

2025-2026 Abbot PTO Committees & Chairs

Abbot Gear

Chair: Andrea Smith, smithandreacd@gmail.com

Co-Chair: Bradley Biggs, bradley.n.biggs@gmail.com

Abbot Gear is a selection of t-shirts, sweatshirts and other items bearing an Abbot logo.

Book Fair

Chair: Kari Akerley, kari.akerley@gmail.com

Co-Chair: Jamie Lausch Vander Broek, jlausch@gmail.com

Co-Chair: Marshall Anderson, marshall.anderson@gmail.com

Day Captains (2): ***Needed***

(one school day commitment, oversee book fair and volunteers, problem solve, and alert chairs to any issues)

Expected Book Fair Dates: Week of March 2nd, 2026

Dine to Donate

Chair: Viralyne Lipps, viralyne.lipps@gmail.com

Co-Chair: ***Needed***

This is a fundraising initiative where local restaurants donate a portion of their proceeds on designated Abbot fundraising days. Multiple restaurants are enlisted throughout the school year.

Grocery Reward Programs

Chair: Viralyne Lipps, viralyne.lipps@gmail.com

Co-Chair: ***Needed***

One of the largest fundraising programs at Abbot in participation with Busch's, Kroger, and Arbor Farms. After families sign up to participate, a percentage of sales are donated back to Abbot.

This program also covers the Box Tops for Education program.

Disability Awareness Workshop

Chair: Noura Insolera, nehamid@gmail.com

Co-Chair: ***Needed*** (typically a 4th grade parent)

Hands-on event sponsored by The Center for Independent Living comes to the school to teach the 4th graders the challenges in navigating life with a disability.

Fifth Grade Farewell and Mural

Chair: Gabriela Darahem (typically a 5th grade parent)

Co-Chair: ***Needed*** (typically a 4th grade parent, who then be Chair the following year)

This is ~5 hours total commitment. A brief ceremony celebrating the fifth grade students' time at Abbot followed by cake and punch.

Mural Description: 5th graders add their handprints in shades of green paint to the leaves on the mural outside of the office and write their names in the bark of the trees.

Last Updated August 2025

First Day Parent Coffee

Chairs: Kristen and Noah Livingston kristenlivingston@gmail.com & noahlivingston@gmail.com

A brief coffee after the bell rings on the first day of school to welcome families back.

Girls on the Run

Chair: Erika Landreaux landreauxe@aaps.k12.mi.us

Co-chair: **Needed**

Volunteer coaches facilitate lessons that blend physical activity with life skill development to enable team members to adapt to whatever comes their way. At the end of the season, the team completes a 5K together, which provides a tangible sense of accomplishment and sets a confident mindset into motion.

Ice Cream Social and Raffle

Chair: Beth Clifford, elizabethclifford@hotmail.com

Co-chair: Gina Maksimchuk, maksimcc@aaps.k12.mi.us

One of the largest PTO activities, this family-oriented, end of the school year event includes a raffle, cakewalk, carnival games, concessions, ice cream, and more.

Ice Cream Social Date: May 29th, 2026.

PTOC Representative

Rep: Mandy Gagel, mandygagel@gmail.com

Co-Rep: **Needed**

PTOC is a collection of PTO representatives from each Ann Arbor Public School which meets monthly to share ideas and provide a unified voice to the district administration. The Abbot PTOC representative reports to the Abbot PTO on topics discussed at the meetings that would be of interest to the Abbot community.

Run-a-Thon

Saturday October 4th 10am to 4pm

Chair: Kit Bennett

Co-Chair: **Needed**; two year commitment, you will be Chair next year

Committee Chairs:

Refreshments: Gina Maksimchuk and Kat Bennett

Trophies/Lap Counting: Viralyne Lipps

Sponsorships: Kit Bennett

Day Of Volunteer Coordinator: Matthew Cunningham

Fundraising Website: Gina Maksimchuk

The Abbot Run-a-Thon is the biggest fundraising event of the year and a popular fall tradition. Students collect pledges through the School Funder website or via paper. Students, teachers, siblings run or walk around a track behind the school on a Saturday in the fall.

Chair Responsibilities: Oversee subcommittees, set date, order tent, keep track of pledges, set assembly date

Run-a-Thon Date: Saturday, October 4, 2025 from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm.

School Beautification and Schoolyard Habitat

Chair: Caleb Kline, cjkline18@gmail.com

Co-Chair: Matthew Cunningham, mdcunni@umich.edu

Oversee the maintenance of the exterior appearance of the school, primarily the courtyard area, and maintain the educational Schoolyard Habitat located in the Abbot courtyard. One day in the Fall (October) and one day in the spring (April), Final date TBD

Student Support Committee

Chair: Mandy Gagel, mandygagel@gmail.com

Co-Chair: ***Needed***

This committee works to identify areas of tangible unmet needs/concern (e.g. clothing, food) for students and marshal community resources to meet those needs.

Washtenaw Elementary Science Olympiad (WESO)

Chair: Tom Strait, tstrait419@comcast.net

Co-Chair: Carey Swanson, swansoncarey@gmail.com

Co-Chair: Shera Thompson, sheracthompson@gmail.com

The Abbot Science Olympiad team is a multi-grade science enrichment program that culminates with the regional WESO competition. WESO events vary with some requiring knowledge of scientific facts and concepts, and others relying on scientific processes, skills, or applications.

May date TBD

Teacher Appreciation

Chair: Kristen Livingston, kristenlivingston@gmail.com

Co-Chair: Ashley Ambrosino, ashleyniekirk@gmail.com

Coordinate parents to bring food or some other token of appreciation on a monthly basis, as well as Teacher Appreciation Week

Yearbook

Chair: Ashley Ambrosino, ashleyniekirk@gmail.com

Co-Chair: Noah Livingston, noahlivingston@gmail.com

Send photos to yearbookabbot@gmail.com

PTO Board

President: Kat Bennett, kcsingle@gmail.com

Vice President: Bradley Biggs, bradley.n.biggs@gmail.com

Treasurer: Martha Hannah, hannahm29@comcast.net

Secretary: Gabriela Darahem, gabidarahem@gmail.com

Communication Chair: Heidi Burkhardt, hmsteiner@gmail.com