

Sunset Ridge/Middlefork School PTO
Tuesday, April 11th, 9am
Virtual Zoom PTO Minutes

Meeting Called to Order: Christie Caceres
Approval of March 14, 2022 Minutes: Approved by Patricia Gainsberg and Archana Piotrowski

Presidents Report:

Christie Caceres, PTO President

Full meeting today- we have the budget proposal led by Kori and Bridget's slate nominations.

Treasurer Report:

Kori Pierce, Treasurer

Bank Balance is at \$142,519.59 in the bank - as of month's end. The major movement was with regards to the final donations and expenses in the benefit. Close to \$75,000 for the benefit, still waiting on a donation and an expense but this is a really great number for the benefit! It is April 11th and we are approaching end of the year, please turn in your expenses so we can get those paid out by the end of the year!

You can email (koriconway@gmail.com) or text/call me, for a reimbursement question or help.

2023-2024 Draft budget: This is the proposed budget for next year. The document we are all reviewing is current budget for this year with a revised budget (current budget) column, and a draft budget column is what we are looking at for next year. For time sake, I am going to go through the changed items only:

Mid year fundraiser, this is our bi-annual fundraiser. Sandy will be working on that for next year when she is president. Possibly a letter writing campaign. Benefit year is the big year, and the subsequent year is a more mid-range fundraiser. We want to fund fully the expenses for the year, and \$15,000 fills that hole and is in line with what we have earned in the past.

Dues, We were very successful in collecting dues this year, we are hopeful we can continue to have a solid dues collection.

Interest, our interest is now at 3%, so Yena will continue to monitor interest rates for next year.

Expenses:

Conference meals, we upped conference meals due to inflation. 2x a year we provide meals during conferences - grab and go options were very appreciated and the cost has increased.

Copy expense- we use to use the copy machines at Middlefork and the school would charge us for that. Since we are living in a much more virtual world, we eliminated that expense.

Zoom expense was added as a permeant feature.

Northwestern Settlement, we increased the northwestern settlement house to \$2250. That line item needs to be boosted to continue with that project.

Junior Great Books, increased by \$100- allows us to have a separate teacher manual and \$1200 for the teacher stipend.

Credit card fees have increased, so we have \$500 addition to the budget.

Teacher appreciation, increased by 10% due to inflation and being able to support the teachers.

- We did meet as an Exec Board as well as with Administration. Admin said the teacher appreciation is the favorite event. Always overwhelmingly positive feedback from the teachers on this event and we felt it was necessary to fund this and put more towards it.

Treasurer- fees we pay our tax accountant to do the taxes and the software we use for accounting. We may be changing our accounting and this increase allows us the ability to do so.

One time tax filing fee, this fee will allow us to receive some donations. We are unable to receive some donations, and this is a one time tax filing fee will make us compliant.

Insurance, we increased this line item. We need to take out insurance to cover liabilities and we want to make sure we take out the right policies to protect the PTO.

No designation for 8th grade- a donation has rolled forward for the 8th grade. The 8th grade activities are funded by the 8th grade parents. Crumbl cookie donation went toward their programs.

We will post the draft budget on the PTO website as well as [HERE](#) on the meeting mins.

Next month we will vote on this budget.

Discussions on the 8th Grade Graduation Participation:

Amanda Alpert Knight- PTO does have a responsibility to provide some funding toward 8th grade graduation. Not that they should be paying for all activities, but I think the PTO should be taking pride and a participatory role in the 8th grade graduation. I think there should be at least \$1500 fund – graduation ceremony costs a lot of money. I think it would be great for PTO to play a role in that. The current 8th graders have \$1800 roll over for this year, but next year would be the first year that the PTO would not fund the ceremony. 8th grade activities are different, but I think we should have our kids graduation ceremony memorable and amazing and I think the PTO should be part of making that happen.

Christie- good piece of feedback. One thing we struggled with was that we are trying to avoid funding the parties. We can donate this towards the actual ceremony. Even if it is a lower fee that reduces the fees for the family. A piece of the ceremony allocation, it will alleviate some of the money needed.

Brent: How much is the 8th grade graduation ceremony?

It really depends on how much the chairs decide to spend. \$150 is collected for the dance and all activities to make 8th grade a special year. We are not saying we reduce the \$150, we would simply be participating in the graduation ceremony. There are some things they want to do with the 8th grade fees but are not able too because some of the money has gone towards the ceremony.

What does the school cover for the ceremony?

Ivy Sukenik: My understanding is that we pay the photographer, musicians and any programs that we have. We also paid for the cap and gowns. The PTO paid for the flowers. The next years chairs sponsor the snacks after graduations- the 7th grade parents have light snacks after. Bridget said that the school covered the snacks as well. Ivy has about \$2K allocated and she went over that – she checked budget. The school spent about \$3000 on the graduation last year. Photographer, Snacks, and musicians.

Bridget Kennedy: Another question that came up last year was should we be covering stuff for the 3rd grade graduation? If a line item is considered for 8th grade then we should consider the 3rd grade graduation as well.

Brent Payne: \$2500 seems completely reasonable to donate to the 8th grade graduation. We will take a look at donating some money for the 8th grade ceremony and then we can make some adjustments in the budget. I think the 3rd grade is a good idea to make a line item for as well.

Ivy Sukenik – we need to be really specific, for instance noting the money is for the musicians, for what part of the ceremony you want to contribute. I know the musicians fees are going up significantly- is that something the PTO wants to commit to?.. I don't want to get into the grey area again. It would be helpful to understand exactly where the money is going- specific things within the ceremony.

Jen Kiedaisch: Ivy and I have collaborated regarding graduation fees. We want to make sure what we cover with our budget money is similar at each school. Ivy and I should be there together. I can do Balloons and pictures- we should have a convo together.

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

Good morning. Thank everybody for allowing me the opportunity to talk. I don't always have fun things to talk about but some are very important to know.

Police department: My budget is supposed to go in front of my board for approval. I hope to be swearing in a new officer that we just did the backgrounds and psychological on. I have been preparing for the graduation party as well.

Gun locks are very important! What just happened at Highland Park high school and what happened in Kenilworth – No gun, no replica, no toy, no weapon that even looks like a weapon should be near a school! Please have gun lockers and have the responsibility to lock it up so kids cannot get access. I have a gun safe, the gun is locked up- there are no accidents that can occur. Those who are concealed carry, please do not leave in the car and gun was used in a robbery in another community. We have responsibilities if we choose to carry or own a gun.

Mail theft, people are paying their bills and getting checks bleached. The postal inspector is looking into where the checks/mail is being stolen. You need to monitor bank statement and check all checks.

December of 2021, we responded to a home invasion with firearms and gunshots fired. Just recently on March 14th we apprehended the offender. This was a targeted residence due to drug activity and the perpetrator has been apprehended.

Administration Reports:

Dr. Ed Stange, District 29 Superintendent of Schools

Thank you and good morning! We are interviewing for 7 positions. We are bringing recommendations to the board tonight.

We have been working on safety and security this month. Over Spring break we had some recommendations from our audit and all of those were addressed. Ingress, egress, security camera, etc. A lot of improvements were made over spring break. I will say that things that were identified in the security audit were addressed over spring break.

Congratulations to the new board members who were named as the new District 29 board members. April 25th is the special board meeting to confirm their seats.

Jennifer Kiedaisch, Middlefork Principal

Really excited about partnering with the PTO for teacher appreciation week! It is such a fun week and to show our staff in both culinary and non-culinary ways how much we value what they do! Thank you for helping to make that extra special.

Thank the PTO for funding our Author illustrator visit- David Biedrzycki- he was very entertaining and his on the spot illustrations were so fun. It was cool for our students to watch him in action live and who knows how many author illustrators he inspired.

We have one more maternity leave shift at Middlefork this month. Mrs. Miler will be leaving and Mrs. Leary will be returning. Mrs. Shelly Kelly will be coming in for Miller and Ms. Victorn did an amazing job for Leary! We have Ms. Niersbach in music helping us for the next month! She is already working on a Middlefork idol, American Idol for the students!

We have been busy interviewing for a 3rd grade teacher, music teacher, and a learning specialist. We are in the final rounds of the hiring process.

This is a time of transition and are looking forward to inviting in the new families this month with our Kindergarten meet and greet. We host a school tour for new kiddos to play and meet each other and their new school.

3-4th grade transition days are coming up: 3rd graders go over to Sunset Ridge to visit the new school. We are also planning to do a ride to the Ridge which was a new tradition we started last year. 3rd graders ride their bikes with lots of supervision to Sunset Ridge - I will be asking for parent volunteers, etc. Someday in May- separate from the parent event.

Going to continue to have a student showcase at Middlefork- May 18th for 2nd and 3rd. May 23rd for K and 1st. There will be time in the classroom where the kids will show their parents around. We will likely not be having a music performance, but we are still really excited about some other rotations to highlight the specials. The show will go on, but it will just look a little bit different!

Dr. Ivy Sukenik, SRS Principal

4th and 5th grader have an evening performance on Tuesday night.

Wednesday the 7th graders do outdoor ed- Prior to covid, this was an overnight experience. When we came back to school we tried to do an extended day and it was preferred. We just do a super long day and they come home to their parents and pass out 😊 Great opportunity to do team building, in the fresh air.

Thursday, our 8th graders leave for Washington DC. Large majority of the grade going! One family has a family member working at the white house so our group gets a tour! Our robotics team is going to the world championship!

Our 4th graders will be doing the Arbor Day celebration with the village.

Ruler Reps are students in 5th and 6th grade who will serve as ambassadors for our Ruler Program (SEL program rolling out next year). They are our Emotion scientists. Ruler Rep will help

planning parent events, opportunities for our students and lots of ideas at Middlefork. Program really works on how to identify emotions.

Peter Pan the musical will be performed on May 11th and 12th! Really good! Hope you can come to watch!

School Board Report

Abigayil Joseph

Morning everybody! I want to lead with a farewell- as excited as we are for 4 new members, it is bittersweet to saying goodbye to Scott Subeck, Adelbert Spaan and Amanda Alpert Knight. They have, as a group, served two decades to the district. This is a volunteer position, and they are three members who helped get us through the pandemic which was a really stressful and emotional time. If you can send a thank you, and well wishes their way! The close of a chapter is always challenging and emotional. Passing of the torch, this school board meeting is their last. New board members will be placed on April 25th. Huge thank you to Amanda, Scott, and Adelbert for their unwavering service to the board. How committed they have been to the educational progress and success of our students. Asking the question, what is the best interest of our children. Thank you!

April is always a busy school board meeting. We do personnel reports and well as contract negotiations. There are going to be lots of votes for social worker, music teacher and ALP teacher. Anybody interested in joining those actions stay tuned. We also have a finance and facilities meeting where we vote on the amended budgets. We have superintendent contract coming through this month. Middlefork Capital improvements will also be discussed at the finance and facilities meeting. We will be discussing engaging an architect to do a feasibility study. Board meeting calendar will be voted on at this meeting as well. Those are the highlights.

Education committee meeting will also highlight the new math curriculum.

Christie- thank you to all the outgoing board members. We appreciate all you have done!

Committee Reports:

Bridget Kennedy – Nomination Slate

Thank you to everybody to step up to lend a hand for next year. We keep repeating it takes a village, and thanks to everybody helping.

Congratulations to Sandy Norbot on taking over for President. And Ranjini Shankar for taking the reins from Sandy the year after!

Bridget went through the list of who is slated for what positions.

PTO nomination slate [HERE](#)

If you have not done your board report, please send to Christie, Sandy and myself- we need that information for the website! Happy to send out a new template if you need it, and also attached [HERE](#)

We will be doing a transition meeting, which will help previous position holders educating the new ones!

Ranjini Shankar, Family Fun Fair

So many opportunities for volunteers at the family fun fair! We have a great event planned. June 7th- the event starts at 3:30pm and go till 7pm. It will be pretty similar to last year. We were lucky enough to get the tumbler group who will perform from 3:30-4pm. Airbrushed tattoo artist will be there instead of face painter to save time and get more kiddos through the lines. There will be a ninja wall, and obstacle course for older kids. We are lucky enough to have the library pushing summer reading and mobile check out! They are going to be doing an art project and happy they are excited about the event.

You are going to see a lot more from us and pushing for volunteers in May. We need more adult help, while the Sunset Ridge kids were great, we need adults helping with trash cleanup and bounce houses. We could use all the help we can get: 20-30 volunteers for the event.

So much work has gone into this, thank you!

We are going to be doing mascots again, Brent, will you be the dolphin? Eddy the eagle, any takers?

Hayley Garard, School Supplies

Reminder to parents to order kits by the July 1 deadline. Kits get delivered to the schools in August and we divide them into classrooms as needed. Typically, Sunset Ridge does their own sorting and the PTO sorts at Middlefork. I'll coordinate the deliveries with the company and work with our future chairs to secure volunteers to help deliver the supplies in August. More to come on that, but don't miss the deadline!

Patricia Gainsberg, Author Visit

Thank you to the board members who are leaving and Christie, you have done a great job! David Brizicky – kids loved the author! We have another author coming May 23rd, Joana Ho. We also have the theatrical performance happening on May 30th!

Seong McGarry, Parent Connections

At our March Parent Connections meeting, the District's Math Curriculum Review was discussed. It has been 10 years since the math curriculum was last reviewed. There was a curriculum review committee formed which consisted of teacher leaders: Rachel Berkhof, Monica Brouillette and Shannon Tremont as well as a number of other teacher representatives. Thank you to all of our wonderful teachers that were involved!

We had a great discussion and it was brought up if "we as a district should fix what's not broken." The district's current math quantitative outcomes (i.e., MAP and IAR) are strong. As part of the review, there were a number of various math platforms piloted and a recommendation was made to adopt Bridges Math for K-5 and College Preparatory Math for 6-8th grade. There will be a discussion and possible approval of the Mathematics Curriculum Adoption at tonight's board meeting. The Math Curriculum presentation discussed at the last meeting can be found on the District's website under the Parent Connection's link.

There are two Parent Connection meetings remaining for the school year. The next one is scheduled for April 18th at 9am and the agenda topic is World Languages. Robert Cummings, the Modern and Classical Languages Dept. Coordinator at New Trier H.S. is scheduled to attend as a special guest. We hope to see all of you there!

Virtual Zoom Meeting Adjourned : 10:02am
Minutes compiled by : Emily LeMire, Secretary