

Sunset Ridge/Middlefork School PTO Board Report

Thank you for taking time to complete this report. This information will be kept as an electronic file on the website and used solely to hand down to the next person responsible for chairing this position. We value your experience and knowledge and know the incoming chair will as well. Every little bit helps!

Submitted by: Katie Lutz

Board Position and Year held: Middlefork and SRS Welcomers, 2023

Approximate Budget: \$150

Key Responsibilities: Please list key responsibilities, for your position, in its corresponding month:

Month	Responsibilities (bullet format, as many as needed)
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select a date for the New Family Ice Cream Social. Contact the Park District about reserving the picnic shelter. • End of June, send an email to Melissa Draka (Middlefork) and Kyla Quesada (SRS), introducing yourself as the Welcome Chair.
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media post asking for Mentor Family volunteers (especially Kindergarten families!) Link to Google Form (maybe post several time over the course of the month – summer is busy!) • End of July/beginning of August you should start receiving information about new families. • Once class lists come out, start pairing new families with mentor families from volunteer list (template below). I tried to pair families up with kids in the same grade level AND classroom. • If there are not enough families on the volunteer list, you can contact families and ask if they would like to be a mentor family. Also, ask current mentor families if they know of anyone that they think would be good!
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to pair up mentor families with new families as registrations come in • Mrs. Draka and Mrs. Quesada typically won't send out contact information for new families until their residency is confirmed. We were still getting new registrations until 2 days before school started! • When you get late registrations, be sure to let the potential mentor family know so they can contact them asap, to get their questions answered before school starts!

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 week before school starts, send a reminder email to all mentor families asking them to please make sure they have contacted their new families.
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 week before the New Family Ice Cream Social, send a reminder email to all mentor families, asking them to reach out to their new families and remind them/invite them to the ice cream social. Reminder about the New Family Ice Cream Social in the Friday News Post reminder about Ice Cream Social to PTO Instagram (Optional) ParentSquare reminder about Ice Cream Social on the day of (we did not do this in 2023) Set up and run the New Family Ice Cream Social (details below) Send in your reimbursement form with receipts Email Middlefork and SRS secretaries and ask that they let you know if any more new families register. If you get that information, pair them up with a mentor family. It's especially hard to be new if you come in after school starts!
October and onward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to pair up new families with mentor families
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Optional) send out an email to all the new families, asking for feedback on the mentor family program
April / May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create Google Form to collect families interested in being mentor families for the next school year Collect contact information for mentor families to pass along to the next Welcome Chairs!

Key Contacts: List key contacts, in chart below and any pertinent information that could prove useful for incoming chair.

Name	Email	Phone	Misc. Notes
Melissa Draka	drakam@srd29.org		Middlefork
Kyla Quesada	quesadak@srd29.org		SRS
Vicki Heuer	vheuer@nfparks.org		Park District

Childs name	Parent 1 Full Name	Parent 1 Email Address	Parent 1 Phone Number	Grade Level	Mentor Family	Email

Email to Potential Mentor Families:

Hi (Mentor Family name),

I'm (your name) and I'm working with the PTO in charge of pairing up returning (Middleofkr/SRS) families with families that are new to the district. Would you like to be a mentor family to a new (grade level) family this year? All you have to do is send them an email (I will send you a template), attend the New Family ice cream social (if you're able), we highly encourage trying to meet up or have a phone call with the parents, but most importantly, be around in case the family has any questions about starting at (Middlefork/SRS)!

Please let me know when you get a chance.

Thanks,

Hi (Mentor Family name),

Thanks again for volunteering! Here is the family's info:

Childs name	Parent 1 Full Name	Parent 1 Email Address	Parent 1 Phone Number	Grade Level

The new family ice cream social will be September XX from XX:XX-XX:XXpm at Clarkson Park.

Email Template for Mentor Families to send to New Families

For new Sunset Ridge Students, we would like to suggest getting a bunch of kids from the grade together to meet up. It can be at someone's house or a park. It's tough being new in middle school!

Dear [parents' first name(s)],

I just wanted to introduce myself and welcome you to (Middlefork/Sunset Ridge School)! I have [one/two/three child(ren)] at (Middlefork/Sunset Ridge) in (grade level)

and wanted to reach out to see if you had any questions about the school or the community. We are also hosting an ice cream social for new families on September 14th from 4:30-6:30pm at Clarkson Park. I hope you can stop by with your family for this meet and greet. I (will/hope to) be there and I would love to welcome you in person and introduce you to other families at the school.

Before then, it would be great if we could set up a time to chat or meet at Clarkson Park. (suggest some dates/times that work for you).

Best,
[your name]
[include your phone number if you are comfortable]

Feedback from new families from the 2023-2024 School Year

- What to do on the first day of school (get a picture with Splasher, try to walk there if you can etc)
- "Back to school night" is a great time to see your kids classroom/meet the teacher/learn about curriculum
- info on how to sign up as a lunch room volunteer
- How do I go about ordering school supplies? I had missed the PTO ordering, so I had to scramble to get everything together (and it was much more expensive). If feasible, I think it would be nice to order a few extra kits, so new families have access.
- How in the world does the car line work? Obviously you figure it out quickly, but it's intimidating at first
- What sports programs do Northfield families participate in? (being that we're a smaller town, it wasn't as obvious as it was when we lived in Glenview, for example) - AND the huge bonus that the Park District is connected to the school and does after school programs
- I was interested in learning more about the sports and activities available to the kids, as well as those they're interested in. My children would love to have buddies for their extracurricular activities. Things like, popular sports clubs, library programs, music studios, etc.
- The advanced learning program seemed rather ambiguous to me. We had to learn about it on the flight.
- I have a bit of a social media phobia, so I was particularly interested in understanding the level of access to social media, video games, and electronic devices such as phones, smartwatches, and personal computers among my fifth grader's peers. For me, It's not just about trust; it's also about helping him feel like he fits in. However, this was challenging to gauge. I didn't want him to be either the last or the first one to own a personal phone or play a specific video game. So, I needed to understand what was considered normal at school in order to help him fit in and educate him about cybersecurity and media risks accordingly. Karie Smith kindly gave me a call and helped me gain a better

understanding of that dynamic, but as a mom, I realized I needed a lot more information about the dominant culture and its impact at school.

New Family Ice Cream Social 2023

Thurs Sept 14th

4:30-6:30pm

This time span was perfect, some families stayed almost the entire time. Some came early and then returned after kid activities were over. Some came after dinner.

37 New Families

30 Mentor Families (some doubled up)

Supplies:

- Cooler with mini water bottles (left over from Kinder Meet and Greet)
- Name tags (could see if there are any left over from other events)
- Sharpies
- Baby Wipes
- 1 roll of paper towels
- Large Cooler with ice
- Ice Cream treats and popsicles bought from Costco (Costco does not accept our tax-exempt letter)
 - “Chipwich” ice cream sandwiches (4 boxes-10 in each box)
 - Kirkland Almond Vanilla Ice Cream Bars (4 boxes-18 in each box)
 - Johnny Pop Watermelon popsicles (1 box-18 in each box)
 - Healthy Choice Organic Fudge Bars (1 box-18 in each box) – do not recommend, kids didn’t like and they melted really fast
 - Total: \$118 (ice cream only)
 - We had about 45 ice cream bars left over
- I brought one empty box of each type of ice cream bar with, in case there were any allergy considerations.