

**Sunset Ridge/Middlefork School PTO  
Tuesday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 9am  
Virtual Zoom PTO Minutes**

**Meeting Called to Order: Christie Caceres  
Approval of February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Minutes: Approved by Patricia Gainsberg, and Dan Friedman**

Presidents Report:

*Christie Caceres, PTO President*

Benefit was a tremendous success! We surpassed all our goals, and it was an incredible event! Thank you all for your support. We host this event every other year and this is how we support all our programming. We are sharing all the feedback with the incoming chairs for the benefit roles to make sure they are set up for a great event in 2025. Thank you to everyone!

Treasurer Report:

*Kori Pierce, Treasurer*

Bank Balance is at \$171,486.42. The big thing I want to cover is the budget cycle. I would love to get feedback from anybody, particularly on your chair position line item. Do you think your budgeted line item should be bigger, smaller or adjusted? Really want any feedback as soon as you can as we are nearing the end of the year. Can I request feedback by the end of March? We will then need to review the draft budget with Tom Beerheide, and the principals. The more collab we have on the budget it better. You can email ([koriconway@gmail.com](mailto:koriconway@gmail.com)) or text/call me, or anybody on the exec board. Please send feedback on budget!

The bank balance is really just a moment in time. We will be factoring in how we did at the budget into the following year budget. We do the benefit bi-annually, so apply it over two years.

Christie- There was some feedback in the survey to use the money raised in that current year. We do our best to allocate and spend the budget for each year on that calendar year. We are trying to be transparent on the budget and where all the funds go. The budget is posted on the PTO site for everybody to be able to see. Click on [What we Fund](#), and scroll to the bottom of the page where it states: Click [here](#) to see the PTO budget allocation for programs.

Community Update:

*Bill Lustig, Northfield Chief of Police*

I would like to let you know about an incident that took place on Presidents Day. Swatting is a term for when somebody plays a prank in a communication center. Somebody calls and reports a crime that is not happening. We are on the same radio frequency with Winnetka, Wilmette, Glencoe, Kenilworth so when they got a report of an active shooter at North Shore Country Day

my heart sank. All the officers started responding to North Shore Country Day which is a Private school with about 4 different buildings. They started entering the school rapidly for an active shooter. Wilmette Junior High got the same call of an active shooter, but that school was closed. North Shore Country Day was open and still had students in the school. Some were in lockdown while other kids were being removed from the property. It made me realize how long the students will have to stay locked down until officers can clear an area and then get kids out safely. What if this happens on the West campus - this could take a long time. I wanted you to be aware of this.

When you see our squad cars sitting in the church parking lot, Sunset Ridge, etc.. my philosophy is that if you see police visible you are less likely to commit a crime in that location. We try and watch the path to school, and have police around on a regular basis We like to let a perpetrator know there is police presence and to stay out of Northfield.

There were two burglaries on Sunset Ridge Rd.. Suspect apprehended and items returned. This suspect is out on electric monitoring so hopefully we can arrest him before another crime is committed.

We hired the last officer and are doing background and psychological testing. I should then be at full staff, which is exciting.

We are preparing now for summer events and how we are staffing them.

#### Administration Reports:

*Dr. Ed Stange, District 29 Superintendent of Schools*

Good morning all. Thank you to all of the PTO, everybody who helped out to make the wonderful Benefit happen.

Chief mentioned security and prevention. We contract with John Heiderscheidt, John is here today and he trains the staff to be as prepared as we can in the event of an emergency.

Education committee starts at 5:30pm. We are very excited to hear about the work on the Math curriculum for the past two years. They will give their feedback on the program and their recommendations. This information will be relayed on the next Parent Connections meeting.

At the April's Parent Connections meeting we will start to talk about world languages. Our foreign language program was flagged for review and some changes. Bob Cummings, the modern and classical language coordinator at New Trier, will come to the April meeting and talk about world languages and what the programs looks like beyond elementary school.

*Jennifer Kiedaisch, Middlefork Principal*

Thank you for the Winter Benefit. It was a fun opportunity to connect with parents and staff. You raised a lot of money; thank you for all the small and huge efforts.

Dr. Stange teed up the board meeting tonight. The kindergarten kids are going to share what they love about kindergarten, what are the highlights at Middlefork. We have added 36 fully registered for next year, and 3 more in the process. We have about 39 total kids.

This Friday progress reports will be shared with parents via Parent Square. Teachers do so many thoughtful assessments on how the kids are progressing and those will be on Parent Square.

You will see the absence and tardy occasions on the reports. On behalf of the nurses office and both schools we want to let you know that we want you to keep your kids at home when they are sick. When students are sick, that is an excused absence! We want your health to be the number one priority!

State test, the IR (Illinois assessment of Readiness), will start next week for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and continue after spring break.

*Dr. Ivy Sukenik, SRS Principal*

I echo Dr. Stange and Mrs. Kiedaisch; you hosted such a great party. Every detail was so incredibly done with so much love. Thank you!

IR (Illinois assessment of Readiness) started this week at Sunset Ridge. I is quiet in our hallways. 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade have another test coming up in Science.

Two surveys' will be coming out in April. There is one for 8<sup>th</sup> grade in particular where we were selected by University of Michigan to participate in a survey about student lifestyle. What are their life goals, friendships, etc. We are happy to share more about it; 8<sup>th</sup> grade families got info about it yesterday. It is an exciting report, and they give us some money and compile the results. The funds will be donated to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade committee for their use.

Working on rolling out Ruler for our SEL overhaul. They now have a new research study around school climate. We will be trying out their climate assessment for grades 6,7,8. It is an interesting survey: kids take a 10 min survey in the morning about safety and their feelings. Then they take another survey at the end of the same day where they are asked about their experience during the day. A group out of Yale used middle school kids to come up with their questions. We hope this will be good information for us to use in the future.

Parent question: what is the Ruler program? Ruler is a program where kids are able to label their emotions. They are taught that no emotions are bad and can build skills to use all their emotions properly. Phase 2 will start to roll out to students and families, so you will hear a lot of info on this in the coming year. For example, there is a mood meter and you look in a quadrant to identify what I am feeling and which quadrant I fall in to. Then, there are strategies shared to shift to another feeling. It is great work and is supported by research.

One of our robotics team will be heading to Dallas for the world championships. Ms. Albright will be out on maternity leave so Ms. Stonequist and Ms. Trueman will be joining them. This is the fourth time we are going to worlds!

### School Board Report

*Abigayil Joseph*

Thank you and deep appreciation for the winter benefit. For those to planned and those who attended.

Education committee meeting will precede the board meeting tomorrow, and it will be a deep dive on the math curriculum. Last month's meeting was a board based review of all the curriculum; thank you for that. It gave the board an amazing overview what is happening day to day. Tremendous deep work on the math curriculum and selecting new and improved programs for math. Thank you for putting it together!

Regular board meeting at 7pm. First, we are going to talk about Moody's financial rating for the District. We are being managed in the most financially responsible way. We are proud to be rated AAA.

A few policy updates and the board will be reviewing a few of the personal recommendations.

### Committee Reports:

*Devon Pearce - Winter Benefit*

We had a wonderful benefit and raised over \$81,000 in total. \$20,000 was from family and business donations. 250 people attended. All in all we learned a lot and we had a wonderful time. We raised the money we wanted to raise! One of my favorite part of events is the Monday morning recap, and will pass the baton in the most responsible way possible. We will share all the good and bad feedback to incoming chairs. If you want to shoot me some feedback, we would love to hear what you have to say ([devon.a.pearce@gmail.com](mailto:devon.a.pearce@gmail.com)). Any specifics you can provide we will compile and pass on for the next committee!. Thank you for your support, donating, bidding, yard signs dressing up, thank you!

Christie: We did have extra 100 people and only anticipated 150 and got 250. It was a great problem to have!

*Aimee Reynolds and Maureen Huhs, Junior Great Books*

They wrapped up 8 weeks of the return of JGB, Newman lead the program choosing four stories for us to dissect covering topics of relationships, kindness and confidence. In one session we read the story out loud as a group while the kids annotated in their books. The following session we broke into small groups for a deeper dive. It was fun to see the level of engagement, critical

thinking (especially in the 7:30am session!), empathy (for characters and other's opinions) and understanding. Engagement, and critical thinking and empathy for the characters. Shoutout to Ms. Newman, who was an excellent choice to run the program. She has some great ideas for next year!

*Bridget Kennedy, Nominations*

Thank you and congratulations to Devon, Sarah, Sara and Angie- I talked the 4 of them into doing this and none had attended the benefit before. This is a huge undertaking! They knocked it out of the park. Well done, well attended, great job!

We have an open slate this year. I have all the spots filled which is unusual! In past years we have put a call out for people interested in volunteering their time, and then we have a nomination committee meeting to fill the rest of the spots. We are still going to have a nomination committee meeting in April, and then we will present slate in April and vote in May! There will be tons of opportunity to volunteer, these nominations are just chair position. There will be lots of opportunities to volunteer in the future. Nobody has been turned away!

*Seong McGarry, Parent Connections*

The last meeting in Feb was about capital improvement projects. Notes from the past meeting can be found [HERE](#)

March 21<sup>st</sup> 9am via zoom or in person- Math curriculum review and curriculum adoption Agenda linked [HERE](#)

Question: The resumed testing after spring break is Wed and Thursday next week, and Tues, Wed, Thursday after spring break.

Virtual Zoom Meeting Adjourned : 9:36am - Adjourned by Bridget Kennedy and Patricia Gainsberg

Minutes compiled by: Emily LeMire, Secretary