

Sargent PTO Meeting #4

December 12, 2019

Ama Enoteca

**Minutes**

Principal’s Report

* Mr. Archer expresses thanks and appreciation to Lori for her advocacy for Sargent, her work and efforts.
* Recent events & accomplishments – thank you, volunteers:
  + Holiday boutique
  + Senior luncheon (100 seniors, with 12 fifth graders as waitstaff and singing from K and 3).
  + Fall festivals for Pre-K – each family brings a food from their culture
  + Gaga Ball pit completed (PTO donated wood, Mr. Carofano and Mr. Seaman built it)
* Sensory Room update:
  + Thanks to those who helped secure the $2800 grant for Sensory Room. PTO kicks in $2300. Check has been received (it all happened within a month), committee will meet to start thinking about how to spend it.
  + The room has been in use all day, every day, as a lot of kids get stressed out this time of year.
* Building Leadership Team
  + Committee comprises 4 parents, 3 teachers and Mr. Archer.
  + Held first meeting in November. Talked about highlights of the year, Board goals, how we’re trying to reach them – stations in classrooms. Talked about things to work on as well.
* Have been holding data team meetings with each grade’s teachers. This uses ELA and math benchmarks to identify and help kids that are struggling. Will monitor progress through the winter and at the end of the school year. “Easy CBM” tool. Sargent in the only elementary in the district using it.
* PBIS update:
  + In December, the PBIS character trait is responsibility.
  + On Friday, December 20, schoolwide celebration for reaching PBIS goals (filling pompom buckets). K-2: movie in auditorium; Grades 3-5 watch the Grinch.
* Upcoming events:
  + Tuesday December 17: Sargent grades 3-5 have winter concert at the High School. [Update 12/17: due to snow day, this was rescheduled to Thursday, 12/19).]
  + Singers from the high school also will visit Sargent for a short performance at some point.

Staff Reports

Adria

* Deb Lucke is a locally based artist/graphic novelist who does a school session oriented at ELA and visual learners, telling a story in pictures. Presentation on creating animation.
* Her book Lunch Witch [might become a movie](https://www.vulture.com/2016/12/kate-mckinnon-to-star-in-the-lunch-witch-movie.html)!
* The presentation would be for 5th graders, and it goes with their unit on Dark Water Rising. Can PTO sponsor for $400 for the day?
* Vote to support it.
* Need to complete the planning before CoSer deadline in March. Need to set a date.

Tracy

* Thanks for support for sensory room – donations, keeping an eye out for used equipment.
* Paint room over the break? [Update 12/17: BCSD Facilities will take care of painting the room.]

PTO Officer Reports

Treasurer:

* We have $9508.87 in the bank and $3000 PayPal.
* Will create a tool to estimate upcoming expenses and detail sources of funds (ie how much each fundraiser brought in), spending/usage, etc.
* 10 Spin has been fully paid. Alena to confirm.
* We have a PTO debit card and a BJs card – whoever uses them must be careful as they’re issued in individual’s name.

President Lori

* Stepping down as President at the end of this year. Excited to pass the torch to everyone else, and will still be here to help. Erin will serve as President.
* Beautification tasks – will start in downstairs hallway, hopefully to library soon. I’ll still be in charge of Beautification Committee and will continue to report.
* Recent BOE meeting included presentation from Technology Director Mike Kealy. BCSD has a cart with great tools and schools can check them out to use. Let’s encourage Sargent teachers to get these tools into students’ hands.
* A parent mentions that teachers have expressed interest in STEM equipment and there is some in the Sargent library that PTO helped to purchase in the past.

Grantwriting

* We have a small team – Faye, Maureen Neary, Anna – will meet in new year. Mr. Archer is collecting input from teachers on their needs. So far they have emphasized math, literacy and science.
* Alena, Sarah offer to help as well.
* Team will create template text so we can put out many requests. Also will create calendar of grant timelines; teachers can let team know of interesting grants, even if we missed deadline for this year.
* A parent notes that Verizon has grants that could help with a request from a teacher about virtual reality goggles for the 2nd grade’s insects unit. Another person notes that the District’s tech cart has 8 pairs of these goggles.

Board of Education

* None present – will do specific invitations for next meeting.

Open Forum

Parent raises idea of promoting internet safety – social and emotional skillsets around technology for young ages.

Question about outside time on snowy days. Shall we collect snow gear for kids that don’t have the right stuff? School staff respond that on snow days (as long as it’s 22 degrees or higher) kids do play outside – paved areas, walking around. Nurse has backup coats that kids use every day.

Question on returning cafeteria food that is not eaten. Response: There is a share bin to put them in.

Suggestion of pursuing kids’ yoga teacher training offer from Firefly Yoga; could become a side program in the morning – between breakfast and morning announcements. Or teachers can use as a movement break. Local yoga studios do PD? Eileen will follow up.

Assemblies

* Gwen Laster/New Muse4tet – early 2020 – Mr. Archer is in touch with her to find a date in Feb. Another musical assembly Jan/Feb – local groups.
* Deb Lucke (Graphic novelist/ELA presentation) (see above)
* New idea for an assembly – local dance troupe – A/Y dancers – can we expand beyond music and environmental assembly, to include more physical movement? Could have assembly in the gym, lead kids through movement exercises. If not this year, then maybe next year. Consult with Mr. Carofano.
* Question about Bash the Trash? Mr. Archer is looking into interest at the district level.

Fundraisers and Drives

* Results of Penny Wars, next steps on party and tree
  + Thank you for Mr. Archer’s willingness to get a new hairstyle (Sargent Star) – helped motivate parents to participate.
  + Eileen will email teachers to schedule the pizza party with DJ Snug and “the ceremony for my head.”
* Food Pantry
  + Three parents have volunteered to coordinate with Ms. Cortina on food pantry. They are in contact.
* Believe Kids Holiday Catalog
  + Orders arrive on December 18, should get to families in time holiday break. Lori will let late order parents know of the timing.
* Spring fundraisers
  + Usually we do SilverGraphics using kids’ art (to fund 5th grade tiles for hall) and Mixed Bag (reusable gear). Idea to discontinue both, and find a new spring, local and/or nature-themed fundraiser to fund the tiles? Ex: HV Seed Company – packet of local seeds, lower cost, instead of big corporate products.
  + Some people love the Silvergraphics mugs, etc.
  + Decision: Continue with SilverGraphics, do HV Seed Company instead of Mixed Bag this year.

Event Planning

* Holiday Shop: Happening now.
  + Discussion of idea to supplement next year with donations as families declutter after holidays. Ask again right before holiday shop.
* Trivia Night: Thursday, January 16 at HV Brewery
  + Putting out request for parent design help
  + Looking for local businesses to donate services, gift cards. Items should be usable by anyone who happens to win them.
  + Barb’s Butchery will be asked to do food again.
  + Ticket structure (same as last year) – teachers are sponsored, everyone else is $10

Committee Updates

* Sensory Room – Grant Won! (see above)
* Beautification and Artist Collaborations (mural, construction, etc.)
  + Joe Pimentel is coming early Feb – will coordinate with Mr. Archer about prepping areas.
  + We have $2050 in CoSer to apply however we decide. Doesn’t have to be all for mural.
  + Parents express interest in more kids participating with mural project.
* Sustainability/Green School Initiatives
* Gardens and Wildlife – Ms. Gida planted bulbs. Desire to work on the meadow in the spring.
* Can the path from Knevels around the playground be cleared when it snows? [Update 12/13 – it was cleared!]
* 5th Grade Parent Group
  + Parent asks about the background of the field trip: Mr. Archer notes that the Sharpe trip has been part of BCSD for 30 years, but the additional trip (Bronx Zoo, Albany, etc.) is only the last few years.
  + Parents met and expressed interest in bringing some entertainment – more affordable than Broadway, etc. Sargent kids are doing more trips than in the past, so it’s not as much of a need for the 5th grade special experience.
  + Have raised about $200 so far through an Etsy fundraiser. Mr. Archer offers to send out a reminder and link on this fundraiser.
  + Parents should come up with some ideas and any questions, then can set a fundraising goals.

Other Matters, Follow-ups, Announcements

Next PTO meeting: Thursday, January 9 @ 3:30 pm (Sargent Auditorium) – new 3:30 pm start time to catch more teachers.