

Sargent PTO Meeting #1

September 12, 2019

Sargent Auditorium

**Minutes**

**Updates since the meeting are in green.**

Principal’s Report (Mr. Archer)

* New staff in the building:
  + Ms. Wokanick is back now teaching 4th
  + New social worker Camile Cortina (Ms. Oliver retired)
  + New PE teacher Brian Antelek, co-teaching with Mr. Carofano
  + New TA in 2nd grade - Melinda Sumner
  + Ms. Stickney on parental leave till end of Jan; sub is Erik Velasqie
  + Pre-K teacher from South Ave: Marta Cruz. (Mr. Dom is at JVF now.)
  + Hudson Hills in Pre-K room with Inclusion Program Shannon Elliffe
  + TA Donna Consaga
  + Reading teacher from South Ave, Kathleen McGahan
  + Principal’s Secretary Karen Grant
  + New security guard Joe Valerie
* We’re thinking about where Sargent should go in relation with where the Superintendent (and Erik) sees the district as a whole going.
* Mr. Archer spent 11 days in professional development / staff training over the summer.
  + All administrators went to diversity/dignity training in Ithaca.
  + 4-5 teachers went to 3-day “engagement” workshop at the High School
  + “Responsive classroom” training – approximately 3 teachers from each building plus Mr. Archer. Responding to kids’ needs, emotionally and academically. Happy kids that feel safe in school, the more they stay in class and engaged in their academics. Pay attention to kids that perform the least. It’s minority boys – sticks out in the data. As in almost every other school.
  + As a response, Mr. Archer has started a morning meeting for every classroom, and formed an equity team (Mr. Archer, Ms. Butler, Ms. Liesewski, Ms. Cortina) to ensure all kids get same opportunities to education, school programs, ask kids what they want to do).
  + A building leadership team is being composed (Mr. Carpenter, Ms. Asch, one more). Will be inviting a few parent volunteers to meet throughout the year.
  + Discussion:
    - Diversity resources for parents, curriculum? If needed, Lesly Deschler Canossi can help.
      * How about a training or evening workshop? PTO could host, promote, etc.
    - Is there a Diversity Committee?
      * Yes, on the School Board, and parents can attend those meetings.
* Recycling: Kaeleigh has data (how many bags of garbage vs. last year when recycling is going well). She said kids are recycling this year, but it’s not perfect. We need more of those signs. Talked about Green Team, Kaeleigh has ideas, Mr. Archer will get into that in the next week or two. Could use parent volunteers in the cafeteria.
  + Assembly to boost it up again.
    - Lori suggestions: Dutchess County Solid Waste is free. We could also do Bash the Trash.
  + Question from parent: Can Sargent do composting?
* State of the building – looks great and classrooms are ready even though teachers had less time to get ready for the year to start.
  + Computer carts in every room of 3rd, 4th, 5th grade, and others are sharing one cart for each grade (K, 1st, 2nd)
  + Ventilators – does that mean AC? More economical HVAC system. When it’s too hot in the classroom, we come up with ways to get kids out of the classroom.
    - Should be totally done by end of September or sometime in October.
  + This was the smoothest, easiest opening of the school year in the past 5 years

Staff Reports

* Megan (Hudson Valley Seed)
  + Changing name to Land to Learn
  + Monthly tastings in the cafeteria (3rd Thursdays); students vote. For September, the veggie is peppers. This is in collaboration with Common Ground Farm and the food staff.
  + Sign-up sheet for Tasting volunteers
* Ms. Pezzo – co-chairing yearbook committee with Ms. Ferrara. Thinking of using Memory Book instead of Lifetouch this year.
* Ms. Ferrara – library is coming along

Officer Reports

* Erin: In charge of communications, happy to share & promote activities that you know of, including at other schools
* Anna: New position of Grantwriting Support for administration and teachers. As grant opportunities arise, we can assist. We’re looking into a credential called Green Ribbon Schools (GRS). Things have been happening for several years – considering applying for that credential.
  + If you hear of any grants that could benefit Sargent, bring them to Mr. Archer and we’ll see if we can help.
* Lori: Ms. Liezewski (2nd grade) found a movement program (<https://yogafoster.org/program-overview>) that would give each student a yoga mat to use the classroom. We’ll research it and survey teacher interest. Update: PTO is supporting membership for the year.
* Lori: GRS has 3 pillars: facilities, health and nutrition, curriculum. The School Board has official goals, and this year it added a sustainability goal, and Sargent is leading the way in the district. If you have ideas for things in that category, please come to us.
* Eileen: We are looking for a graphic designer to make posters once every 2 months. We use Canva.com. Nice-looking announcements and our communications.
  + Pezzo: ask HS students – credit the student. They get hours for honor society.
  + Other volunteers: Ash if manageable time commitment.
  + Lesly – student mock job – interview the client – use it in their portfolio

Open Forum

* PreK sink working? Yes (email from Mr. Archer on Sep. 17)
* Andrea Davis:
  + 14-year-veteran of Sargent! Kudos to PTO and Mr. Archer for getting things done.
  + Willing to fundraise for outdoor equipment (recess bin) if needed.
  + Discussion:
    - Mr. Archer says 20-ish new balls were purchased end of last year, just need to fill them
    - Solutions to balls/gear going missing:
      * Cloth wagons - keep inside, have a kid responsible for bringing it in and out.
      * Whoever brings cart out has to bring it back or ask for a helper.
      * Last period could have a kid responsible for going to get it.
      * Parent volunteers to check inventory
      * Policy in which someone is responsible for it; aides can remind them.
      * The last 2 minutes of recess are for returning the gear. (The little kids are out last and they love helping.)
      * Need aides to be part of the solution since they manage the outdoor time.
    - Other input: need jump ropes, chalk, hula hoops others for kids that don’t play sports.
  + Can 2nd graders play soccer at recess? Some have been told “no.” Update from Mr. Archer, email to PTO on Sep. 17: Yes, they are allowed, and this has been communicated with the 2nd grade staff.
  + Can 2nd graders play on the red dome? Update from Mr. Archer, email to PTO on Sep. 17: Yes, they are allowed.
  + Can we paint the swing set poles? Mr. Archer will check with Mr. D’Amato. Update from Mr. Archer, email to PTO on Sep. 17: A work order has been placed to get them painted.
  + How long is recess? If it’s only 20 minutes, can we increase it? Mr. Archer will look into this with the District – he tried last year but was asked to wait until the other buildings would be able to do the same thing.

Others Business

* Assemblies in the pipeline:
  + Bash the Trash – musical instruments – came from PTO collaborative (i.e. all the schools’ PTOs)
  + Arm of the Sea
    - All-school trip to HS – large-scale puppet theater
  + 4Tet (Gwen Laster) – part of Black History Month curriculum. Will be in conjunction with South and maybe other buildings.
  + Recycling – Dutchess County Division of Solid Waste – cool presentation with a video that shows the sorting.
  + Others (TBC per Mrs. Grant’s calendar)
* Planning for upcoming events:
  + Spirit of Beacon Day: theme is Growing Together
  + October Family Fun Night – biggest fundraiser, lots of fun
  + Trivia Night is to raise $ for Joe Pimentel to finish the mural
* Fundraiser Updates
  + Project Playground Fundraiser: **$2,500 – goal surpassed!**
    - Gaga ball pit, TenSpin
  + Book Fair: $715 in book matching
  + Discount card: not doing it this year
  + School Tool Box fundraiser: school supplies – only 10 people did it – you don’t go to target. South Ave does it.
  + Box Tops: Judy Grogan – twice a year collected from the library – bring them to the teacher in a baggie or drop box outside the office
    - PTO will send home info on which products have box tops
  + T shirts: just ordered more. There’s also interest in sweatshirts. Will do a survey. We make about 50% profit (at Meet the Teacher Night, made $70 profit). Company is Swag.com.
    - Color cube in Newburgh also has good prices. Bags for less than $3.
  + Story screen “round up” program – PTO collaborative Arm of the Sea
* Committee Overviews and Updates
  + Vegetable and Sensory Gardens. Working with our OT Tracy Bottone to create a sensory path – taste, touch, smell – regulate for kids during the school day and just enjoy exploring their senses.
    - Bluebird and Swallow Trail
    - Monarch garden
  + Sustainability/Green School Initiatives
  + Beautification and Artist Collaborations
    - Goal is for downstairs Joe mural to be done, library including mural above circulation desk that Paula and Justin King are creating for us.
    - Facelift for drop off
    - Question about painting classrooms – this is Facilities’ purview
  + 5th Grade Parent Group
    - Sharpe Reservation
    - Big field trip i.e. Bronx Zoo – parents try to raise the money for the buses
  + Class Parent
    - Only a couple teachers have expressed interest. Mr. Archer will ask again. Update from Mr. Archer, email to PTO on Sep. 17: Asked teachers for interest and will let you know
  + PTO Admin/Office Help
    - All PTO officers work full time, sometimes we need help stuffing flyers into mailboxes, not every week but time to time.
    - Mr. Archer will check on a PTO copier card
  + Discussion on more outreach for PTO:
    - At next year’s First Day of School, have a friendly table outside on first day of school.
    - Have a table at the open house – and at every other event
    - Mr. Archer can ask teachers to mention PTO when they do their classroom intros – fill out the membership form, what PTO does, etc.
    - Convey that we all work as volunteers and that parents benefit from participating – have an impact on your kid’s school and get information.
    - Can the teachers’ clipboards at sign out have a meeting reminder