Newcastle Elementary PTSA
Parent Teacher Student Association

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**

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- **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.**

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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.**

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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.

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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.

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- 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.**

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.

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[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.**

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.

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- 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.**

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

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Action Items:

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

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