



## **SUNSET RIDGE/ MIDDLEFORK PTO MEETING October 9, 2018**

### **CALL TO ORDER/ APPROVAL OF /SEPTEMBER MINUTES**

Jenny Damon, PTO President, called the meeting to order at 9.05am.

*Motion to Approve: Tom Whittaker*

*Seconded: Tara Subeck*

Jenny opened the meeting by introducing Lonnie Stonitsch of FAN, who is kind enough to join us at this time every year to tell us about the great things that FAN is doing in the coming year.

### **SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER**

#### **Lonnie Stonitsch, FAN co-Chair and Executive Director**

Lonnie began by explaining that she met with Dr. Sukenik, Dr. Greene and Dr. Stange at the end of August. They explored initiatives and ideas for our schools. Lonnie thanked them for that opportunity and said she had really enjoyed it.

Lonnie passed out 2 flyers itemizing upcoming scheduled FAN presentations she is very excited about.

Joyful: The Surprising Power of Ordinary Things to Create Extraordinary Happiness – Ingrid Fetell Lee  
October 16<sup>th</sup> at 7pm, North Shore Country Day School Auditorium

This Imperfect Moment: A Conversation with “Ask Polly” Advice Columnist Heather Havrilesky  
October 29<sup>th</sup> at 7pm, North Shore Country Day School Auditorium

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Treasurer’s Report: Ewa Vlad, Treasurer**

##### Income:

- PTO Dues – We are not doing as well as expected. We have collected about 68% of Dues. We will start sending out emails very soon. When asked if they were perhaps receiving all the Dues since you need to pay separately, and Jenny responded that Ewa is keeping track of that.

##### Expense:

- Winter Benefit – paid the deposit.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Dance – paid the fee.

Account Balances:

- Main Checking - \$59,000
- CD - \$28,000
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Fund - \$ 5,860

**Legislative: Jessica Adams**

Jenny explained that Jessica could not attend today. She guided everyone to the reverse of the Agenda to view a proposed change to the By-Laws. Jenny revealed that for the past number of years Jennifer Kyriakopoulous had attended Picture Day to ensure the kids' faces and hair were nice for their photos. This year, April Toofan and Seong McGarry did it, so if your child looked extra nice you know who to thank! However, this has not been an official PTO Position, so we would like to add the Position for MF and another for SRS. We will need a quorum to vote on this next month.

**School Supplies: Seong McGarry & Kendra Chilewich**

Seong informed us that we signed a 2 year contract with Shane & Co. We negotiated a great deal; this year we made 11% and for the next 2 years we will make 15%.

**Parent Connections: Sydney Clark**

We met last Thursday and it was well attended. For those of you not aware of what it is, Parent Connections is a monthly meeting where parents can sit down with Dr. Sukenik and Dr. Stange to discuss things going on in the schools. Sydney divulged that this year we are scheduling topics to be discussed. Last week was about Progress Reports, and it was a wonderful opportunity to learn more about D29's policy on that and for Administration to receive feedback. The next meeting will take place on November 1<sup>st</sup> at 8.45am in the SRS Large Conference Room – the topic will be Communications, so things like the website and the newsletter. Everyone is welcome to attend, you do not need to join the Parent Connections Committee, you are welcome to come to any and all meetings that you can.

Jenny added that the format of Parent Connections is more of a discussion, whereas PTO Meetings are more informational presentations. It is a great opportunity for parents to have a voice. Sydney agreed and said that it is also an opportunity for Administration to give parents some perspective, to hear feedback and also for parents to discuss various topics with other parents.

**Book Fair: Megan Waite & Melissa Daley**

Megan reminded us that the Book Fair will take place on October 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. They are still looking for volunteers, so if you have any time please sign-up for a shift. Megan revealed that the faculty will be presenting a Readers Theater on the 16<sup>th</sup> at 5.30pm, which is something the kids always love.

**Alliance for Early Childhood: Allison Gaetano**

Allison divulged that the Alliance has decided to cancel Screen Break. Now with kids using iPads or Chrome Books for school work, it has morphed from being a week where kids can explore other entertainment options into a week that puts guilt and work on parents. Screens are now part of our life. Allison explained that they will host events throughout the year, but this coming year will be a transition year and we can expect much more next year. Allison revealed that the first event will be this coming weekend – a Fort Building opportunity. She explained that when families do a project outside together in nature, afterward they usually say “That was great,

let's do something like this again!" but it is difficult to come up with ideas, which is where the Alliance will come in.

### **School Programs & Author Visits: Tom Whittaker (SRS) & Venessa Matuschka (MF)**

Venessa revealed that she and Dr. Greene have been working together on the schedule for this year and have it pretty much figured out. The Rope Warrior will be coming to MF on October 19<sup>th</sup> – he will begin with an assembly in the morning and will then work with the Gym classes in the afternoon. Joe Faccione will be coming for PJ Day on February 1<sup>st</sup>, he has been at the school a few times and we are excited to have him back. Venessa also informed us that Mrs. Nagy is working on an Artist in Residence Program with a sculptor who will work within the art classes.

Tom revealed that last year he took Lauren Gray to the Book Stall in Winnetka, where they established a great working relationship. Tom explained that the Author Visits this year, so far, have been scheduled through the Book Stall so have been free of charge. But Lauren has secured Kwame Alexander for April 10<sup>th</sup>, and they are so thrilled about it. Because he is such a highly sought after author, his visit will take up much of the budget. As part of the visit we will need to purchase books for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Graders, but Lauren will likely also be submitting a proposal to PTO Gifts to purchase his books for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade classrooms. Tom informed us that Lauren will be working with the Northfield Public Library and Park District to publicize the event to the community.

Jenny noted that the budget is just under \$10,000 which is derived mostly from the Winter Benefit.

### **Winter Benefit: Cathy Langford & Bianca Rose**

The Benefit is set for March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Cathy informed us that they got a fairly good response to the Sign-Up for Volunteers. They are also looking for Donation Items. The big reveal for the theme will be soon. Cathy also explained that they will use the same mobile bidding app that they used last time.

### **Fall Event: Jenny Gallagher, Rebekah Bader & Sally Brown Thilman**

Jenny explained that the ladies couldn't attend but wanted to reveal that the Fall Event would take place on Tuesday, November 6<sup>th</sup> at 3.30pm at SRS.

### **PTO Gifts: Erica Marinello**

Erica revealed that the PTO Executive Board decided to dedicate \$15,000 to PTO Gifts. Erica added that she attended the MF Staff Meeting and will soon attend the SRS Staff Meeting to explain the procedure to faculty. The Committee will meet, after receiving the Proposals, to make allocation decisions. She noted that Caitlyn Anderson from MF and Hilary Logan from SRS will sit on the Committee also.

### **COMMUNITY UPDATE: CHIEF LUSTIG**

Chief Lustig informed us that he is still looking for a Crossing Guard and reminded us that the staff we see are employees of the Police Department.

Chief divulged that car burglaries are still ongoing. He also revealed that a guy in a red Range Rover pulled in on Central, ran inside a business, leaves the car running with the keys in the ignition and \$4,000 in cash inside. Chief noted that a lot of these thieves are juveniles from Englewood. Chief is reminding us the lock up our vehicles and take valuables from them.

Chief also asks that we refrain from being on our phones in the school parking lots. He noted that he has sat there, using the radar gun, and it is crazy how fast people are driving in the lots.

Chief explained that the law treats juveniles differently when they commit an infraction. They meet with a Juvenile Officer and they attempt some sort of behavior modification such as sending them to a peer jury of

high school kids who then dole out the community service. Should the juvenile again get caught, they may then be sent to Juvenile Court where a judge will then decide upon the penalty. Chief further stated that the consequences doled out to juveniles are only effective if their parents are on board. If the parents feel the infraction is no big deal, then the juvenile will. What we are seeing at New Trier is that the consequences are not effective, the kids don't care. If they are suspended, big deal. Vaping has become notorious in the bathrooms and elsewhere at New Trier. If the parents, however, feel that vaping is not a big deal, then the child will. So New Trier has requested that Northfield and Winnetka Police Departments begin ticketing students caught vaping and that they go to court.

Chief informed us that there is someone currently in his jail - a divorced parent in Northfield, living with his mother, who has 6 children. His 14 year old called DCFS to report that there were inappropriate images on the father's computer. DCFS called the Northfield Police, who got a search warrant, confiscated the computer. This will be his first offence. There are no Northfield Children involved. He will make bond.

Chief also reminded us that this is the time of the year that the Police get complaints about strangers. Officer Friendly visited MF and Dr. Stange talked with SRS students to remind them what to do. It could be totally innocent, or it might not be. Chief asks that young kids not be outside their homes alone. He noted that recently a young child was outside playing in his front yard when a stranger in a car approached and panicked the child. Seong McGarry revealed that it was her 6 year old – playing in his yard on a cul-de-sac of 3 houses. A car approached asking where an old lady lived, started asking about their dog. The child came in and the car drove off. Within 10 minutes, the car returned, so they called the police. Chief revealed that it happened to another family also and the 13 year old let a complete stranger into the house. Chief noted that the expressway has never been our friend, it offers a quick getaway.

## **ADMINISTRATION REPORTS**

### **Dr. Ed Stange, Superintendent**

Dr. Stange thanked the PTO for the support during Teacher Appreciation. He noted that the teachers loved the signs in the lounges, and was touched by parents calling to say "Thanks".

Dr. Stange revealed that next Wednesday we are hoping to get approval to walk on the grass at SRS.

Dr. Stange informed us that last night at the Board Meeting, the Board watched a presentation on the Capital Improvement Plan for MF. The plan includes a redesign of the Learning Center, security enhancements and the creation of 5 breakout spaces. He added that the Board needs to decide by July so that it can go to bid in the fall.

Dr. Stange announced that the Board approved Misty Bell moving from 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade to Kindergarten.

### **Dr. Mary Frances Greene, MF Principal**

*Loose Parts Recess:* Dr. Greene explained that Tuesday lunchtime recess is the longest recess of the week. The first one was last Tuesday, the second one is today. She thanked everyone who donated, especially the parent who donated the real drums. She isn't sure how far into winter they can do it, they may need to regroup after the winter. Different grade levels are playing together, some kids continue playing sports on the fields, but it is a great alternative.

*Upcoming Events:* Details are on the School Calendar on the website.

October 10: 2<sup>nd</sup> Cup – Kids and Social Media

October 12: Vision/Hearing Screening

October 15: Conference Scheduling

October 19: Rope Warrior – there has never before been a program integrating Art and PE at MF.

October 31: Halloween Schedule is on the website.

## **Dr. Ivy Sukenik, SRS Principal**

Dr. Sukenik thanked the PTO for allowing us to bring in Kwame Alexander. She added that it is a really big deal, that his books fly off the shelves at SRS and are likely the most popular books in the school. His books are appropriate across the SRS grade levels, so it is a great opportunity for all the grades to share the same Author Visit.

*Angst:* Dr. Sukenik thanked all who attended the screening. There were about 100 attendees, of which about 40% were not D29 parents.

*Bikes:* Kids are not locking their bikes. The racks are full and only 10 bikes were locked. This isn't a problem during the day, but it is when they leave them overnight. Please remind the kids to wear helmets.

*Early Arrival:* Kids are arriving earlier than 7.30am and are staying in the vestibule playing on their phones. There is no supervision there and as the weather gets colder and colder it will become more packed.

*Fall Sports:* Fall sports are wrapping up this week: Girls Volleyball, Soccer and Field Hockey. The Girls Volleyball team is heavily favored to win the championship, which will be hosted by SRS. Basketball will start the last week of October.

*Service Leagues:* October 19<sup>th</sup> will be the kick-off. There are groups going to Feed My Starving Children, Erickson Woods, Cradles To Crayons, Bernie's Book Bank, and walking to Middlefork Farm. Students not going on field trips this month will go in November. Dr. Sukenik is requesting more volunteers.

*Partnership Survey:* Only about 30 people responded to the survey sent out in the Friday News. This is stemming from D29's partnership with the Museum of Science & Industry.

*Upcoming Events:*

November 14: Digital Citizenship parent presentation

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## **Teacher Representative: Pilar Westfall**

Mrs. Westfall hopes that parents will respond to the survey.

She thanked parents for their support for Service Leagues.

Kwame Alexander – she divulged that she has Crossover on her desk as she is reading it and it has sparked so many great conversations with students.

*Motion to Adjourn the Meeting: Tara Subeck*

*Seconded by: Tom Whittaker*