

Sunset Ridge/Middlefork School PTO
Tuesday, February 14th, 9am
Virtual Zoom PTO Minutes

Meeting Called to Order: Christie Caceres

Approval of January 10th, 2022 Minutes: Approved by Emily LeMire & Bridget Kennedy

Presidents Report:

Christie Caceres, PTO President

Survey results came in! The PTO survey was distributed asking parents how they felt the PTO was doing as a whole, and how we communicate and district families.

We had a tremendous response, thanks to everybody for their contribution to the survey.

51 total respondents. Predominate results were in the PTO favor, noting that we are spending time and money on the right programs. E-Newsletter is the preferred way to hear about PTO programs. They want us to keep the website up to date. One position may expand in order to get more attention and help on keeping the website up to date.

People feel like the communication is just right. Some themes and ideas: Timing of meetings, Morning meets are tough for some to participate in so the suggestion was to rotate morning and night. We are taking that into consideration. People like Zoom and we will continue with that meeting platform. Parents want equality across all grades in terms of funding. Parents want to make sure we exhaust the budget each year. Expand funding for academic programs and experiences. Re-evaluate where the largest funding is allocated. DEI position- Diversity equity and inclusion position on the board. Dan's work on the CIA does touch on that, but we could have a conversation about a more inclusive roles. Consider new programs: Nutrition, safety, school garden, annual art show.

Treasurer Report:

Kori Pierce, Treasurer

Balance is \$93,623 – higher than we have been running due to the collections for the winter benefit but we do have expenses to pay for that benefit. We will be able to provide more updated figures at the next meeting based on the funds raised at the benefit.

Please send invoices to me! I am going to be sending out emails to each chair person about ownership of your line item. We want some feedback for the 2023/2024 budget, but also to get your reimbursements. This helps set us up for success as we want to have realistic numbers for the 2023/2024 school year.

FYI, we were able to open a new saving account with a 3% rate. This is great news.

Be on the lookout if you are a chair for feedback on the budget and reimbursement requests.

Community Update:

Bill Lustig, Northfield Chief of Police

Department update - we are interviewing hopefully our last candidate for our vacant position. Board did authorize adding a 20th officer to replace our injured officer. Standards are very high for Northfield Police department. I do not want to be on TV with officer issues. No officers with any discipline are considered at all. We do psychological exams, which are both important and costly. The testing gives us the insight if this person have the characteristics that are needed to be a officer.

Recommend moving all temptations from your house when going away. Remove opportunity and lock up valuables. One house sitter had a friend took all their jewelry to a pawn store.

Last night, there was basketball game at the west campus. Some teenagers stole gym shoes, air pods, computers and one of the parents was able to track him to Skokie. One of the fathers was aggressive and a young man ended up in the hospital. I think the property was returned, but waiting on all details.

Administration Reports:

Dr. Ed Stange, District 29 Superintendent of Schools

Happy Valentines Day everybody! Busy time in life cycle of our school district as there is a big push on enrollment and staffing plans. You have to make your staffing decisions by the March board meetings so we are working hard to get accurate enrollment numbers (mainly from kindergarten but also all the grades). First session of Kindergarten enrollment just happened, that will give us some numbers. We will take that data and combine with all the grade levels and look at what the staffing needs are. Get any student registered for 2023/2024.

Parent Square recently referenced the Illinois 5Essentials School Climate Survey which is done each year by each district in the state. You have to do the 5Essentials or you can adopt your own school survey, but most use the 5Essentials. Window to complete the survey goes through the end of March. The results are anonymous, no administrator will see the answers. The data will go onto our school report card - public face that somebody sees when looking or shopping for a school. It drives continuous improvement for the district so I appreciate you taking the time to do the survey.

[Illinois 5Essentials School Climate Survey](#)

Next week is the Parent Connections meeting. I am going to share the discussion that we had about the capital plans for Middlefork school. We will share what options have been discussed

Jennifer Kiedaisch, Middlefork Principal

We are in the second year of our Math and SEL reviews. For Math, our teachers (K-8) have finished piloting new resources. They gave each resource a test drive, and evaluated engagement and more. Teachers are giving feedback about how these new programs align with our priorities. They will give a recommendation to the board this spring.

SEL- Ruler planning in progress and we are planning for district wide implementation for the following school year. Staff has been enjoying digging into the program for themselves!

Middlefork specific, thanks for the fun Valentine's Day activities. Thanks for the 3rd grade parents who have been volunteering at the Junior Great Books program. This has been a great program focused on engaging students in discussion and reading some great literature.

Northfield Police department for Officer Friendly – Thank you for your visit and discussions on poison prevention and saying no to drugs.

Kindergarten- 35 registered, with about 3 pending. I am sure we will have more but those are the numbers we are at. We encourage anybody else to register so that we can get accurate numbers.

Middlefork is celebrating random acts of kindness week. Children have been filling in hearts on a huge poster each time they witness a kind act. We will also participate in a spirit week with a theme each day. Parents just encourage those random acts of kindness!

Dr. Ivy Sukenik, SRS Principal

Random acts of kindness week, each club doing different initiatives. We are really excited about bringing this awesome week to life.

Thank you to all the parents who made the 6th and 8th grade dance a reality. Thank you to the PTO parents who are helping to support Valentine's Day celebrations.

Congratulations to our Robotics teams - **all 9** of our teams have qualified for the state tournament. I will be able to report about how that went at the next meeting. Hopefully we have some that qualify for the world championship! Huge than you to Ms. Albright and Ms. Stonequist for coaching them along.

Looking forward to having parents in the building for conferences. Most of our upper grade conferences are student led. It encourages the kids talk about their own learning, we hope you enjoy that opportunity.

Teacher Liaison

Michele Widdes

Thank you for your unwavering supports of the teachers! Between the Valentines parties, or helping in the lunch room, we are so grateful for the parent support! Want to acknowledge that teachers are very excited about coming to the Winter benefit. We are also excited about conferences and getting a time to set some goals with parents for the end of the year.

School Board Report

Abigayil Joseph

Dr. Stange always does such a great job with his summary so I will just fill in.

We get Hyper focused on enrollment and staffing projections at this time of year. It is also worth noting that we have an education committee meeting coming up in which we will be reviewing updates across the curriculum.

5Essentials survey is a University of Chicago reputable survey and the results are vital for us to keep improving. Because there are so many of us on the call today, it is so important to encourage other parents to fill out this survey.

The 5Essentials Survey identifies five indicators that lead to improved outcomes for all students:

1. Effective Leaders
2. Collaborative Teachers
3. Involved Families
4. Supportive Environment
5. Ambitious Instruction

If you are strong on 3 out of 5, you are more likely to grow as a school. It is so strongly linked with our continuous improvement. We analyze this at the board level and it is a very important tool for our school to improve each year. At last month's meeting, we officially brought on a new board member, Jenny Damon. On April 25th we bring on 3 new board members. Cynthia Ho, Charlie Pick and Sam Tideman.

Devon Pearce - Winter Benefit

March 4th at Sunset Ridge Country Club!

Pre-event fundraising- we met that \$15,000 goal!

Total fundraising goal is \$75,000- on our way!

Parent attendance goal of 150 parents, we have sold 163 tickets, so exceeded goal! Adjusted that to 200 parents!

Teacher sponsorships is 50, we have received 37 to date.

Yard signs are out, and the banner up at Willow and Happ. We had two invitations go out in mail, one to parents which should arrive soon. The other is for Teachers.

Teacher and Staff invitation- latest they will receive is today, please RSVP to rd29Winterbenefit@gmail.com to book your spot! Hoping for 50 teachers and staff to attend!

Thursday last day for early bird tickets \$150 each. Friday the 24th will be the last day for regular tickets. Get your tickets before prices increase!

[Winter Benefit Website](#) The site contains everything you need to know – sponsor a teacher, see auction items.

We hope to see everybody there, teachers RSVP by Thursday! And parents, buy tickets by Thursday so you can get the early bird rate!

Christie: this committee is incredible and it is going to be such a fabulous time!

Where do you still need help/volunteers? We are all set on help, we are fully staffed! But please reach out if you want to help and we will find a way for you to help!

Committee Reports:

Bridget Kennedy, Nominations

We are in amazing shape for 2023/2024. The slate is almost complete- there are a few people I am waiting on confirmation for. Two positions I do not Alliance for Early Childhood and Parent Connections. Everything else I have at least one person in the roll and some are full. I am trying to accommodate everybody. If you do not end up with a chair position, there are plenty of opportunities to volunteer. If the slate is almost done, I don't know what that means about doing a committee meeting. We just need to figure that out- we are in great shape. If you are looking to volunteer please reach out to Bridget Kennedy at bridget_kennedy13@yahoo.com

Christie- If you are interested in something, we will coordinate the ability for everybody to get involved!

Final Note: If you have not done your board report, I really need that done. The majority are from 2015-2017. Some have done it, but I need the rest, so we are complete. This way it is easier to see what the responsibilities are. Thanks for filling those out!

Seong McGarry, Parent Connections

Last month we met with Dr. Stange – insightful conversation regarding fostering inclusivity and equity within the district. What do you think of when you think of inclusivity and equity?

Thoughtful and insightful conversation with Dr. Stange. Take a look at the initiative, the notes are [HERE](#)

Next month, we are looking at Middlefork Capital improvement projects. Feb 24th at 9am – zoom or in person at Sunset Ridge. Presentation linked [HERE](#)

Virtual Zoom Meeting Adjourned : 9:41am
Minutes compiled by : Emily LeMire, Secretary