

From the Desk of the Principal
December 2017
Eric Chisausky

I would like to thank PTO Presidents Kim Lowe and Maggie Lynch for their leadership and championing a wonderful start to the school year for Walker. The Walker Fest provided our community time to connect with each other, celebrate Walker, and support our academic programming with exciting enrichments. As the first trimester has come to a close, I hope you all found the recent parent-teacher conferences valuable in the continuing partnership to help your child learn and grow at Walker School. I am proud of our students, staff, and parents for working hard together to make Walker a great school community!

PTO Fundraising Purchased Items

Thanks to you, parents, the PTO sponsored fall Walker Fest/Warrior Challenge netted a total of \$30,900.00—103% of our total goal! Over 90% of our Walker students participated in this fantastic event! The PTO Executive Committee has been working with me to strategically plan how best to spend the money raised. Note, much of these funds help pay for field trips, assemblies, celebrations/spirit days and other enhancements, such as Science Week and Spelling Bee. Here are our goals with our annual fundraising:

1. Spend the funds in the year in which it is raised
2. Serve all or most of our students' needs
3. Target meaningful expenses to enhance the Walker School experience

Thus far, the PTO earmarked \$4000.00 for this year's *Strategic Planning budget*. At our November General Meeting, we decided to allocate about \$2000.00 to purchase the following items for our students this year:

- Math Fraction manipulatives for intermediate grades
- Popcorn Site words for primary grades
- Gumball Math game for primary grades
- 6 Breakout EDU Kits for whole school (Check out the walkerpto.com website for a little more info to learn what this is!)

Additionally, the PTO and Walker staff is discussing how best to allocate remaining strategic funds on items such as...

- More flexible furniture for classrooms (standing desks, stools, rocker chairs, etc.)
- Updated gymnastic equipment for PE

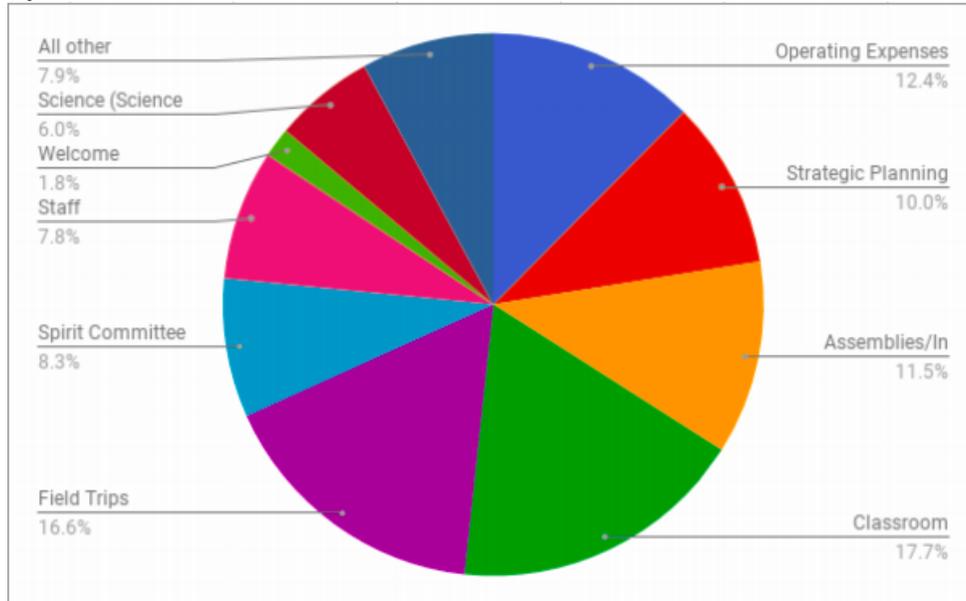
Our Walker staff is very grateful for the partnership with the PTO to identify valuable resources to enhance the overall learning experience for our Walker students!

Here is a quick snap shot of the PTO 2017-2018 expenses. Check out this link to the Walker PTO website for more information:

<http://www.walkerpto.com/about-us.html>

2017-2018 PTO Budgeted Expenses

Operating Expenses <i>(Website, Directory, School Supplies, Classroom Parties, T-shirts)</i>	\$4,960.00
Strategic Planning	\$4,000.00
Assemblies/In School Learning	\$4,600.00
Classroom Enrichment <i>(Bulletin Board, Celebrations, Teacher Enrichment)</i>	\$7,060.00
Field Trips	\$6,600.00
Spirit Committee	\$3,300.00
Staff Appreciation/Gifts	\$3,100.00
Welcome Committee/Back to School Day	\$700.00
Science (Science Fair/Science Week)	\$2,400.00
All other committees <i>(Art, Bldgs & Grounds, Field Day, Spelling Bee, Student Leadership)</i>	\$3,156.00
Total Expenses	\$39,876.00



What's New This Year: Curriculum Committee Work

As I mentioned during our August Curriculum Night, there is a lot of important committee work happening this year. Just about every curriculum area is meeting district wide monthly to develop content aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and create and validate assessments that will help us evaluate the strength of our instructional practices and ensure our students are prepared for their grade level learning outcomes. Several Walker teachers are members of these district wide committees. You may have noticed that your child has had substitute teachers with some regularity; in many cases, this is because the aforementioned curriculum committees meet during the school day in order to be most productive and advance our curriculum goals for the year. I am very proud of our teachers and their willingness to lead such important curriculum development.

English Language Arts Committee	Social Studies Committee	Math Committee	Science Committee	Art Committee	Physical Education
Lauren Bonga	Jordan Thornquist	Sarah Karrow	Lynn Mueller	Hilary Andrluk	Melissa Marshall
Rachelle Heck	Lynn Mueller				

School Improvement

At the November 15 PTO General Meeting, I gave a brief overview of Walker's performance on last year's PARCC and MAP assessments and I discussed how we are using this data to inform this year's school improvement process. I'd like you to know that these assessment results reflect that Walker School is performing at or above the district average in the areas of Reading and Math overall. Recently, our Building Leadership reviewed the three-year trend data of these assessments results, which we analyze to ensure our students are growing from year to year. We also spoke frankly about the instructional practices that we identified are contributing to our success and we identified some areas we intend to focus on to support further growth for our students.

I'd like you to know this is a healthy opportunity to reflect on our organization and that 18 months after making changes to our several of our teacher-teams, we are seeing the results of much hard work and collaboration. Walker School is moving in a good direction and all of our teachers are committed to growing and supporting our school goals!

Greatest Area of Needs

Each year, Walker as well as the other schools within the district, set and work toward specific school improvement goals. As an improved process this year, each school has reviewed student growth data and current instructional practices to identify a *Greatest Area of Need* for each grade level. That means the Walker School Improvement Plan is comprised of grade-specific goals for English Language Arts and Math, in addition to a school wide SELAS goal (Social and Emotional Learning for Academic Success).

In short, Walker has identified on-level reading and writing proficiency, and math fact fluency as needed focus areas for many of our grade levels. The resources we have implemented since last year will support better instructional planning and delivery. Feel free to contact your child's teacher if you'd like to further discuss your child's progress relative to these school improvement efforts. I look forward to keeping you updated you on our progress in these improvement areas throughout the school year.

SEL at Walker

For our school-wide SELAS (Social and Emotional Learning for Academic Success) goal this year, we have identified the following three themes, which all teachers are purposefully weaving into the Walker experience:

1. Positive Attitude
2. Flexibility
3. Perseverance

We have continued stamping students' hands for CHAMPS expected behaviors; and we have recently started to recognize students who demonstrate the above characteristics. You may have notice that we recognize Weekly CHAMPS and share these group photos in *Walker Wednesday News* each month. Additionally, one student from grades K-2 and one student from grades 3-5 will be selected from our Weekly Champs to be awarded an extra recess for his/her homeroom class. As parents, you can help my *championing* the effort of your child and these important life skills as we work together to instill a sense of resilience and pride in doing things well!

Looking Ahead...

Winter MAP testing occurs in December for grades 2-5. Our teachers will review the winter MAP data once it is available to monitor student progress and scaffold supports to help each child be successful.

Giving and Sharing

Please continue to donate new, unopened toys, winter clothing, books, and canned food for our Giving and Sharing collection, which will support HCS Family Services. Reminder: Our annual Giving and Sharing Assembly will be December 20 at 2:00 PM. See the table in the front hallways for the growing collection of donated items!

Thank You, Parents!

Lastly, thank you, *parents*, for your investment in your child's education and for being such an important part of Walker School. As this season of Giving and Sharing unfolds, I want to pass along my sincerest appreciation for your efforts in partnering with our staff to help every Walker student *develop the skills they need to change the world and the confidence they need to do it* (newly adopted d181 Vision statement).

As always, feel free to connect with me if I can assist you in any way to further support your child at Walker School.

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