



Sargent PTO Meeting #4  
January 11, 2023

## Minutes

### *Presiding:*

Principal Biordi; Ryan Biracree, PTO President; Emily Hare, PTO VP

### *Minutes:*

Laina Mason, PTO Secretary

- Meeting preview (2 minutes):
  - Students Report
  - Principal's report
  - PTO Updates
  - Open discussions
  
- Students Report Presented by Audrey Fisher and Maram Al Hajjaji
  - See copy of report
    - Breakdown of current all grade's current curriculums
    - 2by2 Zoo visiting primary grades January 12
    - Winterfest is exciting for the grades
    - Student Leadership is also interested in doing some scavenger hunts, e.g. "Investigator Events" or book mysteries; this will be student led
      - Potential after-school activity
    - Upcoming field trips, Bear Mt Ice Skating and Sharpe Reservation
    - New club calendar
    - Please remember sick notes when kids are sick
    - First edition of school newspaper out soon
  
- Principal's Report (10 minutes)
  - Ms Biordi commending students on their report
  - Addressing today's lockdown drill and issues that arose, apologies to parents
    - Question around how teachers are trained to speak to students about the lockdown drills
      - Ms. Biordi sends out a faculty email with talking points for how teachers should address this with kids
      - Ms. Biordi also does an announcement over the loudspeaker a few minutes prior to alert kids that it's a drill and walks through the steps first so kids are prepared immediately before the drill
      - Ms. Biordi also available to speak with parents who need support around how to talk with kids about this
      - Ms. Biordi open to new feedback expressing concern around how each teacher speaks to classes about the reasons for lockdown drills
      - Parent feedback around age appropriate content



being shared

- Digital club calendar on the website, including day cycle for specials
- A number of new clubs this year, expanded offers and interests
  - Please check the calendar to see if a club is on or cancelled due to weather or snow days shifting the dates
  - Intramurals can be more difficult due to morning nature of activity, with two teachers running; they will be putting out communications about this
  - Parents can also call the main office to check
- First meeting of Lego League today, K-2 Art club
- Science Fair currently being planned, applications being sent home this week
  - STEAM Fair
  - Students will come up with their idea and explain in the application to be submitted to teachers
  - They can conference with teachers about their plan but majority of work will take place at home
  - Not mandatory for students to participate
  - May 18th date, during the school day as well as an evening event for parents
  - There will be judging for grades 3-5, including science teachers from the district - meant to be fun, not overly competitive
  - Next year will aim to do this earlier, to be included in Dutchess County Science Fair which takes place earlier in the year
  - The purpose of the application is to ensure that kids are following scientific method and meeting criteria, serves as a guide for teachers and parents to conference with the kids on their plans
  - Every application will be accepted; the applications choose a planning sheet
  - Ms. Biordi discussed with the teachers at faculty meeting this past Monday on how to present to the kids
  - Ms. Biordi also available to meet about the projects
  - PTO can also communicate mirrored message Ms. Biordi gave to the teachers to help facilitate conversations at home
  - Audrey has an idea for making posters around the school - Student Leadership Team will help with this
  - Question around accessibility, and PTO offering support to teachers for kids who may need additional support and supplies for engaging with the fair
- Sargent will be hosting Parent Resource Night on February 23rd
  - Purpose is to have teachers and outside groups giving presentations to community / school families
  - Ms. Biordi will also address the Targeted School Designation from the state, comes from state assessment data
  - School was charged with coming up with a plan to meet criteria,



- currently in Year 3 of the plan
- Ms. Biordi does want to speak to parents around all the factors, including test results, impact of who is and is not taking the test, as well as other variables
- Opportunity to talk about computer-based testing
- Opportunity for teachers to do presentations about curriculum for parents
- Therapists from an outside organization around building student self-esteem
- 5th/6th grade teachers offering a presentation on 5th to 6th grade transition
- Parent offering of a therapist who gives presentations on neurodivergence
- Two PE teachers will run “child care” games in the gym for school aged kids
- Dinner will be provided as well
- 2by2 Zoo coming for an assembly for primary grade students January 12
- New TA's and student teachers in the building right now
- Mr. Jerry is retiring in a few weeks, last day is January 27th
  - Will be getting a new security guard
  - Please wish Jerry a good retirement
- Mr Koval is planning some PE trips for the kids, including snowshoeing and ice skating
- Dr Landahl will be at Sargent at 7pm next Wednesday for Community Conversations to review district strategic planning process
- Parent Portal - trying to get as many families on as possible, admin staff available to support parents in navigating this
  - This is a big factor in upper schools as it's used for a lot more communication to families
  - Progress Reports will start being distributed on the portal
  - Families do need to update the system every few years to keep information updated
  - Concern to directly target families that aren't already signed up, and how school is communicating with these parents and/or guardians to emphasize the importance of it; it has been sent out in Spanish as well
  - School is reaching out directly to individual families as needed
  - Altaris is the company that organizes the drills
- PTO Report
  - Winterfest
    - 6-7:30pm in the Auditorium
    - Family Fun Night & Student Dance
    - DJ and Magic
    - S'mores and hot cocoa - re HV Marshmallow Co. is going to try to staff the event; parent volunteers will be selling hot cocoa
      - If HV Marshmallow Co. can't come, PTO will put together



- No dinner/hot food
- Photo Booth Snow Globe theme
- Need volunteers to help build this, materials have been ordered / made by Ryan and Cassy
- Parents can gather next Wednesday in preparation for this
- Time during the day next Friday as well
- PTO will send out a Sign Up Genius on social media: set up/clean up; assemble decor; maybe shopping; sales of hot cocoa and s'mores
- Volunteer for photographer for photo booth? Otherwise, will use the ring light selfie stand
- Karaoke was a request for Winterfest, cannot do it for this event but will do Karaoke for Rock n' Roll Bingo night instead!
- Family Fun Night 90's Dance Party
- Family Fun Night PRIDE Celebration in June
- Valentines Day
  - It's helpful if parents send in extra valentines so that kids who don't have any have the opportunity to use the extras to make for their classmates
  - Box will be organized for drop off, or communicate with your child's teacher
- Trivia Night
  - Erin Guinta, Chair
  - Thursday, March 16th
  - HV Brewery can give Sargent a space for the event
  - The area is a bit smaller than it used to be, and was already a tight space
  - Potential to be in the area upstairs which is a new space which will require some additional prep logistics
  - The prize is a trophy that gets passed down, and a free round of drinks etc.
  - Instead of broader raffle, looking at doing three bigger prizes for the raffle e.g. Lego Land, Splashdown, pool membership, Regal Theatre; from larger corporate businesses to support event
  - Seeking ideas for other venue ideas incase this idea doesn't work out
    - Discussion around where will donate the space, e.g. Towne Crier?
  - Seeking support for the event planning / prep, needing volunteers
- Open discussions and brainstorms (20 mins)
  - Parent question around outdoor recess time during winter
    - Mr. Koval working on winter themed PE trips
    - Faculty meeting discussion around teachers planning for when there's snow that there is an outdoor recess plan



- Plan for students to come prepared to play in the snow
  - PTO will support school to have extra supplies
  - Bound to rules and regs around “Real Feel” temperature
  - Concerns that kids on computers during indoor recess
  - It would be good for teachers and recess monitors to provide alternate activities and not have kids on screens the whole time
  - PTO can also support this re comms with teachers and parents, recess carts
  - Student Leadership feedback; that there’s not many options to do during indoor recess, can’t run around, and might feel limited by what’s available and end up on computer
  - Student Leadership Team can also survey kids to see what would be good indoor recess options at each grade level
- 5th Grade Spring Plans
    - Eileen Sheppard is the head of the 5th Grade Committee
    - Ms. Biordi sent a letter home in November outlining the 5th grade trips that are planned, with dates for end-of-year activities
    - The district has requested a different way of doing the end of year events for 5th graders to be more equitable across the district
    - There will still be fundraising, e.g. raffle at Winterfest, Hair-Cut-Athon
    - Dr. Landahl wanted to standardize what all the schools are doing
    - Parent concerns around what Sargent kids will be doing that is special for them this year
    - Ms. Biordi reiterating the contents of the letter sent home in November that was drafted with 5th grade teachers and in conjunction with new direction from central office
    - Ms. Biordi offering that events are coming up that will be opportunities for 5th grade parents to volunteer
    - There are other 5th grade trips, including the overnight to Sharpe
    - 5th graders will also do another trip to Story Screen, to watch 5th grade video and a movie; a picnic at the school afterwards
    - Concern around a 5th grade parent committee / meeting raised, for parents to be further involved
    - Ms. Biordi also discussing the tiles, that the school will be working with the same company to create an 8x8 piece of artwork that will be submitted and parents can have things printed on what they’d like - this work will be displayed in frames in the auditorium and they can be switched out every year.
    - The original artwork can be returned to the kids on their senior walk when they graduate
    - A muralist is coming in April, 5th graders will help with this



project

- Concern raised that the Story Screen and picnic idea is not as big and as special as it could be with more planning and resources available this year as compared to last year; comparison made to pre-Covid trips to Washington, DC or Rocking Horse Ranch.
  - Response that Dr. Landahl had asked that all schools ramp back the trips to be more in line with each other
  - Ms. Biordi discussing the efforts that are going into spring planning, the picnic being an example of something that can be made to be quite special
  - Working in building up a savings account to help with field trips, for sustainability with PTO going forward
  - Working with other principals of the other 3 elementary schools to collaborate on field trips and excursions
  - Want to emphasize that the milestones get bigger and better as the kids get older e.g. 8th to 9th, high school milestones etc.
  - Student feedback: that whether something is big or small, the kids will enjoy it because they are excited about going to middle school; idea for picnic to have an ice cream truck; potential for water slide thing and maybe a bouncy castle?
  - 5th grade swimming night at the high school pool
  - District-wide 5th Grade Field Day
  - PTO will include on the website the 5th grade letter that Ms. Biordi sent home
- 5th Graders heading to Pre-K
    - Once a month program, great feedback from parent and kids
  - Can Pre-K also do intramurals?
    - At this time, no intramurals for Pre-K
    - Mr. Koval is considering offering something separate for Pre-K; still workshopping this
    - Still a new program, so needing to figure out what other options are possible
  - Sensory Room Query
    - Teachers are able to send students whenever needed
    - OT room is separate, with swing
    - Teachers use the sensory room frequently, as well as the OT and PT
  - Staff Rest Room Query
    - Reports that it's being used, people adding things on their own
    - That room does need to be repainted, will need volunteers to help with this