

Community PTO Meeting Minutes
April 28, 2026

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Executive Board Report: Jen Pettit & Crystal Soule present
3. Budget Update: Prepared and Presented by Lynsey Kramer
 - a. [APRIL BUDGET PRESENTATION](#)
4. Principal Report: Ms. Norris
 - a. Successful ELA MCAS
 - i. Next week will be Math for 3rd, 4th & 5th graders
 - ii. In two weeks, 5th graders only will be taking the Science & Technology MCAS
 - b. Spring Concert - May 29th
 - c. Field trips will be coming up for many grades, some with chaperone opportunities. Please make sure you have an up-to-date CORI & fingerprints on file
 - i. Thank you to the PTO for providing busses for the field trips
5. Staff Report: Mrs Leonelli
 - a. Literacy & Math - Friday May 11th
 - b. Math Carnival - Thursday June 18th
6. Standing Committee Reports
 - a. Restaurant Night Out - Mary Sullivan
 - i. April 16th - The Chateau total \$15.60
 - ii. May 14th - Jake n Joes
 - b. Scholarship Committee - Meeting on May 4th to discuss recipients
 - c. Fifth Grade Committee - Yearbook & End of Year events are in final stages
 - d. Visiting Artists - Jill McElroy
 - i. May 5 - Kite making
 - ii. 3rd & 5th Grade will have Delila the Whale
7. EVENTS
 - a. Fun Run - April 27th
 - i. Successful Sunny Day!
 - ii. More wristbands for next years race
 - b. Spring Event - May 20th
 - i. Free to all families
 - ii. Waltham Community Farms will be there with plants
 - iii. Taqueria Marinana Food Truck will be there with food for sale
 - iv. Plympton Closet will be offering donated spiritwear at \$1/ \$2

1. Please look through your closet for any items you wish to donate
 2. Pride Shirts will be available for sale
- c. Staff Appreciation Week
- i. Second week as we celebrated our staff in January as well
 - ii. PTO sponsored acts of appreciation include coffee cabin, Luncheon, Tempo BakBar event Friday 3:30-6pm
- d. SPIRIT DAY - June 5th
- i. World Cup Theme
 - ii. If you wish to volunteer, sign ups are available. Please make sure you have an up-to-date CORI & fingerprints on file
8. Superintendent Executive Leadership Team Visit - Dr Porch - Chief Family & Community Engagement Officer met with parents and staff present
- a. Teachers & Parents were heard by Dr Porch over growing concerns with budget cuts and behavior issues within the school
 - i. Key Comments:
 1. Dr Porch gave a brief summary of his background and his strong commitment to the school and its students as well as his appreciation for the investment the community has made in its schools, particularly concerning safety and a sense of belonging.
 2. Tim Pettit shared his experience as a parent to a child having graduated from Plympton with great experiences and now having a first grader with some troubling experiences. He expressed his concern to the bridge program and the effects it has on other students. The budget was another concern and how a school with the bridge program needs to keep its resources.
 3. Mary Sullivan expressed concern over increasing violence in the school. Safety is a serious concern with multiple teachers being hurt. The potential budget cuts could significantly increase the likelihood for more teacher injuries and potential child injury.
 4. Ashleigh DiPronio was concerned over lack of transparency within the school over the medical emergencies. Understanding the need for privacy around children, there needs to be a better way to inform parents without vague messages leading to rumors and confusion.
 5. Jill McElroy pointed out in her 12 year tenure as a Plympton parent, she had not received a message regarding medical emergencies, to which Ms Norris clarified it was an attempt to inform due to increasing concern over the presence of emergency vehicles. She also stated there was no correlation between the bridge program and the emergencies.

6. Anna Antoniak asked about the budget and its fluidity between school and city and potential for reallocating funds. Dr Porch responded that there is time to get involved. He also commented that there is a distinction between repurposing and cuts and that cuts haven't historically happened in Waltham. The interconnections of the school budget with other public budgets in Waltham are all anchored to taxpayer dollars.
7. Kerri Blanchard wanted clarification of rumors for new budget proposals including \$877000 in new positions.
 - a. Dr Porch responded that it wasn't true, that despite being listed in that way, in some of those cases those "new" positions were actually individuals who were repositioned.
 - b. She continued to express concern as there are other cases where there are new positions and that would potentially allocate money away from the school, resulting in larger classroom sizes. In her 33 years of experience, she is a proud plympton teacher with amazing colleagues, but said it has changed drastically. Increase in safety concerns needs to be addressed and not by "locking classroom doors to keep everyone safe" that is not okay. She expressed admiration for the Plympton administration, but also invited the Superintendent and support staff to observe the daily environment and challenges firsthand.
8. Jill McElroy spoke again, bringing attention to the accountability scores from the high school and how the problem should be addressed from the bottom up. Focusing on the elementary level will in turn help the high school ratings. Her older son is thriving at the high school level, however considering the issues being experienced by her elementary age child, she has started to contemplate private school. This is not easy for someone who believes in public education and has seen first hand how it can be great.
9. Lynn Caissie spoke as a lifelong Waltham resident, parent to two children in Waltham schools and as a Waltham educator at Whittemore Elementary. She has current concerns for the children at Plympton's safety as well as her fellow teachers. Budget cuts will significantly impact the well-being of both teachers and students at Plympton.
10. Kelly O'Brien spoke about her love for Plympton as a teacher and having the bridge program here. Seeing the diversity among students generally is a beautiful thing. In recent times, there has been an increase of students who have different needs and there needs to be a response to that.

11. Dr Porch thanked everyone for voicing their concerns. The information shared with few exceptions was not new information and many hands will play a part in the final decision. Providing support was an important takeaway for him and how it's being done now and what is working. In terms of what are the next steps, he advised to stay in the conversations and all he heard would be relayed to the district.

9. 2026-2028 PTO Board Elections

- a. All officers ran unopposed with the exception of President Jen Pettit
 - i. Vote was taken and Jen won over opposing candidate Tariq Lukwago
 - ii. Board for the next two years will be as follows:
 - 1. Jen Pettit - President
 - 2. Crystal Soule - Vice President
 - 3. Erin Barnicle & Julie Rushe - Co-Secretary
 - 4. Lynsey Kraemer - Treasurer

MEETING ADJOURNED