

WHITTIER SCHOOL

Dear Whittier Family,

Family Conferences are scheduled for the evening of Wednesday, February 7, 2018, and the afternoon and evening of Thursday, February 8, 2018. Afternoon classes and the lunch program will not be in session Thursday and Friday, February 8 and 9, 2018. We will dismiss students at 11:00am on February 8 and 9. Classes will resume Monday, February 12, 2018.

Be sure to sign up for a conference time with your child's teacher.



GIVES — BACK —

TO YOUR LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD
...

Join us for a

FUNDRAISER

to support

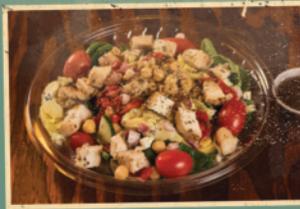
Whittier School PTO

Potbelly will donate 25% of net sales

JANUARY 31, 2018 FROM 5PM - 8PM

1100 Lake Street, Oak Park, IL 60301

708-386-1395 / potbelly.com



25% of net sales made on 01/31/2018 from

5pm-8pm

will be donated to Whittier School PTO

Whittier Refugee Welcome Project 2018 – All School Notice

Two years ago, the Whittier school community launched the *Refugee Welcome Project* and, over that time, we've done amazing things:

- During the 2015-2016 school year, the Whittier community donated "Home Starter Kits" that contained essential household items and, in partnership with Exodus World Service, helped to set-up the homes for two refugee families and two refugee individuals from Somalia, Syria, Burma, and Ethiopia. We then hosted these families and individuals at Whittier for a Welcome Party where many families from the Whittier community attended.
- During the 2016-2017 school year, in an effort to help educate Whittier families about the refugee experience, we hosted a movie screening of "The Good Lie" and facilitated a discussion with two former Lost Boys of Sudan and, for the kids, we facilitated a mock-refugee camp experience for 3rd-5th graders in partnership with Exodus World Service, which was a huge success. The Whittier community also donated "Good Neighbor Kits" that contained household items for 30 recently-arrived refugee families from Iraq and Burma. These kits were delivered to families during two Community Meals, one hosted by the Iraqi Mutual Aid Society and the other hosted by the Rohingya Cultural Center, and families from the Whittier community both prepared and ate meals with our new friends.

The *Refugee Welcome Project* has been embraced with such enthusiasm that we are continuing it again this year. In an effort to both further educate the Whittier community on the refugee experience and to help those in need, we have scheduled the following events:

- "The Good Lie" Movie Screening and Post-Movie Discussion with two former Lost Boys of Sudan
Friday, February 2nd from 6-9pm in the Whittier Auditorium
Kids are invited to attend, at parents' discretion (movie is rated PG-13; see attached flyer); heavy snacks will be provided.
- Immigrant and Refugee Story and Craft Time
Friday, March 9th from 3-5pm at the Dole Branch Library
In partnership with the Oak Park Public Library, kids will learn about the experience of immigrants and refugees through rich literature, crafts and a celebration of different cultures. Try out cultural artifacts, listen to music and begin to understand what it might be like to be an immigrant or a refugee. Recommended for grades K-5; snacks will be provided.
- All-School Assembly Q & A with Refugee Kids
Wednesday, April 4th
Whittier parent Shana Wills has arranged for two kids from her organization, Refugee Education & Adventure Challenge (REACH), to visit Whittier and answer questions posed by our kids.
- Exodus World Service's 30th Anniversary Celebration of Hope
Friday, April 13th from 6:30-9:30pm at the Drury Lane in Oakbrook Terrace
The *Refugee Welcome Project* has reserved a table to celebrate Exodus World Service, a faith-based organization that mobilizes its community to welcome and befriend refugees by educating about the refugee experience, connecting volunteers with refugees through practical service projects, and equipping leaders to advocate on behalf of refugees (www.exodusworldservice.org). Join us as we enjoy an inspirational evening celebrating the courage and resiliency of refugees who are building new lives in the Chicagoland area. This is a free dinner event but donations to Exodus World Service will be requested. Seats must be reserved in advance, so please contact us at whittierrefugeeproject@gmail.com to let us know if you'd like to attend.
- All-School Fundraising Event
Friday, April 27th from 12:30-2:45
In an effort to have the kids be more involved in the process of helping refugee families, this year we are going to host an all-school fundraising event. Our kids will gather pledges from family/friends for participating in an outdoor afternoon of fun that will include activities such as jumping jacks, running laps around the field, Simon says, kicking a soccer ball into a goal, hula hoop, jump rope, and dancing. All money raised will be split between the Rohingya Culture Center and the Iraqi Mutual Aid Society, ethnic community-based organizations, known as Mutual Aid Associations, that provide refugee populations with critical services to assist them in becoming integrated members of American society. These are the same two organizations with which we partnered last year for our Community Meals. More information to come, so stay tuned.

We hope that you will play a role in helping Chicagoland refugee families and, also important, in helping us to educate our kids about the refugee experience. If you have any questions about the *Whittier Refugee Welcome Project*, the refugee resettlement process, or would like information regarding kid-friendly learning resources about refugees, you may contact members of the Committee at whittierrefugeeproject@gmail.com.

WHITTIER ELEMENTARY'S REFUGEE WELCOME PROJECT

presents

Movie and Discussion
with two former
Lost Boys of Sudan

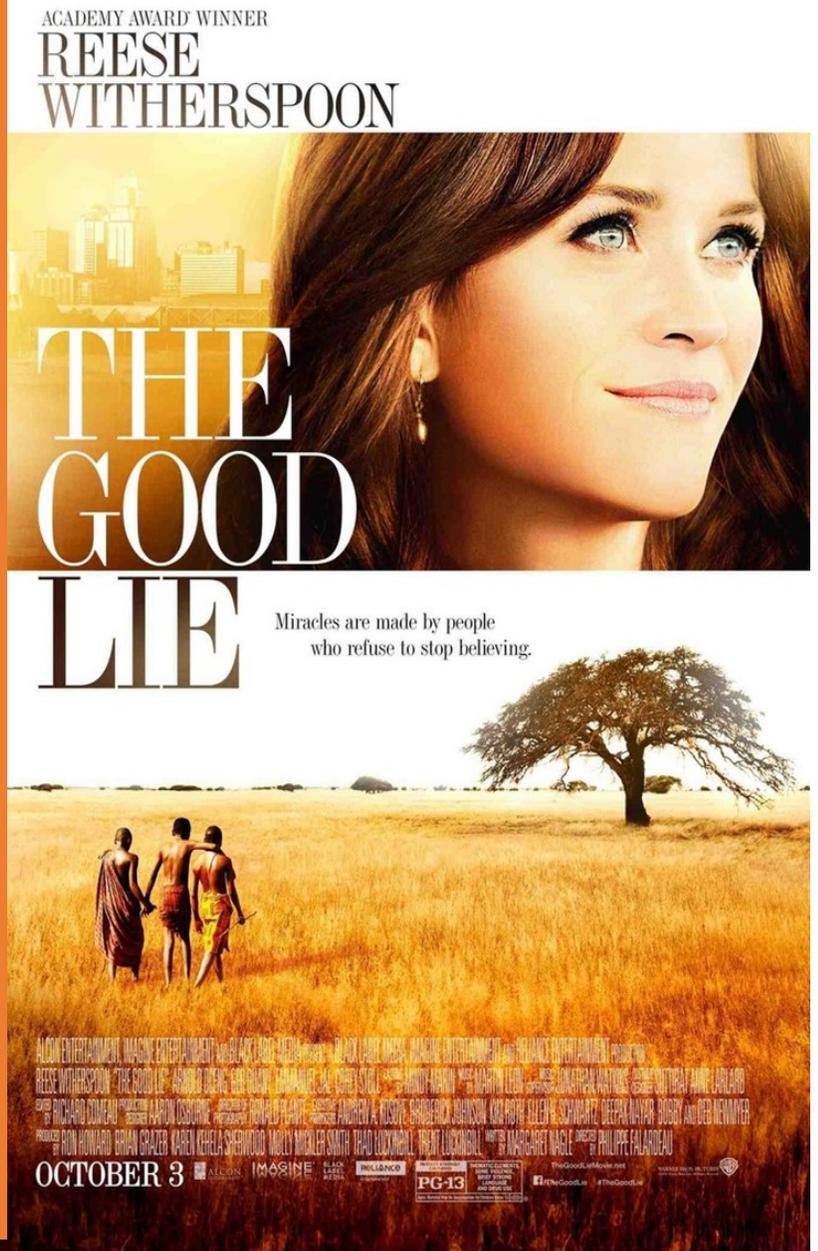
Please join us for a **FREE** screening of "The Good Lie". To view the trailer, go to the official website at www.thegoodliemovie.com. This movie is rated PG-13*.

Following the movie, we will be joined by Peter Magai Bul and Gabriel Dut Atem, both of whom were personally affected by the war depicted in the movie.

WHEN: Friday, February 2nd

TIME: 6:00-9:00pm

WHERE: Whittier Auditorium



*"The Good Lie" is rated PG-13 for thematic elements, some violence (depictions of war and conflict are shown, many involving children who watch their parents get killed and their village burned), brief strong language and drug use.

About our Speakers

Peter Magai Bul is a community activist in Chicago and founder of the Ayal Community Development Association which, under Peter's leadership, established the Pongborong Primary School in South Sudan in 2004.

Gabriel Dut Atem is a local community activist and spokesman for the Twii Community Association.

Both men spent more than 14 years in refugee camps after fleeing war in the Sudan in the late 1980s.