

Parents Association

January 8, 2013

Meeting minutes

Minutes taken by Gema Gray in the absence of PA Secretary, reviewed by Lisa Harvey-Mone.

Call to Order: 7:00pm

Review and Approval of Minutes

December 2012: Motion to Approve Elissa Dennis. Seconded Janet Daley. Approved Unanimously.

IMPACT

Guest Speaker: Paul Carberry, Clerk, SSCPS Board of Trustees (BOT)

Paul gave a presentation about the Board of Trustees, outlining the composition of the BOT, and the work the BOT undertakes for the school (see presentation attached). Points covered:

- The role of the BOT is one of Governance of the school, but also provides support to Alicia and her team in the Administration of the school.
- The mission and purpose of the BOT.
- The composition of the BOT. The BOT is self-perpetuating. This means that they select their own members, who are then approved by the State. In the future, parents will no longer elect Trustees. The State has advised the BOT that parents have no legal standing to do this, so the BOT is looking for other ways to involve the parent community in the selection process, probably during the vetting stage.
- Currently faculty members serving on BOT are non-voting. This will change following advice from the State.
- The BOT is currently conducting an overhaul of its Bylaws. All these changes will be clearly stated in the Bylaws which are the rules by which the BOT must conduct itself.
- The current structure of the BOT, including Officers (Chair – Jeffrey Seglin; Vice-Chair – David Whitemyer; Clerk – Paul Carberry; Treasurer – Brian Tyler), Standing Committees, and Ad Hoc Committees.
- BOT meetings and Committee meetings are all open to the community.
- Parents wishing to contact the BOT can do so at boardoftrustees@sscps.org, but the first point of contact for any issue should be with the Executive Director.

INFORMATION

Alicia Savage, Executive Director

- The Freitas family has been in the forefront of staff thoughts since news came of the car accident and Matthew's subsequent surgeries.
- The support parents showed to the school and the staff in the wake of the Newtown incident was tremendous, and really helped the staff get through a difficult few days before the December break.
- Thanks to all the families and students who volunteered for the Open House in November. The next Open House will be on January 17. On that day the school will also get a site visit from the State.
- Pam has been very creative with placing ads for the Open Houses. The last one featured last year's Abigail Adams Grant recipients. The next one will feature this year's National Honors Society inductees. All photographs are taken by the Hartings – professional photographers and SSCPS parents.

Critical Incident Drills

- Understandably parents have had a lot of questions about the school's Critical Incident Drills. The school conducted one in December and will do so again soon, following further recommendations from Norwell Police Dept. in the wake of Newtown.

- The school conducts at least one such drill each year to make sure that new staff and children are aware of the procedures.
- Our school is a “model” for these drills. The police bring administrators from other schools to see how we conduct these drills.
- Parents should notify the school if their child is anxious about these drills or safety in general.
- The procedures are as follows:
 - The police arrives, and a loudspeaker announcement is made. There is no alarm sound in order to distinguish this from a fire alarm, and keep anxiety at a minimum.
 - Everyone moves into the nearest open classroom if they are not already in a classroom. Children and staff in the corridors or bathrooms know to move quickly to find an open classroom.
 - The classroom door is locked. The lights are turned off and window blinds are drawn. The school has bought new blinds so that all windows can be covered. Everyone sits on the floor away from doors and windows and stays quiet. The idea is to make it appear that there is no-one in the room. The teacher quietly takes attendance noting anyone missing, and adding anyone who came in for the drill.
 - Police and Administrators sweep the building looking for anyone who is not safely locked into a classroom. They open a nearby classroom and let them go in, if they find anyone.
 - Everyone stays put until a police officer or an Administrator opens the door to give the all clear.
 - After the drill is over, all attendance sheets are examined to ensure that everyone known to have been in the building is accounted for.
- Parent volunteers in the building follow these same procedures. A discussion followed:
 - Anyone in the gym is alerted by cell phone that a drill is happening. They stay in the gym until the all clear is given. Parents leading a class in the gym without a staff person present must inform the front desk of their cell phone number before their class.
 - Anyone outside (for lunch, recess or PhysEd) cannot come into the building. They evacuate to the Cygnet Building, the Gym or the VNA Building.
 - Parents requested that the school develop a one-sheet instruction list in the event of a fire alarm or critical incident for classroom volunteers and especially parent FIT instructors who have students with them without a staff person.
 - Parents should notify their child’s teacher if someone new will be picking up their child on a specific day.
- The BOT has begun a Strategic Planning exercise in the wake of the State approving our expansion plans for the HS. This will make sure that the school grows appropriately. A core group has been appointed to undertake this work under the direction of Trustee, Jackie Liebergott. Once broad goals have been decided upon in January sub-committees will be created to work on each area. Parent volunteers are needed to serve on the sub-committees. Anyone interested should contact Alicia at asavage@sscps.org. The core group consists of: Jackie Liebergott (Trustee), Joanna McCarthy (Development Director), Matt Tondorf (Learning Services Director), Jonathan Slater (SSCEF member), June Fontaine (Level I Faculty), Ed Dormady (HS Faculty), Elyse (Level IV Faculty), Liz-Ann Moffett (Level III parent), Troy & Tracey Wilson (Level III, HS parents), Larry Marchese (Level II parent).
- In response to a question, Alicia confirmed that the HS requirement of 2 college level courses is being reviewed for students who undertake multiple AP courses. A decision will be made soon.

Ted Hirsch, K-6 Principal – not in attendance due to illness.

Angie Pepin, 7-12 Principal – not in attendance.

Katie Aucella, Student Representative

- Basketball season as begun.
- Quarter ends next Thursday.
- Midterms are January 23-25. These are early release days for HS.

Elissa Dennis, PA Treasurer

- Time for another round of PA grants to be awarded. Applications are due January 24. They must be accurate, detailed and complete. Information will be distributed to administration and level coordinators.
- The Task Force will meet before the February meeting and their recommendations will be presented at the February PA meeting and then voted upon at the PA March meeting.
- Volunteer parents needed for the Task Force: 2 parents each from level I and HS, 1 parent per level for Level II, III, and IV.

Grade Reports

Level I - Kindergarten

- Judy would like to thank the PA for her new listening center purchased with a PA grant.
- Janet finished the weighted blankets purchased from her with a PA Grant and was \$20.00 under budget.
- Cassandra would like to thank parents for their help on Craft Day.

Level I – 1st & 2nd Grades

- First Graders will go to the MFA January 31.
- Second Graders will go to the MFA February 12.
- Second Graders will also join the Level II students on a trip to the BSO in March.
- Parent chaperones are needed – one parent per pod.

Level II – 3rd & 4th Grades

- EOM packets are due this Friday, with the 3 resources. Remember – one resource must be a book. Parents had questions about eBooks...
- BSO trip in March.

Level III - 5th & 6th Grades

- The Frog Pond field trip will take place Thursday, Jan 10. Students going must bring and wear a helmet. If they don't have one, they have been asked to speak up so that one can be lent to them.
- Sixth graders received Science Exhibition of Mastery packets before winter break. Fifth graders got their Project EOM packets last week. All are due back this week.
- FIT assignments will change by the end of the month. Parents with requests or questions regarding FIT choices should contact Joyce at jdandrow@sscps.org.
- Students will have formative assessments next week.
- All level Talent Show! Claire, Dan and the Europe Trip Group are hosting an all-level talent show on January 31st at the Hingham Middle School. Prizes will be given to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place. Sign up at the front desk or in Claire's room before school.

Level IV - 7th & 8th Grades

- Project EOM timeline is available on Edline.
- A librarian from the Old Colony Library Network will visit soon to show students how to use library resources to find books and conduct research.
- Mid-term exams January 23-25. Not early release days.
- Math Counts, run by Jody Regan meets every Wednesday from 3:00-4:15pm. All 6th, 7th and 8th Graders are welcome, regardless of math ability.

9th Grade: No Report

10th Grade: No Report

11th & 12th Grades

- Junior Seminar with Mary carter will begin the week after Mid-Year Exams (Jan 28th)
- On Wed, Jan 16th there is a free financial aid seminar for families of Seniors at SSCPS. A representative from ASA (American Student Assistance) will be here to assist parents in filling out the FAFSA.

Committee Reports

Arts & Music

- Apologies for absence from Heather. New Chorus season will begin January 27.

Bylaws

- The schedule for this process has been put back by one month to allow the writers enough time. A draft document of proposed new Bylaws will be presented at the February 2 PA meeting, where all questions will be addressed and any changes/edits decided upon.
- The final document will be presented for an up-or-down vote at the March 5 PA meeting.

Community Service

- TeenLife Volunteer fair for students in Grades 7-12 is on Sunday March 10, 12-4pm at Chestnut Hill Mall.

Fundraising & Events

- Gwen announced a Dine for a Cause fundraiser tonight at the 99 Restaurant where we will also be selling Rotary Raffle Tickets.
- Denise DeMaggio reported on several events:
 - Auction: April 5 at The Elms. Concentrating on getting food donations from local restaurants for Taste of The South Shore display. Also, on getting services donated from members of the SSCPS community.
 - Touch-a-Truck: May 19 at Abington Town Hall.
 - Golf Tournament: June 7 at Indian Pond Golf Course.
- Volunteers are needed for all these events.

Volunteer

- Jessica is working with Pod parents, teachers & Level coordinators to prepare for the student-made projects for the Auction.
- Priscilla is working with Pam and individual volunteers to ensure that proper paperwork (CORI & Confidentiality Agreement) requirements are being met. Remember, all volunteers must:
 - Complete a CORI – to be repeated annually.
 - Attend a volunteer training session – one time only. Ted runs several group sessions at the beginning of the academic year, and will meet individually with new volunteers throughout the year.
 - Sign a Confidentiality Agreement – to be repeated annually.
- Priscilla is continuously recording the volunteer logs and asks for volunteers to please PRINT their name and make sure they sign out when they leave the building.
- Finally, volunteers are reminded to hand in their visitor badges before leaving the school. Several are missing. If you have any at home please return them.

Welcoming

- The Open House will be on January 17. Volunteers needed. Nut-free snacks and water needed.
- Priscilla will be organizing the volunteers that day as Iris will be in Florida.

Technology - Apologies for absence from Gary. No report.

Library

- The committee is going to Storybook Cove bookstore on January 11 to choose books using the \$490 that was earned in book credits from the Book Fair last fall.
- They are planning to buy books requested by students and also replace books that have disappeared from the collection.
- They may be scheduling a "book party" to process all the new books before they go on the shelves!

SEPAC - No report.

INQUIRY

Old Business

New Business

Karen Boyle led a discussion with regards to the Freitas family:

- Update on Matthew's condition. They are transferring him from Maine to Childrens' Hospital any day now.
- Cassandra's pod prepared a care package that included gift cards for local restaurants.
- Amelia Freitas' class has also prepared a care package.
- Parents should encourage their children to text/email Matthew – even if they don't know him personally. All the messages are keeping Matthew very positive.
- There is a box at the front desk for cards and gifts.
- There will be a bank account set up for donations to help with medical bills.
- Karen read out a letter to the PA from Melissa. She thanks everyone for the support and outreach and calls the love that they're receiving "So Charter!" [Not a dry eye at the meeting!]
- It was noted that this immediate flood of support is wonderful, but we must be prepared to continue to offer support over the long haul as Matthew continues his recovery and the Freitas family adjusts.

Announcements

- Cindy reported that she had brought her sister-in-law to visit the school. She is an assistant principal in Australia and was immensely impressed with our school.
- Karen can no longer organize the Teacher Appreciation Luncheons due to work commitments. Need parent volunteer to take this on. Contact Lisa and Karen if you're interested.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm

[Powerpoint presentation attached]