

Get to Know: The Whately PTO



Please join a meeting:

The first Wednesday of each month, from 7-8 in the school cafeteria

All are welcome!

What is the PTO?

The Whately PTO is primarily a fundraising organization comprised of parents, teachers and administrators. The PTO works to organize and put on many annual fundraisers and events, as well as to gather new ideas and opportunities for the school.

The money raised throughout the year is all put back into the school through many different channels. Every member of the school, from teachers to staff to students, reap the benefits.

Anyone can join in to help the PTO. Many hands make light work! You could volunteer for one hour at a scheduled fundraiser, help to spearhead an event, bring forth a skill or idea that you have or very simply just take part in the PTO's events. What can you do?

It takes a village:

It's not just parents who can help the PTO! Grandparents, family friends, neighbors, Aunts & Uncles..... Anyone who wants to help out can find a simple way to make a big difference in your child's life!

Where does the money go?

In the last year the Whately PTO used it's funds in the following ways:

- \$150 to each classroom teacher at the start of the year
- 2 new picnic tables for the playground
- Thank You Luncheon for teachers and staff at the end of the year
- Refreshments for 6th grade Commencement
- Prizes for the Read-a-Thon
- Hosting the Halloween Party
- Special assemblies for students including this year's Positive Character Trait Series
- Petty cash for teachers as smalls needs arise
- Film processing for all teachers
- New playground equipment (balls, toys, etc.)
- Child care and refreshments at Whately's Town Meeting

And More!

What the teachers say.....

Susan Yurgielewicz , Preschool Teacher:

I have been working with the PTO for the past 18 years. I have worked with a variety of people over the years and all of them have been inspirational in bringing and giving our school environment many fun and wonderful trips, activities, events and items for our children and community. We are always looking for new ideas to generate funds to be used for additional school based events/projects. Don't be afraid to become a voice for your child(ren) with ideas you have to share.

Vicki Sittig, Kindergarten Teacher:

This is my second year teaching at Whately Elementary School. I very much appreciate the generous checks that I have received. My first year, I primarily used the money to replace some books and teaching tools which I left behind at my old school and that I wanted to share with my new class. I bought read aloud books and "big books". This year I used some money to buy a class set of magnetic boards that the children use to build their names with magnetic letters and then practice writing their names. I also purchased a set of hand writing books. I have used the money to buy school supplies for special projects or celebrations, such as planting seeds and bulbs, our five senses study, and our 100th day celebration. The money is very helpful to buy things during the year as the need arises. Although I am new to the school, the other teachers have told me how supportive the PTO has always been to the teachers and students at WES. I am happy to be part of such a generous and caring community.

Ann Collette, 1st Grade Teacher:

I have been teaching in Whately for 27 years, and it is through the hard work and generosity of the PTO that has made it possible for me to supplement my classroom supplies each year. This year, the classroom money went towards buying a bigger glass critter cage in which to raise our monarch caterpillars into butterflies. The larger glass cage allowed all the children to be able view the astonishing changes at the same time! When you are able to capture the exact moment the monarch caterpillar is shedding its final skin and turning into a chrysalis, **NOBODY** wants to move aside to give somebody else a chance to see! Also, thanks to the PTO, we have been able to capture so much of what goes on in our classrooms with photographs. It has allowed the teachers and the children to have a visual record of their experiences in each grade. Every cent the PTO raises benefits every child in this school. It may be something that the community uses, such as the playground, or the annual Halloween Party that they sponsor at the school, or it may be something special in your child's classroom. I deeply appreciate all the PTO's hard work on behalf of the teachers and children at the Whately Elementary School.

Christy Bielunis, 2nd Grade Teacher:

As a new teacher to Whately Elementary School, it is apparent that the PTO cares for both the staff and students. My students love and appreciate all the activities that the PTO sponsors and supports. The money that the PTO gave to our classroom at the beginning of the year has bought us new books and keeps our estimating jar full! The activities for students and the support for teachers make this a great place to work and learn.

Pat Bell, 3rd Grade Teacher:

The PTO has helped 3rd grade in many ways. One of our major uses of the money is to stock our food cabinet throughout the year. We always have a snack available to our students. At the end of the year, part of the money is used to publish our "If These Doors Could Talk" posters, which are distributed to each third grader. This project has been ongoing in our class for many years. It is a project which they will treasure.

Stephanie Apanell, 4th Grade Teacher:

For the past 11 years the PTO has been extremely generous and supportive of the Whately teachers. The classroom funding we are given allows me to supplement classroom supplies without having to pay out of my own pocket. It is so nice to know that when we are in the middle of a project and need more clay or tissue paper the next day that I can go out and buy it. When I was first starting out in Whately and trying to start traditions such as the 6th grade trip, yearbook, and graduation, the PTO was there to support those ideas financially. The class trip t-shirts that each class uniquely designs is something that each 6th grader enthusiastically contributes to. The refreshments the PTO provides after graduation are the perfect ending to such a special night for the 6th graders. Without the support of the PTO teachers would not be able to make each child's year as memorable as they do. Thank you PTO members for all your efforts. They are truly appreciated!

Kathy O'Rourke, 5th Grade Teacher:

For years, the PTO has been very generous supplying teachers with money to buy film and paying for processing. This generosity led me to be able to make yearbooks for my kids to have as a memento of their class time with me. Whether we're documenting a trip we took or a year together, the kids love to go back and reminisce. Each year the PTO has gifted us with money to be able to buy classroom supplies throughout the year. It's a good feeling to be recognized for what we do. I look forward to the luncheon the PTO provides to the staff at Whately on the last day of school. It's one less thing we have to think about during that busy time. Thank you for appreciating what we do.

Laurie Gay, 6th Grade Teacher:

I thank the PTO for all they do. With the money that they provide, I am able to buy supplies for many projects. Two of the projects are a biography project where we create figures and a book project where we need clay. The children become very excited about these projects, so it is nice to have the means to do them. With the money that was provided at the beginning of the year, I was able to purchase the book series, Among the Hidden for our classroom, as well as a few books. In addition, PTO is able to help the 6th grade out with money to help the cost of our NYC t-shirts. Also, when we go to Morse Hill, the PTO helps defer the cost. Lastly, but surely not least, the PTO provides us with money so that we can get pictures developed. When the children see their pictures attached to projects that they have accomplished, there is so much pride. Thanks for all PTO does!

Pete Crisafulli, Principal:

As the new principal at Whately Elementary School it is a blessing to have a PTO of dedicated and focused parents who have the best interests of our school at the center of their work. This PTO has provided me with funding to bring in presenters for our Positive Character Trait Assemblies that I might otherwise not have been able to afford. The social events they sponsor create an opportunity for parents to connect with the school community and provide a forum to build a cohesive community of parents and students alike. Most importantly, they are a great bunch of people and fun to work with!