



Genesee Hill News

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- 5 Updated Bell Times
- 12-16 No School - Spring Break
- 22 Disability is Diversity Workshop
- 27 PTA - General Membership Mtg.

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- 3-7 Teacher Appreciation Week
- 31 No School - Memorial Day

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Mark Your Calendars!



DISABILITY IS DIVERSITY WORKSHOP
APRIL 22, 7:30 PM

This workshop discusses neurodiversity, and how biases impact our words and the way we treat people with disabilities. Presented by The Arc of King County and aimed at adults, this workshop helps each person identify their role in creating a culture of inclusion, particularly around talking to children about disability. Co-hosted by the FCEIGH and South Seattle Co-operative Preschools. [Pre-register here](#) to get the Zoom link.

PTA General Membership Meeting

April 27, 6:30 PM

THERE IS NO WRONG WAY TO PTA

JOIN NOW

All are welcome and invited to join the April PTA general meeting on April 27 at 6:30 p.m. We'll start off with some informal community-building at 6:30 and shift to the meeting agenda at 7. Come early to connect with members of our school community, or join right at 7. One topic of importance will be the PTA budget for the upcoming school year. Check the Thursday Bulletin for the meeting link.

Letter From the Co-President



Just over a year since schools in Seattle closed, 85% of kids are just starting back in the classroom this week.

And what a challenging experience it's been – getting to know teachers and classmates through a screen and having less variety in interpersonal

connections than normally come with recess, lunchroom, and hallway interactions. One question from the March 31 Community Chat hit home for me: “How is GH thinking about mental health and anxiety and how that shows up? Some kids have not been in any kind of crowd or even a grocery store in over a year.”

Schools play a critical role in kids' social-emotional development, and the PTA is proud to support mental health and wellness of all children. We recently recommitted to fund part of the counselor and specialist staffing so that as kids return to school, familiar faces would be there to help them.

Additionally, the PTA will consider at the April 27 General Membership meeting how to cover CHAMPSS – the paid recess monitors – who will now assist with playground supervision among other duties for Cohorts A and B. Please join the PTA meeting, member or not, to show support.

Ten weeks of Cohorts A, B, and C may speed by as we adapt to a more vaccinated world. But with continued risk from Covid-19 variants, and needing to adjust our own barometers to endure what's effectively a restart to the school year routines, please reach out to president@geneseehillpta.org to play your part in the change via volunteer opportunities, calling out areas that your kids/families need backing, and just to give a '+1' where things are going well.

It's only together that we use our time, talent, and PTA backbone to ensure Genesee Hill provides an equitable experience to everyone on its campus. Thank you!

Volunteer Appreciation Week

Did you know that Volunteer Appreciation Week is an annual celebration observed in many countries? SPS celebrates the 20,000+ annual volunteers during the week of April 19-23.

Volunteers are an integral part of what makes the Genesee Hill Community fun, welcoming, and a wonderful learning environment for our students. From hosting lunch bunches, to delivering Direct Give Yard signs, to operating as room parents - our community has stepped up to keep spirits high during this challenging year. We would like to extend a tremendous, heartfelt THANK YOU to all Genesee Hill volunteers!

Volunteer Shout Out

One volunteer that deserves ample celebration is the incomparable Kelley O'Connor. Kelley has lent her time and talents to spearhead the Virtual Lunch Bunch program. Her efforts have brought joyous opportunities for students to connect socially. From playing Among Us, to solving trivia, to deciphering an escape room - Virtual Lunch Bunch has offered some welcome fun to the school day. Thank you to Kelley and all Virtual Lunch Bunch Volunteers!

Have a Volunteer to Shout Out?

Help us recognize the volunteers that make our community great! Use this form to submit your shout outs:

<https://bit.ly/31DYxFN>

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



No matter how you add it up, Math Specialist Dana Cochran's talents are exponential!

What is your current role at GH?

I am the Math specialist.

What drew you to this type of work?

The opportunity to teach only MATH! And the students and community. How did I come to teaching? It's a long story, but I thought I wanted to be a High School Biology teacher and ended up being a bank examiner and then a credit review analyst. It's always been about numbers. 😊

What is your favorite part of your work?

Working with students and the fabulous staff at Genesee Hill.

How do you spend your free time?

I like to make quilts, read, and play the occasional video game. Some of my favorites are Township, Best Fiends and Blockudoku (I do love Sudoku, also, but do it on paper!) I'm also obsessed with the Marvel Cinematic Universe and watching movies in my spare time!

Anything else you'd like to share?

I am a die-hard Seattle Sounders fan and I can't wait to see them play again in person! ... My favorite Sounder – that's so hard!!! It's former Sounder, Clint Dempsey. My favorite current Sounder is Stephan Frei. He's an amazing keeper and he doesn't get the recognition he deserves! My soccer love extends to English Premier League – always following Christian Pulisic - and we watch the U.S. Men's National Team and U.S. Women's National Team. I got to go to France to see the U.S. women in the World Cup in 2019!

ADVOCACY & EQUITY

Kristen Corning Bedford (Equity Chair) and Victoria Bhegani (Legislative Chair) offer monthly updates.

Last week GH staff made a stand, rejecting the current SPS GHE school budget for next year because of its severe cuts: Read more about the staff's action and how to support them [here](#). For example, please write a personal email or use the sample below to write:

Seattle School Board Pres [Chandra Hampson](#), Superintendent [Denise Juneau](#), and SPS Chief Financial Officer [JoLynn Berge](#).

Dear _____,

As Genesee Hill Elementary families, we are gravely concerned about the cuts our and other SPS schools face in their current 2021-22 school budgets. In this time of pandemic, we worry over student and staff safety in school buildings, students' mental health, and a widening learning gap that exacerbates already existent racial and socioeconomic disparities between students. In this challenging landscape the bleak budgetary outlook for many schools is troubling. That our schools can face these challenges this fall while having their staff winnowed away seems like an impossible ask. Surely our school district can do better for its students and staff and allocate schools with the resources they need to make the next school year a successful one.

In light of the above reasons, we ask that you take action to restore 2021-2022 SPS school budget allocations and when doing so, prioritize core staff positions (school administrators, counselors, nurses). We also ask that this school district be transparent and accountable about how it uses the pandemic recovery money it receives from the state and federal government.

April is Autism Acceptance Month

Join the FCEIGH for family education about neurodiversity and disability during April! Attend the Disability is Diversity Workshop (details on page 1) and check out the Seattle Special Education PTSA's [Inclusion BINGO](#). It's a fun and informative way to engage in disability history and awareness as a family. Watch, read, and act to elevate disability rights as human rights. There are prizes too!

SPOTLIGHT ON BUDGET

It's springtime and budget season for the PTA. The budget being planned is for next year and must be approved by the board and membership before the end of this academic year. There is a lot of uncertainty about how school will run next year, so we are taking a conservative approach to the budget, knowing that we will need to be flexible and likely make changes in the fall.

The budget is broken down into five main categories (1) community building, (2) PTA admin, (3) classroom basics, (4) educational enhancements, and (5) school

admin and safety. The conservative approach is assuming that fundraising will be lower than pre-pandemic, but higher than this past year, and that the basics for the school are funded. There is plenty of debate about the word "basic" because it has different context for many parents and educators.

If you want to learn more, join our next virtual general membership meeting on April 27.



Greg Deviny is in his second year as Treasurer on the PTA Board. Greg has two GH students and is passionate about education.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising Chair, Tracy Smid, provides an update on fundraising successes this year.

This school year has been quite a journey! We have been exploring innovative ways to raise funds for the GHE community during a pandemic. This has caused the Fundraising Team to overcome unprecedented obstacles. The team rose to the challenge and is doing an amazing job! I cannot thank them enough for their hard work! I would like to highlight our activities and the people behind them:

The **Direct Give Campaign** chaired by **Stephanie Holloway** exceeded the goal and engaged the community. Families loved hunting down the Fox Signs! Stephanie's team worked hard to put together a Direct Give unlike any other. Thank you to everyone on this team!

The **Fox Box Campaign** chaired by **Noirin Lynch** is awesome, popular, and beautifully done! Keep your eyes open for a fun future Fox Box opportunity towards the end of the year!

The excellent **Dine Out** events chaired by **Jodi Lansky** have become a staple in the community. The restaurants that she has found have been wonderful! Our next Dine out will be May 23rd at Lady Jaye's.

Sponsorships are being successfully spearheaded by **Alicia Cummings**. Sponsorships help highlight local businesses. Email sponsorships@genneseehillpta.org for more information.

Move-A-Thon is BACK and will be chaired by **Amanda Baker**. Amanda has a lot of thoughts to make this event super special this year. Details will be coming out late April/ early May.

Fundraising is a community effort. I would like to thank all those who have contributed!

Thank you Fundraising Volunteers: Amanda Baker, Amanda Neves, Amy Higbee, Amy Leiboh, Chau Pho Tung, Courtney Hill, Dave Conway, Dawn Franklin, Deborah Neisuler, Erica Karlovits, Erin Munavu, Heidi Loeffler, Ines Feiereisel, Jen Scherer, Jill Langley, Jodi Lansky, Julie Phares, Julie Riendl, Kara Loeppky, Kate Dixon, Katie Byron, Katie Halse, Kim Zebor, Kristen Corning, Leigh Ann Johnson, Lindsay Wahlborg, Lindsey Imbier, Liz Vivian, Marisa Woodget, Megan Muhlenkamp, Meredith Deviny, Merrick Bodmer, Michelle Commazetto, Mira Beins, Neil Strobusch, Noirin Quinn, Rachel Hansen, Robin Lutton, Stacy Vayanos, Stefanie Kimbrel, Stephanie Holloway

COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

What is the BLT? Does GHE have one?

Each Seattle Public School has a **Building Leadership Team (BLT)**, whose function is to oversee the facilitation and development of the Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP), staff professional development, and the school budget. The CSIP lays out goals and strategies to boost student achievement. The BLT determines the staffing needs and budget to meet the goals of the CSIP and plans professional development activities to meet the needs of teachers as they work to implement the CSIP. Genesee Hill's BLT is composed of the principal,

teachers from each grade level K-5, specialists, and two parents or guardians from the GHE community. The two positions are 1) PTA President or their designee and 2) At-large representative. The at-large rep is chosen by the principal and approved by the rest of the BLT, and typically serves for a few years. These representatives maintain two-way communication with their respective groups and make recommendations regarding programs and policies.

The BLT meets on the first Monday of each month at 3:30 PM, currently on Microsoft Teams. If you have information or ideas to share that fall in the three focus areas of the BLT, please feel free to contact your PTA BLT representatives, [Scot Duffield and Michelle Comazzetto](#), at any time to raise your ideas, thoughts and questions at one of the monthly meetings.



Coming Up:

Teacher
Appreciation
Week
May 3-7

Let's show some appreciation for the hard work of our amazing GH teachers staff! Sign up [here](#) to 'adopt' a staff member. Please label gifts and drop them off M - TH (**May 3-6**) in the bins in front of the school.

You may also sign up to purchase individually packaged "Grab-N-Go" snacks and/or drinks that will be placed in the front office for all staff members to enjoy throughout the week. Drop your contributions off on **Monday, May 3**.

Want to contribute, but not able to drop off gifts? Donate via Paypal (paypal.me/dawnfranklin1) or Venmo (@Dawn-Franklin-6). Funds will be used to fill in gaps in 'Adopt a Staff Member' gifts, buy additional snacks, or add money to a prepaid coffee card staff may use at Hotwire.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Summer Fun Camp!

Are you looking for a GREAT summer camp for your kids? Well, look no further than Ms. Sealey's Summer Fun Camp! This camp is for all K-5 kids who enjoy Sports, Science, and Art and is held at Whale Tail Park near Alki. You can email summer_fun_camp@yahoo.com for more information or take a look at the flyer [here](#)!!!

