

Sunset Ridge/Middlefork School PTO
Monday, November 13th, 9:02am
Virtual Zoom PTO Minutes

Meeting Called to Order: Sandy Norbot
Approval of October, 2023 Minutes – No corrections, stand as approved.

Presidents Report:

Sandy Norbot, PTO President

There is a new A/I program we are going to try out. The program will provide a summary of what happens during the meeting and will send me a summary afterwards. It could help our secretary to review the meeting and we will see what this is like for a full meeting. If we find it useful we will use it in the future. If not, we will turn off the feature.

Thank you for attending this morning. Lots to report on what is going on with our PTO and community. We had a successful movie in the park, it was great to watch Mario Brothers outside. The PTO also provided meals during parent teacher conferences. Volunteers at both schools with picture day were fantastic. Room parents and staff put on Halloween festivities. Thank you to everybody who was involved in all these activities.

Board reports please put your board reports together. These are documents that explain what that role is all about. These are located under “about the PTO”, board positions. The paper icon next to each position is where the report is located. It summarizes what you do month by month, your budget, and there are sample emails, etc. Lots of great information for somebody who is looking to volunteer in this position. Please make sure you submit one of these for your board position- blank report under forms and resources, [Committee report blank form](#).

Budget review and program ideas: We are always thinking about what is coming up next for the PTO, how are we doing now, and how are we going to improve next year. We think about the programs themselves and the budget, etc. The budget is based on the position from last year. What did they do, what funds did they need, this is how we determine the following year. It is important to submit your expenses. Beyond that, if you have any really big ideas for your position, that would not fit into the current budget, we would like to hear it. We can speak about it and see if we can find a way to fit into the current programs or current budget. We have some savings, and some wiggle room for additional items that are deemed important.

President Elect’s Report:

Ranjini Shankar, PTO President Elect,

PTO Gifts program: The PTO gifts program closed at end of October. We have 15 great requests from parents, staff and students. We have the decision making meeting this afternoon, to approve as many as we can. You will be hearing back which requests were approved in the

December PTO meeting. As soon as they are approved it will be updated on the website as well. We will be meeting at 11:30am today, feel free to text or email me with any feedback.

[HERE](#) is where you can information on the PTO gifts program:

Treasurer Report:

Yena Levinson, Treasurer

Total bank balance of \$103,096.11. Received \$10,000 to date, classroom fees. \$9,250 already distributed. We have a balance of \$750 to distribute. The plan is to distribute the remaining funds before the holiday party. I think we are pretty much there, we don't expect a ton more. Please deposit checks, and please submit any reimbursements.

As you are spending, please use the [tax exempt](#) form. And that can be found on the PTO website.

Community Update:

Bill Lustig, Northfield Chief of Police

Halloween, always reminds me of a Norman Rockwell painting. I never know who has more fun, parents or kids. People enjoyed my costume as usual.

New officer is progressing well, will be on his own by the first week in December. We tried to hire a second officer but he is not going to work out.

New license plate readers are installed. We are still waiting for approval on county roads. We have solved a hit and run, so already they are working and doing their jobs.

Last weekend we responded to a call that somebody was shot behind Mariano's. Officers responded and found that it was a hoax. The subject that reported was having a mental health breakdown and was taken to the hospital. He will be charged at a later date.

We were on Standby this weekend to assist Northbrook. Northbrook was having rallies so we were ready in case they needed our services.

Over the weekend we had an ambulance call at a residence. The resident pulled a six inch knife, threatened the police and paramedics, then locked himself in a closet. He will be another guest of ours once he is released from the hospital. Lots could have happened and did not, proud of the officers who responded to that call.

we are going to hire an outside company to do a staffing study. Even though we are under staffed, we want to know how much staff does Northfield need? We will be waiting on that report to start and finish.

That is about it, if you have any questions I am here.

Administration Reports:

Ms. Hillary Logan, Teacher Representative

Sunset Ridge has been super busy. Last week Ruler night was a success, door decorating by student ambassadors, Bold and Crispy was out working with a physical education event in Wilmette. Yearbook committee is working hard on the cover. SRS kindness quilt is being worked on – asking students to complete a sticky note. Music has been super busy! we went to the Wolves games and performed on two different concourses before the game. Students were excited to watch the fight at the end of the second period Veterans day concert was a success, Fourth grade concert as well. We have a 5th grade concert on December 8th and visiting two senior homes with the 6-8th graders. The 8th graders are going to play for residents with Dementia, and learn how they explain this to people in a memory care facility. 6th and 7th will play for another senior home, tradition concert.

Dr. Ed Stange, District 29 Superintendent of Schools

Echo your thanks for all the volunteers, room parents, conference meals, thank you to all that helped out.

Kicking off our work on the feasibility study. The board of education approved this study. There will be opportunities for parents to give their thoughts on this process as well.

Annual academic assessment date- we go over all the results of the MAP testing.

Board of Education meeting will go over the agenda and see when the dates are proposed for the 2024/2025 calendar. Typically target January for final approval.

Parent connections, safety and security was the subject of the last meeting- you can see the slide deck in the recording on district website [here](#).

Wednesday this week is the next meeting. I will be reviewing the academic assessment data. All info on the district calendar. You can gain all this information at the board meeting or the parent connections meeting.

Sandy noted how great the presentation of all this data, that Dr. Stange does a great job presenting the information.

Dr. Ivy Sukenik, SRS Principal

District wide updates: Thank you for the PTO for the conference lunches. We love the PTO and the lunches made a very long conference day go by much smoother. Food was in the lounge at the beginning and allowed the teachers to not feel rushed.

Conferences were successful- 20% via zoom. As we keep moving forward with the hybrid model, this one went smoothly. We want to keep trying to accommodate what families needed.

Our number corner K-5th is going really well. I have been in several classrooms and discussions about patterns and the new routines are exciting the kids. Kudos to teachers for their work on this program.

Ruler family night had a huge turnout, thank you to all who came. We welcomed officers from the police department who were good spots in the photo booth. Thank you the Middlefork families who came and learned about something that we feel is important. Our ruler reps made it really fun. More to come.

Sunset Ridge- the work that the music department has been doing in the past few weeks has been tremendous. Grade level concerts, veterans day concert, Wolves Games. The work that the music department is doing is very intentional and how their music skills are impacting the community.

BBALL season up and running- lots of boys, not a lot of girls. The girls that are playing are passionate about it. We are combining 6,7,8th – they will all play on varsity. Park district to partner with us to have practice space n the AM.

Student ambassadors are partnering with Northwestern Settlement house to do some pre work like constructing boxes, creating a video to show kids about the program (more of a learning opportunity) addition to the donations and shopping. Older kids go to shop for the families, but we want to boost up the learning piece. How is this making an impact.

This group has revived our social media account, Instagram. They are trying to highlight different things in the district. Will put the Instagram in the chat. Follow sunsetridgeschool

Jennifer Kiedaisch, Middlefork Principal

I want to echo Dr. Sukenik said about Ruler night. The glow of connecting with so many of you in person has a lasting effect. It was great seeing you having so much fun with the kids. Thanks for packing the house.

Thank you PTO for making Halloween so special, offering lend a hand in Pumpkin patch, and for encouraging your kids to decorate. Thank you for organizing such engaging parties in the classrooms... set up and cleaned up properly.

Love the gourds and scarecrows and great decorations out-front, we appreciate that work keeping our spaces beautiful.

Thank you to the police department to ensure everything went well at the outdoor parade.

Third graders will be performing at the Northfield holiday fest in Clarkson Park. 3rd year, and it is really sweet and fun! All families are invited to come out. 3rd graders will sing the heart out. Last year the weather was super cold, hoping we are back on the mild side.

Starting to work with Junior Great books, a great program sponsored by the PTO. Sending out some information to see what interest there is.

Northwest Settlement house- Middlefork students will be making cards to go along with the gifts. We will have dedicated dolphins preparing the boxes and helping.

Encourage you to remind your kids to eat their lunch every day. Seems kind of odd, kids come home with partially eaten lunches. We need to remind them to eat, they love to socialize. Just a gentle reminder to eat your lunch.

We are beginning feasibility study, we have 3 teachers from different teams in the building. Sharing different perspectives in what our staff and student needs are. Looking forward to embarking on this.

School Board Report

Abigail Joseph and Jennifer Damon

Jenny Damon is here. We will be having the education committee meeting today at 5:30pm. Christy Crabtree will be going through that with Dr. Stange, MAP, IAR, and ISA presentation. She breaks it down with the Why, so what, now what, a comprehensive and interesting way to look at it. Achievement and growth amongst
7pm is the regular board meeting, we will be working on the calendar. We start with New Trier calendar and go from there.

Collective bargaining with the teachers union is underway. It is going very well, group of school board reps meet with Teachers union reps. We work through their upcoming contracts. Our smooth negotiations show what a true partnership we have between school board and teachers.

Safety and security presentation at the parent connections meeting. I wish more people would attend those meetings as they are so informative.. Please do look at that presentation, that is very important in our community. Want to highlight that as well.

School board meetings are live streamed on YouTube – You can access the meeting information [HERE](#)

Committee Reports:

Maggie Yocum-Piatt, Holiday Gifts Project Northwestern Settlement House

1891, oldest settlement house in Chcigao. \$15,000 gift, toys, gifts, for a good holiday and holiday meal. Look similar K-5, will get 1 family. Kids can work together. \$25 is the participation we ask for child. Wrapped and clearly labeled, box outside each of the classrooms for the gift drop off.

We really improve the student engagement this year. Why are they doing it, and how is impacting others?. 6-8th graders will go to target, shop, and wrap them and take to the families.

We are doing the Christmas Cards for the younger children to give to the families

We are excited about the SRS students creating the video... This will help the student engagement more.

We would like to get the list out this week. We are hoping to have this before break... as soon as we get the lists we will get them out asap.

Sarah Cohen, Middlefork Book Fair

Gearing up for book fair, it will be Tuesday December 5th-Thursday December 7th. Students will shop during the day Tuesday and Wednesday and family book fairs on Wed and Thursday after school. We will send out information this week and next week. Spam you with lots of info after the holiday.

Literati, trying out a new vendor this year. They sold us on the easy set up, so we will see if that is true. Known for book subscriptions. We are confident that it will be successful. There will be an opportunity for a book card so you don't have to send the kid to school with cash. We will be sending around a sign up genius for parent volunteers.

Sunset Ridge will be in the spring, that will be coming -we are doing it later in the year.

Monthly matters had the link to Literati, that information was in the last news letter

Dan Friedman, Parent Connections

We already discussed the parent connections meeting.

Please join us for the next meeting which will be very informative. October 25th 7pm
https://www.sunsetridge29.org/parents/parent_connections

Virtual Zoom Meeting Adjourned :9:42am- Adjourned by Sandy Norbot.
Minutes compiled by : Emily LeMire, Secretary

**Sunset Ridge/Middlefork School PTO
Tuesday, December 13th, 9am
Virtual Zoom PTO Minutes**

**Meeting Called to Order: Christie Caceres,
Approval of November 7th, 2022 Minutes: Approved Archana Piotrowski & Yena
Levinson**

Presidents Report:

Christie Caceres, PTO President

Reported on a successful Northwestern Settlement House drive and noted we will have a report from Chrissy Geraghty and Mekhala Middleton at our next meeting.

This program went over the stated budget for the 2022/2023 calendar year. The current budget is \$1500 and the total expenses were \$2169. The \$669 overage needs to be voted on by the PTO. We first must create a quorum, then count that we have a 2/3 majority vote to approve additional funds from the budget to cover the \$669. We will not be taking money from other programs but will be using existing PTO cash for this overage. Erica Marinello and Patricia Gainsberg approved the motion to initiate the vote.

**** PLEASE submit receipts for all your expenses to the PTO. It is imperative we know the true costs of these programs to accurately budget for the following year. Last year we did not get all the receipts and this year the cost of the Uhaul, stronger boxes, and supplies such as tape, etc drove the project over budget. The PTO also covered the cost of some of the families that were not supplied gifts.**

We will meet in the future to talk about the budget for this program, as well as ways to improve the process. Today we just need to vote on approval of the \$669 overage.

Quorum confirmed - 26 people in the meeting and 16 of the 26 voted yes to approve the \$669 overage to the budget for this project.

President Elect Report:

Sandy Norbot, PTO President Elect

We successfully accepted applications for the gifts grant program, obtained feedback from the staff and public about the submissions, and then met and made decisions about what was going to be granted this year.

This year the approved grants were:

1. Clay Slab Roller for Sunset Ridge art room. This equipment saves time in the prep of the clay for the ceramic projects of the Sunset Ridge student body.

2. Flexible seating for the kindergarten and first grade classrooms at Middlefork. These will help provide focus, stamina, posture, and motor skills for students.
3. Climbing wall add on's- Obstacle pieces. Ninja mats and obstacles add fun, new, exciting, and challenging items to the fitness unit.

All approved grants can be viewed on the PTO website under the [Gifts Program Tab](#).

The school district decided to fund the request for a balance bar for bike safety week, as well as noise canceling headphones for the 2nd grade.

Thank you for the wonderful nominations and participations in this program.

Treasurer Report:

Yena Levinson giving report for Kori Pierce, Treasurer

Shared screen- showed the budget for 2022/2023- as of 12/13/2022 account bank balance is \$76,524.22.

To date we have raised \$1500 towards the Winter Benefit and we have collected an additional \$1100 for classroom parties. This money will be divided and sent to room parents in January.

Friendly reminder to please submit all receipts in a timely manner for any PTO expenses, as well as to cash any outstanding checks. The [PTO site](#) has the tax exempt form and reimbursement form located under forms.

Community Update:

Bill Lustig, Northfield Chief of Police

I have hired a new officer who is on the streets. His name is Gabriel Garcia. He is expecting his first child with his fiancé.

We have arrested the burglars that were terrorizing Wagner road. It was a family of burglars and given that they were utilizing minors to create these acts we were able to charge with specific felony charges.

Got word of a 5:30am burglary of a store today in Glencoe.

Ring video footage this morning showed a car burglary in process. When the burglar noticed a patrol car coming down the street they hid, then resumed the burglary once the police car was out of site. Would love to see more fear of the police.

We are seeing a high instance of burglaries and there will be more during the holiday season.

When sending money or things of value through the mail please use the inside of the post office for drop off of mail. Some burglars are taking mail from post boxes and washing checks or stealing cash.

Remember to look around and be safe while shopping especially at malls.

Question: Is there a website for crime stats? Chief responded that the Pioneer Press is not reporting on Northfield and he is not sure why. He does send out crime stats when he feels it is important but also does not want to create a fear in the villagers. We are up in burglaries this year- 10 in 2021, and 11 in 2022.

Administration Reports:

Dr. Ed Stange, District 29 Superintendent of Schools

Thank you to all the leadership and hard work that went into the Book Fair, Gifts program and the Northwestern Settlement program.

At the Board of Education meeting this evening we will be focusing on engaging hearts where last meeting focused more on Educating Minds. We will be discussing Inclusion, Equity and Social Connections.

The presentation for the social emotional learning presentation (as well as last month's presentation) will be on the [parent connections website](#).

In addition we will be discussing the proposed tax levy, as well as the 2023/2024 proposed calendar.

The approval of the crossing guard switch will be voted on as well. The village has managed the guards for a long time. This has become an increasingly hard job to staff, and we end up using police professionals which is not ideal. We researched and obtained bids and decided on [Andy Frain](#) services. Glencoe and Deerfield currently use their services to hire skilled and trained guards. The cost is \$30,000 which include a crossing guard for Sunset Ridge and Middlefork School, as well as a site supervisor going back and forth between locations.

Question: will this service be doing the traffic direction on Sunset Ridge road? No, that we hire for and the retired cook county sheriffs handle.

Question: Do we require extra background checks? Yes, we do our own and the company does theirs as well.

When the topic of background checks came up, we discussed the 6th grade social dance. That company does not do background checks for their instructors. We decided that even though this is an non-school sponsored event, we would still require background checks of the instructors.

Illinois State only requires daily direct contact with students to have background checks, but internally we have decided to background check anybody who enters or meets with students.

Up for discussion is background checks for parent volunteers.

Dr. Ivy Sukenik, SRS Principal

Gave a summary of all the Civics in Actions- the student groups.

Student Ambassadors:

They have been helping greatly with the Northwestern Settlement adopt a family program. They have been helping with inventory, sending reminders out, and boxing/packing up the gifts. The group is working on a second buddies day in which they are planning a craft. Development of the spirit squad is in the works - you can purchase spirit gear at basketball games and the proceeds will go towards the Special Olympics.

Dedicated Dolphins:

They put together a costume and candy drive which had great success. The group partnered with the PTO and the book fair to do a coin drive. The goal was \$200 and they raised \$900. All proceeds will benefit underserved kids and provide them books. They are gearing up for spirit week next week. And finally, the 2nd graders are working on their environmental work and doing some clean up!

Bold and Crispy:

They are working on school spirit and inclusivity. They are working to outdo some creative spirit days prior to Thanksgiving break. The group is working on the school's partnership with TotalLink2 Community which is a local organization focused on helping young adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities. TotalLink will be sending an intern to SRS to work with them on select projects. This all goes to support the mission of CIA.

Green Club:

They are hard at work on their plastics recycling program. If you have any plastic bags or newspaper bags there are collection bins around the school. They have already collected 40lbs of waste. They are working on a no or low waste lunch day, as well as a collaboration with the lunch provider at school to create less waste.

Jennifer Kiedaisch, Middlefork Principal

So proud of all our student leadership! Thank you to the book fair chairs Sarah Cohn and Laura Curry and of course Kelly Johnson. It was a happy community event.

Thank you to the third grade families and everybody else who came out to the (COLD) Northfield holiday fest.

We are looking forward to our January winter sings. January 19th 1,2, and 3rd grades. January 26th Kindergarten. More to come on those events.

1 time a month the children meet in Dolphin pods to discuss different topics. This month we are discussing New Years resolutions and creating a time capsule. This will focus on a kindness goal.

Thank you to room parents for working hard to plan the holiday parties. These will take place on December 23rd.

Spread the word about the incoming Kindergarten event on January 25th.

School Board Report

Abigayil Joseph

- Covered by Dr. Stange

Committee Reports:

Sarah Cohn & Robin Decker, Book Fair

Sarah: The Book fair was a huge success. Kids enjoyed shopping at the winter wonderland. We sold a total of \$9,000 and 25% of those funds go to the PTO. We collected \$3000 for the PTO which is wonderful! The Middlefork student participated in the All for Books Coin Drive which provided books for underserved kids. Bravo! Last year the book fair was in May, and this year it was successful to have the winter timing which allows for holiday shopping.

Robin: we met our goal and got a cash reward for the PTO. We also had great participation in the teacher e-wallets which the teachers were extremely grateful for!

- Thank you to the Sunset Ridge volunteers who navigated the book fair without much direction from the school!

Devon Pearce - Winter Benefit

Info on Winter Benefit [Here](#)

Devon noted that fundraising is hard at work! They are actively seeking silent and live auction donations and encourage district families to think if there is anything experience they can donate! Some parents just donated a sushi and paddle night.

Tickets will go on sale in January after break and there will be more marketing pushes at that point.

Christie noted the amazing creativity happening within the Winter Benefit committee.

Seong McGarry, Parent Connections

At last month's meeting we discussed the student academic assessment results in both AIR and Math. Presentation available on the [parent connections website](#). Next meeting is December 20th at 9am. You may join in person or via Zoom. The topic is Inclusion, equity and social connections. We encourage all to join!

That is it for today! Wishing everybody a wonderful holiday!

Virtual Zoom Meeting Adjourned : 9:42am

Minutes compiled by : Emily LeMire, Secretary

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

Meeting Called to Order: Christie Caceres,
Approval of September 13th, 2022 Minutes: Approved Emily LeMire & Archana
Piotrowski

Presidents Report:

Christie Caceres, PTO President

There has been great activity in the PTO, a lot has happened since the last meeting

Dues: I know the PTO keeps harping on getting dues and classroom fees but we are making progress on collection. October 14th is our goal to get all party fee's in so the parents can throw some wonderful parties for our classrooms, and so the PTO can continue to do all we do to support the district. \$25/student for the classroom party fee's and \$25/family for the PTO dues. We are close to 100%! [PTO Dues info](#)

October 21st PTO sponsored movie night- going to be great! Will be showing Minions, spread the word! [PTO movie in the park info](#)

Conference meals are in the works and being scheduled, so thank you to everybody working on those!

Christie went through the agenda and shared her screen, and then passed the screen off to Sandy Norbot.

President Elect Report:

Sandy Norbot, PTO President Elect

Gifts Grant Program is something done every year. The PTO gives the community a change to submit proposals/applications for funding on specific needs and projects that would be great for the school district.

Sandy shared the screen to the PTO website and where to access the [gifts program application and information](#). You can see the pervious approved grants for the past few school years, as well as the guidelines, access to the application, and how to submit a proposal.

So far we have 1 application from a teacher

The PTO will review all applications after the October 28th deadline. In early December we will vote on what is approved and announce the grants in the December meeting. We welcome feedback and community participation in this program!

Christie- we welcome feedback on what has been submitted and encourage you to look at the options when they are published.

Patricia Gainsburg brought up a good point about the PTO sharing the grant application with the schools administration to assure that there is no overlap. Somebody noted that cello's were in the Sunset Ridge budget but were an application item for the gifts grant program as well.

Treasurer Report:

Kori Pierce, Treasurer

Shared screen- showed the budget for 2022/2023- as of 10/11/2022 account bank balance is \$84,723.13

At the last meeting we had collected \$8500 in dues and fees, and since have collected another \$12,000. $\frac{3}{4}$ of all families have paid their dues and fee's. Cutt off will be October 14th so parents can begin to work on the Halloween parties. We will continue to push for collection of 100% of the classroom fees and continue to cut checks to room parents as funds arrive.

Questions on budget? The PTO wants to make sure that we are very transparent about where all the money goes

Community Update:

Bill Lustig, Northfield Chief of Police

The Police Department is hoping to hire another new officer as of October 24th- Gabriel Garcia. He is coming from the City of Chicago. He will go through 12 weeks of training before he can be on the streets as an active member of this force. The department is looking forward to hiring another officer so they have 19 sworn officers working and are back to a full force.

The crossing guard at Willow and Wagner will be available in the afternoon's to help us out, but an officer from the force will be handling the morning cross walk duties.

The car thief who stole a car on Dickens was apprehended in Wisconsin. We are working to extradite him to Illinois to prosecute him for the theft.

We have had 4 residential burglaries in the past few weeks. When a burglary happens, officers respond and then the evidence techs arrive to dust for prints and do neighborhood canvassing. This entails asking neighbors for any ring/doorbell camera footage or get intel on what people may have seen.

The evidence compiled is that these burglaries were done by suspects posing as selling lawn care services door to door. If nobody answered the door, they took that as nobody was home and proceeded with the robbery. In video evidence acquired they have hoodies and gloves so hard to identify the suspects. The burglary task force will be in full force throughout the holidays. The most important thing is to report what you see ASAP, do not wait!

Question was asked if the homes burglarized were unlocked or there was forced entry. One of the houses garage door was unlocked so they entered the house through that open door. The burglary on the 200 block of Wagner was forced entry through the sliding door- the sliding doors are the easiest point of entry in this situation. The other two burglaries were backyard entry.

Administration Reports:

Dr. Ed Stange, District 29 Superintendent of Schools

The district continues to spend time and energy on Safety and Security. Noted that John Heiderscheidt has been working with teams of staff members of safety and security protocols (what to do to prevent issues and what to do if...) He is the former head of safety and security at Elgin School District U-46 (2nd largest school district in Illinois), a former police officer, and a current trainer for the Illinois State Board of Education. We have booked three full days with him this year (today was #1) and look to have an on-going training/consulting relationship with him.

Board meeting tonight at 5:30pm will focus on finance and facilities and the findings of the external audit will be discussed. Then at 7pm the regular board meeting will take place in which discussions on the capital improvements needs at Middlefork will be discussed. We know that short term needs at Middlefork school like roof and boiler replacement. We are watching enrollment and are needing to discuss long term needs for the facilities.

Dr. Stange noted the Parent Connection meeting about National Sex Ed Standards. What are these and what are we as a district doing and not doing. Information linked [Here](#) from the Friday Newsletter about this topic.

Jennifer Kiedaisch, Middlefork Principal

Thank you PT0 Patricia Gainsburg and Kelly Johnson for their work on the Author Visits. They have 4 separate visits from Jarrett Dapier. He has gone above and beyond the reading of his books and brought in instruments and has gone into detail about how he comes up with his stories!

Thank you to the Northfield Police Department for their continued support. They have scheduled time for Officer Friendly visits about Halloween Safety and Stranger Awareness. Thank you for their help last month with Bike Safety!

Working hard on the Math Curriculum review. It has been 10 years since we evaluated our resources. We will pilot 2 week units to test out resources. It is not anticipated that anybody will notice the changes but if your student comes home discussing some new units, this may be the reason.

Halloween- Embracing the Monday Halloween for 2022. We are having students bring their costumes to school and change into them after lunch. This is an attempt to get some academic learning done in the morning. Parade will be in the front driveway and parents can come to view/be paparazzi. It will be short and sweet. Then students will proceed to their classrooms for parties! Thank you, Archana, for your work with the great room parents to make these events a success. Dr. Stange and I are in the works on our joint costume, enjoy the element of surprise so keep an eye out.

- Christie- reminder to parents to grab photos and send to the PTO for posting on social media and the website. We are always looking for opportunities to updated images on social media and the PTO website!

Dr. Ivy Sukenik, SRS Principal

Lots to report today:

- Thank you to Glenview Health Services and Lizzie Appleby for providing a comprehensive overview of our health curriculum in grades 5-8. A link to the recoding of the presentation can be found [Here](#)
- We continue to train our staff in social emotional learning. We are learning this month about Charter- how we want to feel in the class room. We want to develop this emotional intelligence in our student population. The teachings now will be rolled out to students in the 2023/2024 school year.
- Civics in action- CIA- working on how we can support all the groups and their missions. Bold and Crispy had a very successful event for Mental health Awareness day in which everybody wore green. Still working on how the PTO can get involved and help the mission of these groups- likely will be an initiative for K-8 during Kindness week.
- Northfield PD- They had such an amazing presentation on online safety that we are working on age-appropriate presentation for 4-5 grade, and 6-8 grade.
- Big year for Girls Volleyball- This is Ms. Mattera's last year, and this is her last girls volleyball season.
- October 28th is our last day of the 1st quarter. This is really applicable to the 7th and 8th graders who switch exploratory classes at this date.
- Thank you thank you to Mr. Payne who donated 80 amazing pickleball rackets for the school. Teachers are losing their minds, they are SO excited. Students have gotten wind as well, so everybody is very excited. Thank you so much for this generous donation!
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School Board Report

Abigayil Joseph

The school board meeting tonight will cover:

- Finance and Facilities at 5:30pm- we will review the financial Audit that has taken place, and discuss the long list of capital improvements and how we prioritize. The big picture is that enrollment is up at Middlefork- biggest numbers since the mid 90's. Are we going

to build up, out, or add mobile options. Do we remove the art room and make that class room space? All options have a price tag so what can we afford to do.

- Security and enhancements also have price tags. Not only are we discussing the price of these enhancements but the cultural/social aspect as well. What message do metal detectors send to kids? How do you balance a safe environment as well as ensuring you have a culture of trust with the students and staff?
- Lots to discuss with enrollment and staffing-8 different focuses including Health, to title 9, to true north to bullying.
- Christie noted that one of the PTO's jobs is to bring parent's thought to the school board. A critical function is for us to foster the communication between parents and the board.

Committee Reports:

Patricia Gainberg, Author Visits

Jarrett Dapier has been wonderful and is in for his 2nd visit today- in a skeleton costume.

The bookstall has worked with us to get his 3 books signed and personalized and will be coming home with your students. This visit was beautifully timed with Halloween!

Working on securing Joanna Ho for Asian Pacific Heritage month in May. Samantha Chaman for Black History month.

Thank you to Mr. Dapier for being so generous with his time, and allowing us to have additional funds to secure even more authors in the coming months.

Seong McGarry, Parent Connections

Great turnout for the September meeting about safety and security. [Here](#) is the link to the presentation on this important topic

Next meeting is Tuesday at 9am about the national sex education standards and what District 29 does and does not do for their sex education program. Meeting agenda for the upcoming meeting and zoom information provided [Here](#)

Devon Pearce - Winter Benefit

Planning underway- March 4th 2023. Roaring 20's theme. By November 1st we will have an updated on Sponsorships and the levels available. We do have one ask right now- does anybody have experience with an online auction site/service? We are looking to hire one, they are expensive so want to make sure we hire the best option. Invitation and more to come!

- There is talk about ways to get the teachers to the benefit- Allowing parents to buy a teacher ticket when they are purchasing their tickets. We would love to have teachers there!

Info on Winter Benefit [Here](#)

Virtual Zoom Meeting Adjourned : 9:43am

Minutes compiled by : Emily LeMire, Secretary

**Sunset Ridge/Middlefork School PTO
Tuesday, September 13th, 2022, 9am
Virtual Zoom PTO Minutes**

**Meeting Called to Order: Christie Caceres,
Approval of May 10th, 2022 Minutes: Approved Bridget Kennedy, Emily LeMire**

Presidents Report:

Christie Caceres, PTO President

Welcome and Christie's introduction of herself. Thanking everybody for all their hard work and efforts on the PTO. Discussion of the [PTO flier](#) and the explanation of what the PTO does and what they fund.

Roles: All Committee reports are posted on the [PTO site](#). If you haven't received yours, please check the site. Would like to have all reports updated by the end of year to accurately reflect the positions and to help position next year's Committee Chairs for success.

We have a list of all Committee Chairs so you can quickly reach one another. If you haven't added your cell phone number and you want to, please [update it here](#).

Agenda- shared the screen for the agenda

Treasurer Report:

Kori Pierce, Treasurer

Shared screen- showed the budget for 2022/2023- as of 9/12/2022 account balance is \$73,447.70 (\$55,000 in savings and \$18,000 in checking). Just accepted \$8,585 from dues and classroom fees. Reminder to pay your party fees, as those go directly back to the classrooms for parties. Party PTO dues fund all the programs the PTO originates.

Committee Chairs- know your budget and that way you can stick to what is allotted to be spent. PTO does not reimburse for sales tax so went through how to get the tax-exempt form and how to get reimbursed for your expenses. [Click here](#) for the form.

Legislative Report:

Erica Foster

Contracts: This year we are focusing on looking at all contracts we enter into. Committee heads can flip over contracts to Legislative to make sure they have appropriate contingency language, background checks, etc. Working on the creation of a check list for future use. This should take some of the pressure off parent volunteers and allow the PTO to have solid contracts.

Teacher Representative Report:

Shannon Tremont- 7th and 8th grade math

Student Ambassadors –

Summary of what action items students are interested in. To date there has been the theme of building more school community- between Sunset Ridge and Middlefork schools.

CIA- Civics in Action- Kids can communicate a timeline for their action items. Dr. Sukenik noted that the groups will include Dedicated Dolphins, Student Ambassadors, Bold and Crispy, and Green Club. We will hear more about how the PTO can support all of these student groups moving forward.

Community Update:

Bill Lustig, Northfield Chief of Police

Busy summer with the incidents in Highland Park having a big impact on how we deal with outside events. They have put an emphasis on more police presence. They have had a short staff, with 2 officers with new baby girls (just returned to work), and 1 injured officer. One retired officer has started a new career as a dentist. They hire police officers two different ways. The first is an external hire that is currently not able to procure candidates till early 2023. The other is through lateral transfer so hiring officers looking to get into the NF department. They hired two officers this way during the summer and getting one more on staff now.

Jewelry scam- Travelers have been camping on exit ramps and selling fake jewelry to people after flagging them down. Do not engage, call police- that is their job to help a family in need if they are truly in need.

Crime: Ruse burglaries are happening all over the North Shore. Stolen cars and Ruse burglaries.

*Make it harder for thefts to happen- lock doors, do not leave your keys in cars.

Safety act: Change how law enforcement is required to handle crime. Lots of unfunded mandates- like by 2025 all officers will need cameras on each individual officer but also in the cars. These are not funded.

Officers trying to make a strong police presence around schools each day.

Administration Reports:

Dr. Ed Stange, District 29 Superintendent of Schools

Welcome back decorations and the lunch were so great, thank you! Grateful for the PTO partnership

- Enrollment: Middlefork at the highest enrollment in 30+ years, looking at long term plans to solve the stress on the facilities
- Covid- if you are sick, stay home, and be honest. Back to a more normal way of life with regards to illness
- Safety and security- had an audit done, policies and procedures were updated this summer. Some still left to discuss and want community involvement, i.e., fence around Middlefork school? Metal Detectors? Want more community input on items like these.
- National Sex Ed: District 29 curriculum is 5th grade = body and puberty, 6th= reproductive, 7th – gender identity, 8th= STD's
- This has been working for the district and we have lots of input from professionals in the area.

Dr. Ivy Sukenik, SRS Principal

Thank you for a great Welcome back- very positive feelings this year and that is very appreciated. Thanks for the delicious and beautiful teacher lunch!

- Extracurricular groups are all getting up and rolling, along with Girls Volleyball (just started).
- Librarian Ms. Gray is having her 1st baby, leaves next month for Maternity leave. Lyn Horn, the old art teacher, will be back to take her place. She knows the staff and kids, and will be a smooth transition.
- Glad to be welcoming Northfield Police back into the building to present on cyber bullying to each grade, all grade specific.
-

Jennifer Kiedaisch, Middlefork Principal

Thank you PT0! Decorating at the beginning of the year goes a long way.

- Grateful for the partnership with the police department- having more officer friendly visits this year. Love the positive interaction between students and the local police department. First visit is October for Halloween and stranger awareness. They were in to discuss bike safety and will be back on Friday to help register bikes. Hopefully bike safety will be outside weather permitting.
- Traditions: Play Pods- starting today K-3 will have a monthly activity. Mixed grade level traditions.
- Author visits- have a few in person and virtual set up, very exciting
- Driveway volunteers- need more help, 10 mins in the morning would be so appreciated. [Click here](#) to sign up.

School Board Report

Abigayil Joseph

Will have a robust meeting tonight, always a lot to do at the start of the year.

- Enrollment complexities- will begin the discussions with the community on how to evolve with the increasing enrollment numbers.
- Strategic plan- proud of this visual piece which is on the website. Come to meeting to hear more on this project.
- Safety and Security- new things we want to implement. Some easy, some more complex.
- Principal school reports- favorite part of the meeting, appreciate all that they do for our schools including evolving curriculum, etc.
- Policies, lots to discuss
- Last night the Caucus had an event for people interested in school board. The board has gotten through the tough part and there are some spots open. Board members feeling positive about the good times to come for the school board. 4 spots will be opening; encourage those interested to reach out and consider running for an open position.

Committee Reports:

Devon Pearce - Winter Benefit

Planning underway- March 4th 2023. Goal to raise \$75,000, and already underway. 4 sub committee's where people can help out and more information to come on the committees and how to get involved. [Biennial Winter Benefit \(district29pto.org\)](http://Biennial Winter Benefit (district29pto.org))

Sara Thompson, Directory Spot

Only one directory moving forward as we needed a way for families to opt in. Encouragement of families to [fill out a form for EACH child](#) is encouraged. The form will close on Friday, Sept. 16. Directory Spot will then be live on Monday for parents to use. Any changes after that will need to go through Sara directly.

Seong McGarry, Parent Connections

Upcoming meeting led by Dr. Stange- allows parents to give admin feedback and input. Happening in person now in the Sunset Ridge conference room. The recorded zoom will be sent out to parents.

Archana Piotrowski, Room Parents

Full for all classes- just need one more volunteer for Mrs. Bell's class. Reminder to pay classroom fee's and PTO dues!

Additional Comments:

Christie brought up the ice cream social on Thursday the 15th, and the movie in the park as the October event.

Virtual Zoom Meeting Adjourned: 9:58am

Minutes compiled by: Emily LeMire, Secretary

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

Meeting Called to Order: Christie Caceres

Approval of April 11, 2023 Minutes: Approved by Emily LeMire and Patricia Gainsberg

Presidents Report:

Christie Caceres, PTO President

We confirmed we had a quorum, so proceeded with the votes.

Budget Vote – Motion to approve the budget: Bridget Kennedy and Patricia Gainsberg
We had a majority YES vote and no opposed. Budget for 2023/2024 was passed

PTO committee Nomination Slate Vote- Motion to approve the PTO Nomination slate: Erica Marinello and Gretchen Peyton. We had a majority YES vote and no opposed. Slate for 2023/2024 was approved.

President Elect Report:

Sandy Norbot, PTO President Elect

PTO Committee Transition Meeting, June 6th, 9am – via zoom. We will email out all the information soon. This is for our current board and incoming board members for next year. This is an informational meeting about your role and going into the school year how you plan your projects for the year. Please try your best to make it, email myself or Christie if you are not able to make it. Hopefully not that long of a meeting, but people can share their lessons learned to help the committee chairs for next year. After the meeting we will ask current board members to meet with the incoming board position to help with a quick transfer and to answer questions. Sandy: sandynorbot@yahoo.com or Christie: christiecaceres@me.com.

Treasurer Report:

Kori Pierce, Treasurer

The current balance is \$140,355.47. With this being the last meeting please send in your reimbursements asap! I want to get all the checks cut, all reimbursements are paid out to date.

Legislative Report:

Ericka Foster, Legislative

Quick update about how we took a review of the bylaws this year. We made those changes and will be posting those to the website. We will be asking the new board to approve the changes to the bylaws. Please take a look at the changes and confirm you are comfortable with the changes.

Clean up, updating the chairs- active descriptions. Please take a quick look, you will see a redline where the changes are.

Christie- thank you Ericka for getting out bylaws into an electronic format! It had been a while since we had gone through them and this was a lot of work. Thank you!

Community Update:

Bill Lustig, Northfield Chief of Police

Good morning! One of the new officers went back to Chicago. We are out looking for a new officer again. A week and a half ago, we had a burglary. They park about a block away from the house. The burglary was on Bracken Lane and was substantial. A few of the residents in the area saw the car parked on Jeffrey and walked down there, but had hard time communicating with the couple in the car – those were the burglars. If you suspect a suspicious car, please call us. They walked back to their house and did not get a license plate. Please call in those cars and take down the license plate.

Officers are going through a lot of training. We had to finish a 5 hour mental health training. All of us have to do the state mandated training. Working to get all state training done.

Please let us know if there is anything we can help you with. I am easy to find. Thanks!

Administration Reports:

Chris Roberts, Teacher Representative

For those of you who are not familiar with who I am, I am a 7th grade teacher at Sunset Ridge and primarily teach Social Studies. I look forward to meeting you in the future. On behalf of the teachers, thank you for making teacher appreciation so special for us. This week comes at the perfect time of year when we are powering through the home stretch. It renews us to have your appreciation. Thank you for making this time so special.

We do have several open houses at the end of the year – student showcases, or evening with the Eagles. It is a special time to see what your child has been working on during the year.

Christie- thank you so much for being here! It means so much to us that the PTO can show how much we appreciate you.

Dr. Ed Stange, District 29 Superintendent of Schools

Chris just stole my intro- It cannot be said enough. There is a life cycle to the school year and May is a hard time of the year. Thank you collectively to the parents and PTO who express their appreciation. It is so impactful, thank you.

We do an Arbor Day planting of a tree each year. The Village did a dedication to Bryan Albro this year, a Science teacher who passed away. Thank you to the village for that gift.

The education committee is covering our strategic plan progress, and priorities for next year. I will do the presentation at the Parent connections meeting next week. Or watch the video after.

At the board meeting next week, we are making the biggest investment. We are recommending hiring a dedicated reading specialist, dedication school social worker, and director of teaching and learning.

Be on the lookout, we have a refresh cycle for our tech devices. We sell the old laptops to a company. We will be offering the Apple MacBook Pro's to parents in the district first before selling to the company. There, about 50-60 for sale. \$245/piece. We do not provide tech support after they are out. Be on the lookout after the announcement.

Jennifer Kiedaisch, Middlefork Principal (Covering for Ivy)

Chris Roberts said it so beautifully, Ivy and I want to reiterate that you have outdone yourselves once again. Both the tangible and intangible signs of appreciation. Showing kids in their favorite outfits and heartfelt notes pouring in. Thank you!

We have been training our staff in this year in the RULER program and we are having a RULER Boot camp for the PTO exec board and liaisons to start the conversation about what RULER is. Ivy has been working with some 5/6 grade students who will be sharing what this program is. We will have more info soon.

Thank you for Christie and the outgoing exec board, flexibility, and support. It has been a pleasure collaborating with you. Thank you for helping provide our students and staff so many amazing opportunities.

Middlefork News- thank you for funding two of our upcoming literary programs and events.
May 23rd virtual author visit with Joanna Ho.
May 30th, in person fractured fairy tale event

Third graders will be riding over to the Ridge to watch the Peter Pan performance. We will take buses if the weather does not cooperate. This helps to practice bike safety as well as getting to know their new school.

At the beginning of June we will have our annual 3/4th grade transition day. The students and parents will tour the school and learn more about 4th grade and sunset ridge and get to tour the school.

Student Showcase night- May 18th, and May 23rd. Like a self-guided tour to see everything from what they have been learning in the classroom, to laps in the gym, or to see a recording of our students folk dancing. We will be highlighting certain aspects of their year.

We will be having field day, Friday June 2nd – Parent volunteers needed, and Ms. Casper will be in touch.

Question: What is RULER approach? It comes from the Yale school of emotional intelligence. Working through ways to Regulate and get along with others... Beautiful approach to social emotional learning.

Christie: May 30th at 7pm is when the Exec Board and Chairs will be invited to the boot camp. I was waiting for the slate to get approved; anybody can join and it will be recorded.

Dr. Ivy Sukenik, SRS Principal (Updated given by Jennifer Kiedaisch)

Baby photos of the 8th graders have been a huge hit – thank you to Jess Akaah and Evelyn Schwall.

Congratulations to Isaac Bowden, Lucas Lai and Jackson Chilwich for representing the SRS Robotics team at the World Championships last weekend!

Peter Pan will be performed this weekend with shows on Thursday and Friday evenings.

Bold and Crispy student club is coming over to Middlefork, next week, to share some read alouds about empathy. We are excited to host them here and build the connections between the buildings.

School Board Report

Abigayil Joseph

Congratulations to the new PTO slate, thank you for your service.

For this month the education committee meeting- looking at the progress for the past year but also the priorities for the coming year/years. I wanted to put out a call, if you have questions about the academic progress or things they want to know more about. Email me please as this is a planning meeting. It is helpful to hear from you. josephab@srd29.org

I am excited about my new education committee, we have divided and concurred already!

May is a big month, all around. For the kids and for Staff and board. New policies that we will be approving, new budget we will be approving, contracts for transportation and Copiers, and new hires. Hope you can join us.

Committee Reports:

Erica Foster – Teacher Appreciation Week

Kelly Caruso, Mallory Ruh, Rose Wormley, Adrienne Hannis- thank you so much! Kelly has kept us extremely organized. We have had a ton of activities going on. Posters around the school, trivia around the school for teachers, flowers for all the teachers and sweet treats. Tomorrow is the teacher appreciation luncheon. Thursday we will be delivering a coffee bar. Friday we are asking parents to have kids write notes for their teachers, send your notes back whenever you are able too! Notes in the Friday news that went out yesterday! Remind your friends to do this as well!

Thank you Rose Wormley who did the teacher appreciation gifts- Cubs tickets, John Legend tickets, Sephora, Athleta, bottle shop, so many great gifts people donated.

I encourage everybody to reach out to your teacher, we have such a great team at Middlefork and Sunset Ridge.

Christie: So much planning, thank you!

Ranjini Shankar, Family Fun Fair

June 7th 3:30-7pm. We have a pretty great line up. Tumblers, all the inflatables, climbing wall, airbrush tattoos, Stormy's and Kona Ice. Library partnership with a craft. Scavenger hunt. Fun event! None of this will happen without a lot of help, we need parent volunteers. We need adults and students to help out! When the link goes out, please sign up! If you have any questions please let me know. ranjkrish88@gmail.com

Christie- thank you so much for all your hard work!

Jessica Akaah, Rebekah Bader, Jenny Gallagher, 8th Grade Chairs

We want to shout out to Evelyn Schwall for a great job with the baby photos! Photos are up in the cafeteria, most 8th graders participated in the contest last week and winners will be announced soon.

Also we will celebrate the end of the year with a graduation party on Sunday June 4 - dinner and dancing at Sunset Ridge Country Club for the graduates.

We hope it has been a fun and memorable year for our 8th graders.

The 8th grade chairs- thanks for you for all your hard work!

Seong McGarry, Parent Connections

In April we met with Dr. Stange to discuss the foreign language program with Bob Cummings from New Trier as our guest. That presentation is available on the schools website under the [parent connections link](#). 90% of all incoming freshmen fall into the novice range, a very small percentage fall in the intermediate range. District 29 will be looking into our foreign language program.

Our next, last, meeting is May 16th at 9am via zoom or in person at Sunset Ridge. [Agenda](#) is the year in review, and strategic plan. For those who cannot join, we are always looking for topics for next year. Shoot Dr. Stange an email, he would appreciate any ideas or thoughts you have.

Christie, A big shout out to the Exec Board and committee members. This is our last meeting and it feels weird to be saying that. We will have one more newsletter but please make sure you sign up and help with the Fun Fair! And thank you all for all your effort and work – We could not do it without everybody here. This was a great year, we had such a successful benefit and I am so happy to have been a part of this year!

Sandy- we would like to thank you for serving as president this year. It is safe to say that you have helped with all the projects this year. On top of that you are the main contributor to our newsletter – you did it all with a poised, professional and patient manner! Thank you

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

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

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

**Meeting Called to Order: Christie Caceres
Approval of February 14th, 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) 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 3rd 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. 5th and 8th grade have another test coming up in Science.

Two surveys' will be coming out in April. There is one for 8th 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; 8th 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 8th 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). 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 21st 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

**Sunset Ridge/Middlefork School PTO
Tuesday, January 10th, 9am
Virtual Zoom PTO Minutes**

**Meeting Called to Order: Christie Caceres,
Approval of December 13th, 2022 Minutes: Approved by Bridget Kennedy and Trish
Gainsburg**

Presidents Report:

Christie Caceres, PTO President

Exec board has been discussing distributing a survey to District 29 families. We want to be transparent and listen to what the district families want from the PTO. This is the districts' chance to weigh in and provide feedback. We will be sending out the survey in January and presenting the results during the February PTO meeting.

In April we are going to present the nomination slate, as well as the budget for next year. We will vote on those in May which is our last meeting.

Treasurer Report:

Kori Pierce, Treasurer

Balance is \$75,690.34. Please turn in receipts; that is very important. It helps set the stage for the budget for the subsequent year. If you don't turn in accurate receipts it inhibits our ability to create a fair budget.

The only real movement from last meeting is the book fair. \$3000 is a great addition to the budget from Book Fair. Thank you for that great work bringing in that line item for the PTO. Junior Great Books will be reimbursed for the cost of the books by the parents. Our out of pocket will be for the teacher stipend portion of the program.

Legislative Report:

Ericka Foster, Legal

We have been working on a PTO checklist for contracts. A lot of time this year has been dedicated to reviewing contracts as they come in, Book Fair, Benefit, etc. We are trying to streamline the process. We have been diligently working to get all the contracts up to speed and in the process are creating a checklist for all the future year contracts. The accurate name for the PTO is listed on the document as well as the current contact for each contract. Some things related to insurance and background checks are highlighted in the checklist. We have attempted to align it accurately with what our District is currently doing with regards to background checks, etc. We have also tried to update the contracts for fallback provisions for a health crisis (pandemic) We will post this on the website so everybody has access to it.

Community Update:

Bill Lustig, Northfield Chief of Police

Happy New Year; great to see everybody.

Ricky is back, he was involved in an accident so very happy he is back. Another officer just had surgery, not sure when he will be back.

We did a survey internally regarding their shifts. They noted that working 6 days straight without a day off was a problem. They want longer shift periods so we are going to 3 months before they rotate to a new shift. This will start in the next 2 weeks.

Crime has slowed down in the last 10 days but I don't want to give false hope. Pick pocketing, in stores; please don't leave purses unattended in shopping carts. Leaving unlocked cars in driveway with garage door openers in it. A resident heard somebody in her house and they had gained entry by using her garage clicker which was in her unlocked car. This guy was apprehended. Did apprehend a few young burglars who created the Wagner robberies. They have been charged, we will see how long they will stay in the system. That concludes my report.

We can donate the ride in the squad car to school; we can talk about other ideas for the winter Benefit.

Devon Pearce - Winter Benefit

Saturday March 4th 2023 is the Roaring 20's winter benefit. Save the date has gone out, will go out again this week. 7-11pm at Sunset Ridge Country Club

Fundraising goals are \$75,000- slightly above what they raised in 2019. We would like 150 Parents to attend and to get 50 teachers sponsored to attend.

Tickets go on sale January 18th - early bird tickets \$125.

February 16th- February 24th - tickets \$150

Saturday February 25th- tickets jump to \$175.

Teacher sponsorships will be available online; goal is 50 teachers to sponsor. We hope parents will help sponsor teachers.

Event website will be live next Wednesday, everything will be kicked off on January 18th. Auction items will go live on February 1st. All auction sales will be through the website which turns into a mobile site at the event.

We have gotten a lot of great donations... Still looking for parent donated experiences. Examples, Sunset poolside yoga and cocktail parties. Experiences, anything in Big Sky Montana.

Communication plan- Yard signs will go out Feb 1, Invitations likely mailed February 1, and Northfield Banner Feb 1. Plus, word of mouth!

Administration Reports:

Dr. Ed Stange, District 29 Superintendent of Schools

Good morning and happy new year all. Few quick notes, just want to thank PTO and all volunteers for their flexibility on the holiday parties. I have been asked "Are we making up the ½ day?" State Board of Ed requires we have 176 days of education on the calendar. We have 178 days in our calendar. My recommendation to the Board is to wait and see if we have to take any more days off before we make any decisions on the calendar. We will put discussions of extending for a day on hold and will see how winter plays out.

The new crossing guard services started yesterday. We are contracting with Andy Frain Services; they work at lot of North Shore school districts. We have crossing guards at both schools. At Middlefork and Sunset Ridge, they work the morning from 7:45-8:45am. The afternoon at Middlefork is set for 2:45-3:45pm, and Sunset Ridge from 3:15-4:15pm. We are not sure if we need one or two guards at each location, we are not sure about these times... we executed a contract where we can go in and adjust this. If you have any feedback let us know.

Video monitoring was recommended as we continue to partner with our security expert for training and support. One of the things parents have suggested doing is weapons detectors. As a response to why we are not proceeding with weapon detectors is that the expert did not recommend either of those with the Board of Ed.

A note about the terrible situation in the first-grade classroom in Virginia- just a reminder that 1/3 of households have firearms. They are the leading cause of death of children, please keep them locked in a safe place.

Jennifer Kiedaisch, Middlefork Principal

Good morning and happy new year. Talking about some Middlefork updates, then up to District updates.

Thanks to all the parents helping with Holiday parties. Some last minute changes happened and it was helpful to have everybody on board. The flexibility allowed us to still have all those special moments with the children. Special shoutout to Archana for her help coordinating all the last minute changes.

Thanks to everybody working on Junior Great Books started again in 3rd grade. Starting next week which is wonderful!

Thank you note from Mrs. O’Looney relating to the gift program was read. The seats have been ordered and we look forward to seeing all the ways the chairs benefit our children.

We have Kindergarten registration night on January 25th! Excited to see what the new Dolphins will look like.

Winter Sing is on January 19th 1,2,3rd grades will perform, and January 26th at 6:30pm we have Kindergarten performance. Will be great to have parents in the building for this tradition.

District updates: Reading different chapters in the book Building Thinking Classrooms by Peter Liljedahl. The book has provided us with lots of great conversations about giving children more ownership in their classrooms. What are the benefits of students standing while working? What are the benefits of random visual group? Lots of fun seeing the learning in action.

The Math Committee has been piloting some new resources out there; we are collecting feedback from students. 6th graders gave us some info on a new program which was fun to see. The Math Committee will make a recommendation this spring on the new programs.

Dr. Ivy Sukenik, SRS Principal

Happy New Year! Thanks you to Archana and all parent volunteers for the holiday parties. It was pretty frantic at the end with the change in day, and it was pulled off with grace and ease. Kids loved it.

6th grade dance is this Friday, and 8th grade dance next Friday.

Pickleball unit has started, and the kids are so invested and love it so much. Teachers want to play; there may be a teacher tournament soon.

8th graders are getting close to graduations. I started measuring for cap and gowns today. Lots of information has been going out about the Washington DC trip. Graduation will be upon us before we know it.

Thank you Dr. Friedman for your participation with the CIA. We will be meeting in the next few weeks about Earth Day and Kindness week in February as well.

School Board Report

Abigayil Joseph

What an amazing start to 2023! Parties, pickleball, Jen is updating us on Curricular enhancements, reading Building Thinking classrooms... what a great start to the 2023 year!

Caucus has slated 4 new board members. This is an uncontested election, and they will be seated in late April. The new members are: Cynthia Ho, Jenny Damon, Charlie Pick, Sam Tideman.

Rory Welch resigned from the board, and the board appoints the new board member for that position. The board has been working with the caucus and Jenny Damon showed willingness to take that spot. We will make that official in this month's meeting.

Finance meeting at 5:30pm and we will be discussing the long-term capital plans for Middlefork at that meeting. Lots to be decided for Middlefork school.

Committee Reports:

Chrissy Geraghty, Holiday Projects (NUSH)

Mekhala Middleton and I organized the NUSH program for this year. NUSH stands for Northwestern Settlement House. 41 families benefited from our generosity. This program occurs at a hectic time of year and our effort do not go unnoticed. Chrissy read a letter from a family. To get a thank you note is a great reminder of why we do it!

It takes a village to run this program. I would like to thank all the people who helped! NUSH contacts Jen Kiedaisch and Kelly Johnson at Middlefork school. Dr. Sukenik, Mindy Golub & Shannon Tremont at Sunset Ridge. They are always there for us and help so much to make this program a success.

Thank you to the teachers who work with the students, and helped organize the gifts. Moving day warriors- who help move boxes. Student ambassadors who show up early and are happy to help. Mr. Parks, Corey Dreher, Bill Crawford and Dr. Stange (who is the Marie Kondo of packing a U-Haul truck) thank you for the help packing the truck. Ericka Foster- who helped audit boxes when Mekhala was out with the flu. Board- who understands the cost of inflation has also impacted the price of boxes and packing materials.

Instagram page will show some photos soon!

Maureen Huhs, Junior Great Books

Aimee Reynolds and I are so excited to be resurrecting the Junior Great Books program. It is teacher led vs. parent led this year. We are running two sessions – AM and PM. This year our budget only covers the teacher stipend, each family asked to cover the expense of the books and journals- \$35/family, 27 total students. Starts first this Friday AM, and the other session is Tuesday.

Bridget Kennedy, Nominations

We are starting work on the nomination process. It seems early but this process takes time and our goal is to have as many people who want to volunteer to be able too! Take a look at the [website](#) : head to the District 29 PTO website, About PTO, and then click on board positions. You are able to click on all positions, who is currently chairing and a board report (paper icon to right)

The board report (summary of the position) should be updated now. If you are chairing a position please update by Friday. The goal is to start gathering interest for the PTO for next year. Look over the report for the position and if you see one you are interest in please email Bridget- you can click on her mail icon on page 3 of the chair positions (nominating), or email bridget_kennedy13@yahoo.com directly. Goal for PTO is to have as many people who want to volunteer to be included. By next month I would like to start getting the committee going for nominations. We will do the slate by April and vote by May. Please spread the word that we are looking for volunteers for 2023/2024 school year. We are starting with a blank slate this year.

Archana Piotrowski, 6th Grade Social Dance

Allison and I are in charge of the 6th grade social dance. This Friday we are hosting 4 sessions led by *May I Have this Dance*. The four dances are Latin Ballroom, hip-hop and line dancing. They will work with the kids on etiquette and partner work. Great event for the 6th graders. If you have a 6th grade student interested, you still have time to sign up. If you are a 6th grade parent who wants to volunteer please let us know! Currently we have 16 boys and 14 girls.

Seong McGarry, Parent Connections

Not able to join but asked Christie to share:

There was no Parent Connections meeting since our last meeting. The next meeting will be held on January 24th at 9am. The topic discussed will be “Engaging Hearts - Inclusion, Equity, and Social Connections.”

Additional questions and thoughts:

Bridget Kennedy asked if we can we update the website about Lunchroom volunteers – what time are we required to attend?

Sunset Ridge is 11:20-1pm.

Middlefork: 11:45am- 1pm.

Christie: We are working on updating the website with new photos of kids with no masks. Parents were asked to either opt out or in of having their child’s picture on publications. We are working on a google drive of photos as a central place to pull from. Just want to make sure we are not using photos of people who have opted out of their children’s photos being used on publications.

Question by Bridget Kennedy- Are we using the website to promote the benefit? Can we look and see auction items. Devon: We have a page dedicated on the PTO website and plan to link directly to the main event website!

Virtual Zoom Meeting Adjourned : 9:47am

Minutes compiled by : Emily LeMire, Secretary

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