8:30 am to 12 pm
Where: Whittier Elementary –Auditorium

Free childcare will be provided. Please RSVP by Wednesday Sept 11 for childcare to kate.cares@gmail.com

Refreshments will be served.

SAVE THE DATE

BACK TO SCHOOL PICNIC
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

WHITTIER 101
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

PICTURE DAY
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

PTO MEETING
TUESDAY OCTOBER 1

WALK TO SCHOOL DAY
+
FUN RUN
TUESDAY OCTOBER 2

COMMON GROUND
FRIDAY OCTOBER 4

WHITTIER AT THE MOVIES
FRIDAY OCTOBER 18

PTO BOOK FAIR
OCTOBER 23-25

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE (HALF DAYS)
THURSDAY OCTOBER 24
FRIDAY OCTOBER 25

PUMPKIN FESTIVAL
OCTOBER 29-30

HALLOWEEN PARADE
THURSDAY OCTOBER 31

INSTITUTE DAY (NO SCHOOL)
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 1



Chalk the Walk 2019

