

Sargent PTO Meeting #4

January 14, 2021

Minutes

1. Principal’s report: Mr. Archer

**Multicultural crayons** have been purchased. Agree with goal of create some teaching to go along with them, not just hand them out. Discussing with PBIS committee – something around diversity.

* PTO comment: We are going to select a book to send home with the crayons, some messaging/material to accompany.

**Committees and teams**:

* The **Wellness Committee** now has a parent member who was recommended by PTO. We will start meeting in January.
* Three parents are now members of the **Building Leadership Team**, one is a person of color, who was also part of the Target School improvement process.

**Target School improvement process**: Sargent has been designated as a Target School based on findings from data 2 years ago about academics for African-American students in grades 3-5. Total of 14 students. A BOCES team recently visited classrooms and provided 5 recommendations. We are now meeting after school every day this week to create goals to address their recommendations (goals 1-2 below) and the needs expressed in the parent/student surveys (goals 3-5 below):

* **ELA** and critical thinking/inquiry
* **Math** (used some of the Target School grant money to purchase iReady for benchmarking/monitoring, to be reviewed by our building’s data team and inform meetings with grade-level teams for progress monitoring)
* **Communication**: per the survey, 29% of parents don’t understand how grades are assigned.
* **Family engagement**: this is about how the school is meeting parents’ needs at home
* **TBD**: one possible direction is that 39% of Sargent teachers say they don’t feel adequately trained for remote instruction

We have also noticed disparities for African-American students related to the trauma and challenge of remote instruction. We are trying to help families (hotspots, communicating the students’ schedules, home visits, attendance issues, getting CPS involved).

More updates coming at BOE meeting on Jan. 25.

**COVID-19**: Everyone is good about staying apart, wearing masks. Janitorial team working at night. But we’re not immune – having expected increase from holiday travel, and students and staff have had to quarantine. We give the tracing to district nurse and have not fit the criteria to close.

Most of us have appointments to be vaccinated.

**Changes in faculty, students**: Approved to hire a teacher for remote self-contained class – Vanessa Black. The hybrid group rose from 6 to 9 kids and was then too much for one teacher to simultaneously teach remote.

Overall, 10 students have switched from remote to hybrid, and 3 switched from hybrid to remote. 5th grade hybrid is at capacity for maintaining social distancing in classrooms.

**Events in the Capitol on Jan 6:** We were concerned about kids being confused and anxious, so we had an emergency response team meeting early Thursday am, visited classrooms, asked teachers to be on the lookout for kids being anxious so we could help/support/talk with kids. Wanted to address it but not cause more confusion or anxiety.

* Teacher comment: I said they could talk to me if they had seen anything upsetting in the news. Harder to perceive anxiety for remote kids.

1. Teachers/staff

**Virtual Field Trips**: Discussion of a virtual field trip for the Denver Zoo (live educator to show animals and interact with the kids), PTO voted to pay for all 4th grade classes to have a session. Two parents offer to help identify virtual field trip options in different subject areas.

1. Quick announcements and updates from PTO

* Sargent Sign: 5th graders are going to select quotes of the month
* Recent fundraisers were successful – Sargent spirit wear and Boon Supply – thanks to everyone who participated.
* Spring book fair will be virtual.
* FYI Compass Arts is offering sliding scale workshops on Saturdays over zoom (music, dance, street art, cartooning)
* The PTO plans to select and donate a set of books to expand the school library’s selection reflecting different types of diversity. Will coordinate with Mrs. Ferrara. Book suggestions are appreciated.

1. Open Discussion

**Girls on the Run**: parent is asking school permission to restart the girls’ running club at Sargent on April 5. There are scholarships. A boys’ version “Club Triton” is also in the works. Looking for coaches now.

**BCSD curriculum updates**: When does it happen, how can parents be informed and give feedback? PTO idea to invite Erik Wright to a meeting to discuss. Some parents raise concern that social studies falls by the wayside due to testing requirements in other subjects.

**Current events**: Parents discuss desire for students to discuss current events in classroom, but understand difficulty and sensitivity for teachers. Ideas: offer teacher training in facilitating difficult conversations; create a “playbook” for emergencies, a plan in place to address big events; start a current events club; provide resources for teachers such as <https://www.learningforjustice.org/>