



Newcastle PTSA Board Meeting

Thursday, September 17, 2026
Newcastle Elementary School

Call to Order: 18:09 PST (6:09 PM PST)

In attendance:

President	Fiorella Tapiarene
Volunteers	Melissa Federhar (absent 9/17) Christine Clarkson
Outreach	Jill Binks Alicia Singh
Programs	Bindi Patel (absent 9/17)
Secretary	Jackie Mitti Laura Kaya
Ways and Means	Sangeeta Iyer
Treasurers	Chai Dasari Paul Graves

Guest/Observer: Rachael Cox, Vice President of Elementary Schools – South, Issaquah PTSA Council (*arrived 6:51 PM*)

Approval of August 2026 Minutes: Approved

Principal Report — Julia Dorn

- Enrollment: Newcastle Elementary enrollment is approaching 460 students.
- School Lunch: Students are required to take ½ cup of fruit with lunch; fruit and vegetable selections may be mixed and matched within meal requirements.
- One Book, One School

- Six-week schoolwide reading program in which the school community reads the same book.
- Selected book: *A Boy Called Bat*
- [One School, One Book – Read to Them](#)
- Popcorn Fridays
 - Popcorn Friday will continue.
 - If volunteer participation is consistently strong, frequency may increase to twice per month.

Action Items: None noted.

Board Updates

President Update — Fiorella Tapiarene

Grant Requests

Two grant requests were presented for programs traditionally supported by PTSA.

- Toymaker Workshop
 - \$600 approved by Board vote.
 - Request was lower than the prior year.
 - Families will contribute \$20 per family after the PTSA subsidy.
- Third Grade Cougar Mountain Zoo Field Trip
 - \$1,137 approved by Board vote for admission costs.
 - Scheduled for October 15.
 - Supports 69 third-grade students, three teachers, and 12 chaperones.
 - Field trip connects to the third-grade science curriculum.
 - Issaquah School District will cover transportation/bus costs.

Action Items: Grants approved; no additional action noted.

Membership

- **Current PTSA membership: 243**
- **Prior-year membership: 265**



- **Staff membership: 42 of 62 staff members**

Action Items:

- **Fiorella: Provide Jill with the list of staff members who have not yet joined.**
- **Jill: Follow up on staff membership outreach.**

Board Roles & Ways of Working

- Board members should maintain clear ownership of their respective roles and responsibilities.
- Members may pull others in for support as appropriate, while larger or sensitive matters should be taken offline with the President when needed.
- Communication expectations:
 - Text/WhatsApp: quick coordination, scheduling, social media items, and brief updates.
 - Email: Board-wide matters, formal requests, and votes.
 - In person/phone: detailed conversations, sensitive topics, and key decisions.
- Longer conversations should generally not be handled via text due to potential for misinterpretation.
- Fiorella will generally reserve Mondays for PTSA work to establish clearer boundaries around volunteer responsibilities.

Action Items: Board members to follow agreed communication channels and role ownership.

Open Roles & Volunteer Needs

- Yearbook Chair
 - No Yearbook Chair is currently in place.
 - If a chair cannot be secured, the yearbook may need to be cancelled and payments refunded.
 - The Board continues to address customer-service items related to the prior year's yearbook.
- Co-President
 - A Co-President remains a priority for leadership continuity, particularly as Fiorella plans to step down next year.
- Ways & Means
 - Sangeeta is currently covering Ways & Means responsibilities.
- Art Docents
 - Two Art Docents are desired per classroom.



- Classes require volunteer support for the art program to operate.
- Room Representatives
 - Approximately six Room Rep positions remain open.

Action Items:

- **Christine/Melissa: Continue outreach for a Yearbook Chair.**
- **Christine/Melissa: Connect with Hilary to confirm current Art Docent coverage and gaps.**
- **Christine: Confirm which classrooms remain without Room Reps.**

Family Communications

- PTSA newsletter distributed on the 1st of each month.
- Room Rep communications distributed on the 15th of each month and must be routed through the school district.

Action Items: Board and committee leads to plan submissions around established communication deadlines.

Auction / Corporate Sponsorships

- The Auction remains the PTSA's largest fundraiser and benefits the broader Newcastle Elementary community.
- Corporate sponsorship outreach is underway.
- Board members were asked to share potential company contacts and assist with solicitation.
- Katie will provide the Auction procurement link.
- Company matching opportunities should be incorporated into outreach.
- Because Fall Fest also seeks sponsorships, the PTSA should maintain a master Newcastle Elementary sponsor list, including benefits/recognition offered to sponsors.

Action Items:

- **Jackie: Draft outreach language for:**
 - **PTSA-wide corporate giving/sponsorships.**
 - **Individual donations benefiting Newcastle Elementary.**
- **Katie: Provide Auction procurement link.**
- **Board: Share potential corporate contacts.**
- **Board/Fundraising leads: Develop a consolidated sponsor list across PTSA events.**

Treasurer Update — Chai Dasari & Paul Graves

- The prior school year's tax return was filed on August 6, 2026, and accepted by the IRS on August 7, 2026.
- The proposed 2026–2027 PTSA Budget was presented.

[View the 2026–2027 Proposed Budget](#)

Major Budget Changes

- Grant Request budget: increased from \$8,000 to \$12,000.
- Teacher/Staff Allotment budget: increased to \$15,000.
 - Additional staff previously ineligible for the allotment are now included.
 - Allotment is \$300 per eligible teacher/staff member.
- Auction: goal is approximately \$60,000 after expenses.
- Overall projected:
 - Income: approximately \$78,500
 - Expenses: approximately \$73,000

Action Items: Continue monitoring against the 2026–2027 budget and approved allocations.

Ways & Means Update — Sangeeta Iyer

Spirit Wear

- Working with the spirit-wear vendor to launch updated merchandise with the new Newcastle Lion branding.
- Sale planned for September 20–October 2.
- Three logo options expected.
- Team discussed whether the sale can appropriately overlap with Fall Fest merchandise.

Action Items:

- **Sangeeta: Finalize spirit-wear launch and determine approach to Fall Fest merchandise overlap.**



Island Books

- Island Books on Mercer Island suggested the first weekend in February.
- Timing avoids overlap with the October Book Fair.
- A potential Galentine's-themed event is being considered.

Action Items:

- **Sangeeta: Continue planning with Island Books for a possible February event.**

Mariners

- A fall Mariners fundraiser is not feasible for this school year.
- PTSA will explore a spring event.
- Future fall Mariners events need to be arranged before the preceding school year ends.

Action Items:

- **Ways & Means: Explore spring Mariners opportunity and incorporate earlier scheduling into future-year planning.**

Pedalheads

- PTSA is expecting a fundraising check.
- Newcastle's referral/promo code was used seven times.

Action Items:

- **Sangeeta: Track receipt of Pedalheads fundraising proceeds.**

Yoga Night

- Nicole is interested in hosting another Yoga Night benefiting PTSA.
- Previous model was approximately \$10 per attendee.
- Event would be geared toward mothers/adults.
- Childcare cannot be directly provided by PTSA due to insurance restrictions.
- Possible use of an independent childcare provider, such as Lions Club/BASK, may be explored separately.

Action Items:

- **Sangeeta: Reconnect with Nicole and work toward scheduling Yoga Night.**



- Explore whether an external childcare provider could independently support the event in compliance with insurance requirements.

Tapatio Fundraiser

- First Tapatio fundraiser planned for October 29, coordinated with the third-grade music event to encourage participation before/after the program.

Action Items:

- **Ways & Means:** Coordinate promotion and logistics with Tapatio and the school event.

Boosterthon / Fun Run

- Boosterthon contacted PTSA regarding Fall 2027 availability.
- Fall dates fill quickly.
- Securing a date requires:
 - Contract execution.
 - \$2,000 deposit, potentially within the next two months.
- Event dates may be rescheduled up to approximately two months beforehand.
- Sangeeta also requested information regarding Spring 2028 availability.

Action Items:

- **Board:** Determine whether PTSA wants to reserve a future Boosterthon/Fun Run date.
- **Sangeeta:** Gather Fall 2027 and Spring 2028 scheduling information before a commitment is made.

Issaquah PTSA Council — Rachael Cox

Rachael Cox, Vice President of Elementary Schools – South, Issaquah PTSA Council, joined the meeting at 6:51 PM as an observer.

- Rachael clarified that PTSA insurance through AIM does not permit childcare offered directly by the PTSA.
- Any childcare connected with a PTSA event would require an appropriate alternative provider/arrangement.

Action Items: Apply this guidance when evaluating childcare options for future PTSA events.

Programs Update — Bindi Patel

Before & After School Enrichment

- Fall enrichment programs are open for enrollment.
- Consolidated and individual program flyers have been distributed.

Action Items:

- **Fiorella: Send Fall Enrichment newsletter.**

Back-to-School Game Night — September 23

- Doors open at 5:00 PM.
- Enrichment vendors confirmed.
- Ice cream truck booked.
- Volunteers needed for setup.
- PTSA booth content is being refreshed to better demonstrate PTSA's impact on:
 - Students
 - Families/community
 - Staff
- Teacher testimonials are desired for the updated PTSA marketing materials.
- Interest will be gauged for:
 - Scripps Spelling Bee
 - Science Fair/STEM Night
- Cynthia will chair the Science Fair/STEM Night.

Action Items:

- **Jill: Assist in connecting with teachers for testimonials.**
- **Programs/Board: Recruit setup volunteers.**
- **Programs: Gauge interest in Spelling Bee and Science Fair/STEM Night.**

Fall Fest — October 21

- Planning is progressing well.
- Approximately \$1,400 in donations secured, with one additional donor pending.
- Approximately 18 Fall Fest merchandise items identified.

Newcastle Elementary PTSA

Parent Teacher Student Association



- Team is working with kitchen staff on a potential spaghetti dinner, expected to cost less than the previous pizza model; final cost TBD.
- Liberty High School is being contacted for student volunteers.
- Volunteer SignUpGenius expected within 1–2 weeks.

Action Items:

- **Fall Fest Chairs/Programs: Finalize food plan and cost.**
- **Continue Liberty High School volunteer outreach.**
- **Publish volunteer SignUpGenius.**

Winter Craft Fest — December 16

- Planning underway.
- Current concepts include:
 - Gingerbread-house kits similar to last year — approximately \$15 per kit.
 - Newcastle Lion winter-themed wooden bookmarks for painting/coloring — approximately \$15 per kit.

Action Items:

- **Programs: Finalize craft selections, quantities, and purchasing plan.**
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Outreach Update — Jill Binks & Alicia Singh

Fall Food Drive

- Scheduled for October 12–27.
- Families will also be encouraged to bring food donations to Fall Fest.

Action Items:

- **Outreach: Coordinate communications and Fall Fest collection opportunity.**

Cultural Bridges Family Guide

- Issaquah Schools Foundation's Cultural Bridges Family Guide was highlighted as a useful multilingual resource for families.



[View the 2026–27 Cultural Bridges Family Guide](#)

Action Items:

- **Outreach: Share/promote the Family Guide with Newcastle families.**

Parent Education

- Outreach is working to secure a 30-minute parent education presentation for the December membership meeting.
- Newcastle Police Chief is being explored as a potential speaker, schedule permitting.

Action Items:

- **Outreach: Confirm December parent-education topic and speaker.**
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Volunteers Update — Christine Clarkson

Hearing & Vision Screening

- Screening: October 6
- Makeups: October 7, AM only
- SignUpGenius distributed to Hearing & Vision volunteers and "as needed" volunteers.
- Opportunity will also be shared on PTSA social channels.

Action Items:

- **Volunteers: Continue recruitment as needed and post opportunity to social channels.**

Picture Day — October 8

- Volunteer positions filled quickly.

Action Items: None noted.

Staff Appreciation

- First staff luncheon will be hosted by 4th- and 5th-grade families.



- Staff preference survey has been distributed to capture favorite items and appreciation preferences.
- Results will support future appreciation activities and "Stock the Lounge" signups.

Action Items:

- **Volunteers: Compile staff survey results.**
 - **Share relevant information with Staff Appreciation volunteers.**
 - **Use results to support future "Stock the Lounge" needs and family communications.**
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Secretary Update — Jackie Mitti & Laura Kaya

Required PTSA Training

Board members were reminded to complete required PTSA training.

[PTSA Training 2026–2027 Tracker](#)

Action Items:

- **All Board Members: Complete required PTSA training.**

Issaquah PTSA Council Meetings

- Council meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of every other month, 10:00 AM–12:00 PM.
- Newcastle PTSA should have representation at each meeting.
- President will assign voting delegates for the first meeting.
- Voting delegates may subsequently sign up using the Council Meetings tab in the tracker.

[PTSA Training & Council Meeting Tracker](#)

Action Items:

- **Fiorella: Assign initial voting delegates.**
- **Board: Ensure Newcastle PTSA representation at Council meetings.**

Meeting Location



- Newcastle Library meeting room may be used as an in-person meeting-location option when appropriate.

Action Items: None noted.

Newcastle PTSA Calendar

[Add/View the Newcastle PTSA Calendar](#)

Newcastle Elementary School Calendar

Board members and families can subscribe to the school calendar so new events and schedule changes automatically populate in their preferred calendar application.

- On the school calendar, select the third icon in the upper-right corner and follow the subscription instructions.
- Calendar may also be added directly using the iCal URL:

[Subscribe to the Newcastle Elementary Calendar](#)

Action Items:

- **Programs/Bindi: Continue adding PTSA events to the school calendar.**
- **Board: Subscribe to the applicable PTSA/school calendars for current event information.**

Continuity / Role Handover

- Board members are asked to maintain a Continuity / Role Handover document throughout the year.
- Capture role-specific:
 - Processes
 - Recurring dates
 - Key contacts
 - Useful links/resources
 - Lessons learned
 - Recommendations for the next role holder
- Continuity documentation should complement materials retained within each role's PTSA Google account, including email and Drive.

[Sample Continuity / Role Handover Document](#)



Action Items:

- **All Board Members:** Establish/update Continuity documentation before the next meeting and maintain throughout the year.
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Adjournment

Adjourned: 18:00 PST (6:00 PM PST)

Next Meeting

Board Meeting (BM): Thursday, October 8, 2026

Format: Hybrid — online or in person

Upcoming dates to remember:

<https://newcastle.isd411.org/our-school/upcoming-events> (district events)

PTSA & School Related Events

- Back to School Game Night 9/23
- Hearing & Vision Screening 10/6-7
- Crocktober 10/13
- Fall Festival 10/21
- Book Fair 11/2-6
- Parent Teacher Conferences, 11/4 and 11/5