

Parents Association

October, 2012
Meeting minutes

TAKEN BY MELISSA FREITAS & REVIEWED BY LISA HARVEY-MONE

Meeting called to order at 7:01pm
September 2012 Minutes Approved

IMPACT

Matt Tondorf, Director of Learning Services

Matt came and discussed Special Ed and ELL.

Myths about Special Ed

1. *We give too many services to Special Ed.* In fact Special Ed is a federally funded program where we receive money specifically for special ed students.
2. *All SpEd students need to be in a SpEd class.* In fact the goal is to have SpEd students in regular education classes.
3. *SpEd students take away from my non-SpEd child's education.* Studies have shown that non SpEd students benefit from having SpEd students in their class.
4. *SpEd students are not ever disciplined for their actions or behavior.* You wouldn't punish a blind man for bumping into you so you need to take a student's disability into account when looking at appropriate action/punishment.

Differences between IEP and 504 IEP is a state document. IEP requires service/specially designed instruction. May require an adapted curriculum. Student may receive pull out services for OT, speech, extra help. IEP ends at graduation. 504 is a federal document. 504 requires accommodations only. Goes with the student to college. Is the responsibility of the classroom to teacher to follow. English Language Learners in 2010/2011 the state came in and reviewed our SpEd department, Civil Rights and ELL. The reports for other two departments came in before and were looked into by the school. ELL came in this year. 36 areas were reviewed and we were cited in 10. Matt can give further information to anyone interested.

Ted Hirsch, K-6 Principal: Ted discussed the MCAS results from last year. There is a different way that the state is evaluating schools this year. Scoring of the MCAS has NOT changed, just the way they use it to judge schools. Ted has a wonderful spreadsheet and wealth of knowledge to share with any-one that is interested. Bottom line, SSCPS did FANTASTIC!!!

INFORMATION

Chair Announcements

Reviewed the Pause Policy- any topic not on the agenda or off topic will be paused and scheduled for later or sent to the proper venue for discussion. 8th grade parent night for grades 9-12 information is Wednesday 11/14. 7th and 8th grade parents are normally the ones invited to attend but it is open to all parents to learn about the high school.

Alicia, Executive Director

Thank you for the big turnout for a second month in a row. MCAS scores should have been received by now. 10th grade English ranked #1 in the state for MCAS. Teachers will use the results to figure out where students struggle and what we need to focus on. Parent Bethany Whitemyer wrote a grant and we received \$250 from Bright Horizons. As of now that money is undesignated. First SSCPS Chorus practice has happened and is wonderful. We have 41 students enrolled. This session ends on December 10.

Ted, K-6 Principal

Lost and Found has been organized by Hope Malnati. Over 60% of things have been claimed. Please label all items.

Angie, 7-12 Principal

10 students have been awarded the John and Abigail Adams scholarship. Please see the October 3rd update for a list of the names. 10/17 PSAT for sophomores & juniors. Seniors will be visiting Curry College on 10/17. If seniors want to visit another college they just need a letter from that college on letterhead.

Katie Aucella, Student Representative Dance that was talked about at last meeting could not get organized.

Elissa Dennis, PA Treasurer Explanation of Grant Review Task Force. Requests were reviewed by the Task force and will be voted on by the PA at the November meeting as a whole package. Elissa reviewed each item and explained why they were approved or denied.

Grade Reports

Grades 5 & 6 - Formative Assessments 10/2, 10/3 & 10/4. New FIT schedule will be arranged based on results. Great start in projects. Mac's engineering students are building catapults and looking at the forces involved. Parent Engineers Wanted!!! Claire's school store students are scripting for a news cast that they will film. The school store will hopefully open soon - they are researching products that meet state wellness requirements. Ben's short circuits students are thrilled to be building Rube Goldberg inventions. Dan's theater project is writing scripts for their puppets that they will be creating. Donovan's cyber bullying troops are entering a contest by creating a poster about anti-bullying. They could win ipads. Jenn's health and fitness project didn't give a report but we are sure they are awesome! Mac and Claire are having a knitting club on Monday afternoons from 3:30-4:30.

Grades 7 & 8 - Formative assessments are coming up. Progress Reports have been mailed.
High school - MEFA will be here November 1, 6-8pm to go over financial aid information.

Committee Reports

Bylaws - Since last PA Meeting, several parents have come forward offering to help write the new bylaws. This is very exciting because last time Gema had to do this all by herself. Thanks to everyone who came forward. The committee will spend the next month or two collecting feedback from the community about how the PA can improve the way it works. If contradictory suggestions are made then there will be a meeting to discuss those issues and decide on the best way to proceed. It is hoped that a draft document can be brought to the PA in the winter so that there is ample time for discussion and revision before a final vote in early spring. The goal is to have the Spring elections guided by the new bylaws, so that parents can decide whether or not to run for a elected position based on the new revised job descriptions. Anyone with ideas should contact Gema at gema-gray@verizon.com. She will reach out through googlegroups and the Update as well as reaching out to current and former Executive officers of the PA for their input.

Community Service - Upcoming events include Walk for Jordan Hospital, Big Brother/Big Sister events and the Breast Cancer walk. See the weekly update for more information.

Fundraising - Harvest Run - sponsor sheets have been given to all students. Volunteers needed on the day of the event. Stop and Shop rewards program - must sign up each year. Vendor Fair is 11/10 at Trinity Church in Rockland. Rockland/Hanson Rotary Raffle will happen again this year.

Volunteer - Jessica is still collecting surveys. Please fill out and return. Make sure to sign in and out each time you volunteer. Email at home hours to Priscilla Kelly.

Welcoming - Picnic went well. Open House is November 17th, 1-3pm. Volunteers and Food Donations needed.

Library - Open Monday and Wednesday 12-3 for everyone. Levels I and II are using it regularly. Book Fair is November 5&6 and will overlap with grandparents day. Volunteers are needed for the book fair and also to cover books.

SE PAC - 10/10 at 6:30pm - Basic Rights workshop

INQUIRY

Old Business

Ed Committee and School Council. More people stepped up than there were available spots. The following were cho-en to be on the committees: School Council - Sarah Collins, Mary Oxner, Elizabeth Vanderveen, Cathy Bowman, Kerry Griffin, Cindy Wormald
Ed Committee - Priscilla Kelly, Cathy Tan
EVERYONE is invited and encouraged to attend.

New Business

President Volunteer Service Award - students can get achievement award with a letter from the President and a plaque and pin. Any organization can be conduit for the program. Someone nominates a person and then a "background check" is done to verify information. Suggested we partner with the Organization. WE would be in charge of verifying information. Lisa and Kerry will review for more information on how we would go about doing this if we wanted to do it.

Open Question and Answer Session

Q - Will there be a Singapore Math Night? A - Yes - the school is planning one soon.

Q - Has the school considered doing a Stranger Danger type of program? A - Ted has a fear of doing something like this because 90% of all perpetrators of children are NOT strangers. Good touch/Bad touch is a better policy. Extended Answer - we discuss many things through our Open Circle Program. Cyber bullying also talks about protection for older kids.

Q - Are there any sort of anti-bullying events? A - Kids for Kindness. Extended Answer - Angie will speak about the MARC program at the December meeting.

Board of Trustees - we will hopefully have a board member at each of our meetings to discuss what the board will do this year.

8:55 - meeting adjourned