

**Swarthmore Rutledge School
Home and School Association Meeting
September 9, 2009**

ATTENDEES: Kate Crawford, Sharon Graham, Carlin McCoy, Gary Davis, Karen Shore, Linda Armour, Donna Cresson, Marj Hatzell, Kathryn Mehan, Stephanie Bailey, Betsy Larsen, Emily Labows, Ali Holsinger, Lauren McKinney, Mimi Spangler, Sandra Sullivan, Kim Woolf, Ann Byun, Margaret Hoch, Denise Disney, Brooke Penders, Kate Hyzer, Kara Schmidt, Jin Xi

Motion: To approve the minutes of the June 10 meeting. Motion carries

TREASURER: *Carlin McCoy for Beth DeBruyn*

- Start up money has been distributed to teachers in the amount of \$3175.00. HSA has already received several thank you notes.
- Safety and Grounds made \$500 in improvements to the 10-year old Sparrow House. Labor was charged at a very discounted rate.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: *Dr. Gary Davis*

- Kids and teachers have come to school and hit the ground running; it is great to see.
- SRS has lost instructional support staff this year and there are some personnel changes.
- Dr. Davis emphasized that SRS has a great character building and anti-bullying program
- Dr. Davis also emphasized that he strongly urges his teachers to be proactive in their communications with parents.
- After School programs will continue
 - Artworks
 - Foreign language with Swarthmore College students
 - Science Explorers
 - The Teacher Initiative Fund will also support other clubs throughout the school year
- Back to school night has been moved to September 22.
- SRS did win a Get Active Grant that will pay for pedometers for all kids and staff at SRS. The goal is to use the pedometers as a part of fitness and integrate it into other classroom learning.
- The Peaceful Playground map has been painted on the tennis courts. We are developing activities and games around that.
- September 17th is Constitution Day and President Obama's speech will be shown to classes at that time, with an opt-out provision for parents who do not wish their kids to view the speech.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Dimensions in STEM – Linda Armour

- In the fall and spring STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) hosts a TE@M night (Technology, Engineering, and Math). In the fall, TE@M night is November 19th.

- STEM supports the 4th grade embryology project, the Birds of Prey study, Rocketry, and the Bird Sanctuary visit.
- STEM encourages parents who are scientists to come into school to share their experiences through the Visiting Scientist program.
- STEM is still looking for a Dimensions in Technology volunteer

Dimensions in Sustainability – Denise Disney

- This is a new Dimensions this year, focusing on a child's place in this world.
- This year, Dimensions in Sustainability will be looking to plant a garden; a spot has been identified behind the fence that edges the basketball court, next to the Sparrow House. The bench and chimes will need to be relocated.
- There will be raised beds for full accessibility. We will have the assistance of a horticulturalist from Penn State at Smedley Park.
- We are hoping to have volunteers to man the garden over the summer.
- The District needs to approve the garden.
- SRS, in conjunction with the Borough, just received a \$300 grant for a rain barrel; there aren't great places at SRS to put the barrel, so it may be placed at the borough recycling center. Lesson plans will be developed incorporating the rain barrel.

Dimensions Social Studies: Sally Fullam

- We will have a mock election this year, but are not sure what the topic will be yet. We hope to incorporate making campaign materials into an after school project.
- The 4th and 5th grade will have a Native American speaker come in November or December to speak.
- During spring conference weeks, Dimensions in Social Studies supports the primary grade study of Japan. There will be food, outside speakers, and perhaps a trip.
- Last year was the first year of our mock trial program; kids seemed to like it. We hope to re-enact it again this year, with more participation from the 4th and 5th grades.

Dimensions in Art – Katie Crawford for Laura Maola

- There will be a 5th grade project this year and we'll learn more at the next home and school meeting.

Safety and Grounds – Stacy Clements

- Safety and grounds is looking for more volunteers. There is one meeting a month with representatives from the school. There is also a lot of upkeep of the grounds with gardens and the playground.

School Directory – Ali Holsinger and Lauren McKinney

- Got started in mid-August. Using a new electronic updating service and the response so far has been very good.
- Advertising has brought in \$1340 to date; our goal is \$2,000.
- This year we will be adding a page of coupons to entice people, and advertising will be throughout the directory as opposed to the back. The overall directory will have the same information but with a different look and feel.
- The directory will have a January addendum published.

- Updates can be emailed to srsdirectory@gmail.com.
- Since directories won't be in by Back to School night, we may take advance sales. Target date is October 1 for the Back to School Picnic

Fall Festival – Margaret Hoch

- Fall Festival is October 23.
- There is a book swap, 4th grade pumpkin sale, scarecrow making, ice cream social, bake sale, and hopefully teacher-made pumpkin raffle again this year.
- Remember to save old clothes for the scarecrow making; we are always looking for that. Contact Margaret for drop off/pickup.

Grant Writing – Brooke Penders

- We need people with great ideas that we can then search and write up grants. A person needs to be a point person going forward because grantors often ask for pictures and/or reports at the end to prove the money was well spent.
- We are looking to partner with the Chester School for the Arts for a \$2,000 grant

Welcome Committee – Stephenie Bailey

- There is a new committee, looking to welcome new families in the school district, no matter what grade they are in. 23 letters went out this year, and several families did reach out with questions.
- There was a welcoming social for new parents on the playground the first day of school. Some families did attend.
- The committee may put together some commonly asked questions into a document to share on our website to help new families.

Cafeteria – Karen Shore

- This is a new committee dedicated to improving the cafeteria and recess experiences of adults and children.
- Committee will look to better supporting cafeteria staff, making the cafeteria space kid-friendly, improving food and food choices, maximizing outdoor recess time.
- Volunteers are always needed and welcome.
- Committee is looking to make a quick win with a big splash, then develop medium and long range goals.

OLD BUSINESS:

SRS Community Feedback – Katie Crawford

- Back in the spring, the SRS community was asked to respond with their three wishes for SRS. 99 responses were received and the feedback really showed SRS' unique qualities. There were many of the same concerns of children and adults including recess time, food offerings and the nutritional value of the food.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Home and School meetings are always the second Wednesday of the month; there will be no meeting in December. February and March, 2010 will be a morning meeting (9:30am).
- The Home and School mission statement has been added to the web. Check it out at www.srskids.org. And remember to sign up on our list (“subscribe”) for regular school messages.
- Thanks so much to Linda Armour and Mary Murray for their dedication as presidents the past school year. They’ve handed off so much information that is so well organized, it has made the transition so much easier.
- 475 Back to School packets were assembled by three volunteers
- 20 5th graders gave school tours to new students; it was well received by all.
- Spirit Wear will be sold at Back to School night and at 1st grade orientation.
- The Rising Star is going totally on line; there will be paper copies available in the office. This will save one box of paper per month.
- Home and School is looking to formalize the idea of a Walking School Bus throughout the community. These would be groups of children who get together in a neighborhood and walk to school together rather than taking the bus. Stay tuned for more information
- Remember that you can register your buyers’ club card from Genuardi’s and SRS will receive a donation. Continue to collect Box Tops because SRS earns money from each.
- We are starting a green fund raising initiative this year to go along with Sally Foster. We need more volunteers to support this.

Teacher Initiative Fund:

- Mr. McElroy requested \$112.88 to purchase a dry erase board to use for projection so that he can mark up the board during lessons that he can take from online.
 - *Motion* – to approve the purchase. Carries.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- September 11 – last day for director advertisements
- September 17 – Constitution Day – Viewing of President Obama’s speech
- September 22 – Back to School Night
- September 22 – Coupon books will be available
- September 18 – October 6 – Sally Foster sale
- October 1 – Back to School picnic

NEXT MEETING

Meeting Adjourned 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Sharon Graham