SWR SEPTA MEETING MINUTES FOR Wednesday 10/7/26, 7:00pm at Wading River School

Attendance: Deborah Aiello, Patricia Hanlon, Lara Guthiel, Lilli Marin, Angela Blachard, Erin Saunders-Morano, Louis Parrinello, Jennifer Norbury, Laura Riekert, Tracy Von Eschen, Maria Minetti

I. **Call the meeting to order –** Pledge of Allegiance
II. **PTA Mission and SEPTA Mission Statements**
III. **SEPTA Board Introductions**
IV. **District Updates:** Tracy Von Eschen, Director of Special Education & PPS reported on what's new in the district, new hires in special education and professional development at Superintendent's conference days. She also reported that the mental health partnership with Stony Brook has been extremely successful and will continue. If anyone has any questions or concerns you can reach out to the Special Education office.
V. **President's Report –** Deborah Aiello
    a. **Old Business:**
        1. Donation of $271.25 was received from Miller Avenue Play Pals. They sold bracelets in the spring and sold them during lunch.
        2. In June, donations were made to Down Syndrome Advocacy Foundation, Nassau Suffolk Autism Society of America and Special Olympics. Proceeds were from our Rock Your Socks fundraiser at the HS Musical in March, as well as the prior year district wide coin collection.
        3. Summer Unified Theater Cast Party was a huge success! Everyone in Madagascar enjoyed the pizza and catering from Caffe Amici.
        4. Summer BOCES ESY Program Lunch: On the second to last day of Summer school, we provided a catered lunch from Caffe Amici for the teachers and staff.
        5. Early Bird Membership Drive ended August 30th. Tara Constant won a $50 gift card to La Plage.
        6. Meeting Speakers Booked: A variety of speakers are booked for this year including Parent to Parent NYS and Jackie Waldman. Our next speaker is Jenny Andersson, from LI Regional Partnership/Family and

Community Engagement Centers. She will be presenting about IEP SMART goals.

7. Elementary Open Houses: We attended the Miller Avenue and Wading River School Open Houses to promote awareness and memberships.

b. **New Business:**

1. Teacher/Staff Membership Drive: Still on going until October 31. Includes weekly drawings for Dunkin Gift cards and a Battle of the Buildings. The winning building will get a party with coffee, donuts and dessert.
2. WHAM Craft Fair: We will have a table selling merch on November 14.
3. Virtual Meetings will be held in November & April using our new Zoom account. We are piloting it to see if attendance increases.
4. Sensory Santa will be the first Friday in December, the 4th at Wading River School Cafeteria. There will be a photo booth, pizza, hot cocoa, snacks and crafts.
5. Teacher Grant applications are on our website and open to all teacher members. December 1 is the deadline for applications.
6. Sensory Friendly Movie Night will be on Friday, March 12, 2027 at the High School Auditorium. We might run our Rock Your Socks Fundraiser in the lobby beforehand.
7. Awareness Days: We are looking for new ideas and volunteers for any Awareness Days. So far, we plan to acknowledge Autism Awareness in April and World Down Syndrome Day in March.
8. Scholarships: will be offered to graduating seniors with a 504 plan or IEP.
9. June Elections: All seats are up for election for next year. Current officers are term limited in their positions. We also changed the bylaws to include a VP position.

VI. **Bylaws Revision Approval.** Voted on and approved.

VII. **Speaker:** Deborah Aiello – Advocacy 101: Tools, Training and Resources for Families. Deborah gave a very informative presentation. She discussed the different ways you can get involved and learn more about advocacy and special education law. Her presentation slides are available to all.

VIII. **Announcements/Discussion Items:**

a. Door Prize Raffle Drawing

b. Next Meeting: Monday, November 2, 7:00 PM via Zoom featuring Jenny Andersson