

Vail School District #20 Vail, Arizona
Sycamore Elementary School
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 10, 2023
4:00 p.m.

Present:

Ken Graff, Principal
Jen Jepson, Assistant to the Principal
Frank Hecht, Community Rep, Chair
Jennifer Shioya, Parent Rep, Clerk
Elisha Caywood, Parent Rep
Dani Vulgamott, Parent Rep (absent)
Kayla Rangel, Certified Rep
Olsen Hancock, Certified Rep
Megan McGowan, Classified Rep

I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Mr. Hecht at 4:01pm.

A. Pledge of Allegiance at 4:02pm.

B. Approval of Minutes – Ms. Shioya moved to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Rangel seconded.

C. Reports

1. Member Report: Mr. Graff for PTA

- 01/11/2023 (tomorrow): Arby's dine out night; info will go out tonight.
- 01/27 (Friday): Father Daughter Dance. Theme: Red Carpet. Chick-fil-a to be served.
- Starting to plan Mother Son night for 04/14 with a magician.
- Community Fair will be 05/12 and already starting to prep. Jumping castles coming back this year, acquiring silent auction items, etc.
- Math-a-thon raised over \$16K! Prize assembly for top 20 earners held in December.
- PTA Membership drive underway for 2nd semester. Got over 200 members last semester, which opens up opportunities for grants and awards through PTA. Also shooting for 100% staff membership.

2. Administrative Report: Ken Graff, Principal

- Great energy just before break. Staff talent show was a hit with the kids the Thursday before. Successful canned food drive. Staff holiday ball. Great bonding among staff.
- 2nd grade (Nov), 1st(Dec), and Kinder (Dec) music performances were fantastic. Great turnout of parents. Wonderful that music performances have continued.
- Benchmark testing at end of last year.
- Tutoring, clubs back up and running this year.
- Gearing up for 3rd grade music performance on 02/02.
- Site spelling bee early December, district spelling bee last Friday. Sycamore sent 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade winners and they did great.
- Successful Pancake Breakfast: sold over 500 breakfasts!
- Principal advisory: Ms. Jepson and Mr. Graff taking some students in 3rd-5th to chat about the pulse of the school over lunch.
- Gearing up for Science Showcase. Mrs. Middendorf doing a great job getting it organized. 4th/5th required, K-3rd do class projects, and K-3rd can choose to do one if desired.

D. Call to the Public

No members of the public present.

E. Recognitions

1. Ms. Caywood
 - Ms. Kim, making connections with the kids.
 - Ms. Guagliardo, helping each child with individual needs.
2. Ms. Rangel
 - New 5th grade teacher Ms. Gau took over Ms. Krup's class, really jumping in, fitting in well with the team.
 - Ms. Cordova now the 5th grade Team Lead, doing fantastic.
3. Mr. Hancock
 - Ms. Eastman and Ms. Duerr, bending over backwards to do anything to help teachers (printing stickers, running attendance reports) on top of all they already do, approachable face of the front office, great support.
4. Ms. McGowan
 - Ms. Breinlinger, Ms. Middendorf. Despite having the class of kids, stay on top of the kids. They go above and beyond what is asked.
5. Ms. Jepson
 - Diane Castillo (para) has opened up and become really involved and eager, excited about the field of education. Growing in her abilities.
 - Susie Bell has a huge heart for kids, desire to love kids.
6. Mr. Graff
 - Ms. Brozeman stepped in for Mr. Gugliotta. Doing a great job with the music performances on top of daily music classes. Planning/practicing with 3rd grade and starting recorders for 4th grade.
 - Ms. Krup for her years of service at Sycamore. Left last Friday. Took a job outside of education, also going to have a baby in March. She has done so much with StuCo (growing new leaders), district formative assessments, ITL for 5th grade for years, etc.
 - Mr. Hancock taking over StuCo, had some tragedies with former SYC student, little brother in his class, has really helped with the student and family.
 - Ms. Payne, spelling bee coordinator. Organized site spelling bee, then helped prepare and oversee the kids that went to the district bee.
 - Ms. Middendorf for Science Showcase has been great at communicating requirements, info to parents. Passion for science and math. SARSEF coming up in March.

II. Consent Agenda

A. StuCo Valentine Grams

Student Council would like to sell pencils as Valentine Grams the week of 02/06-02/10. Raised funds will go to support their club. Ms. Shioya moved to approve. Ms. McGowan seconded.

III. Old Business

A. 2022-2023 Staffing and Enrollment

- Currently have 708 students enrolled. Projected 706.
- Fully staffed for the first time this year.
- Ms. Krup resigned; Ms. Kathryn Gau took over her class. First year of teaching, out of Oklahoma State. Great references, seems like a great fit.
- Ms. Brozeman and Ms. Wright will remain as music/PE teachers the remainder of the year.
- Ms. Casey on maternity but will be back before end of year. First year at SYC, doing great.

- Laurel Wettstein hired as second inclusion specialist will be here just this year. Mr. Frijoles was unable to renew his visa.
- Mr. Graff put in a request for additional paraprofessional for students with additional needs; tentatively approved.
- Projection may drop to 682 for next year. Kinder numbers is 100, 5th is 127. This offset is what made it drop. Need more Kinder. Kinder Roundup will be early March, pushing for open enrollment. Will promote it (even at district level) via social media, have preschool push it out, etc.
- Extra 3rd grade teacher, other positions are funded by Covid grant that may go away.
- Kinder has 3 certified teachers; moving away from having Kinder Enrichment program but would still be full day, so the teachers would have them all day. But still have to offer half day option. May need to move to 5 Kinder certified teachers.
- Teacher retention is high priority. Vail Board to vote on proposed 3% increase for staff, additional funding to increase salary.
- District Job Fair 02/03/2023.

B. Facilities Update

- Mr. Graff reports “everything is dandy.” ☺
- Shade structure is still moving forward, looking at April completion.
- Slope on the field is still being looked at. Want school facilities board to cover the cost, but still waiting for finalization.
- Major traffic issues when SYC field used for middle school practices and games. Looking into reconfiguring CFMS fields to offer other sports but keep offering SYC field for softball. For now, seems cost-prohibitive.
- Got funds for preschool, so flooring was redone (700 building) over break. If extra funds, want to put in artificial turf for the front of preschool rooms for the kids.

IV. New Business

A. Student/Staff/Parent Surveys

01/17 through 02/17, 2nd-5th students will be taking a survey. Parents can opt their child out by end of this week. General questions about feeling safe at school, having a trusted adult, etc. School admin looks at data.

Staff survey PSA (Protected School Assessment). School leadership, budget, instructional programs, at-risk programs. All staff members take this. Staff reviews the data later to look into areas that were lower than desired. Want to ensure culture remains strong, and if not, how to address.

Parent survey. Mr. Carruth will send out parent survey to all families. Asks about governing board, the teacher, superintendent, principal, etc. There is also an opportunity to provide comments. District leadership team reviews it and takes back to the Sycamore staff. Look for a trend in comments so they can be addressed if necessary.

B. Tax Credit Funds

Reviewed inactive clubs (closed for 2+ years) and activities at Sycamore to request any remaining donations accumulated in these accounts to be transferred to Undesignated Fund (Greatest Need).

Currently have the following funds closed and would like to move the remaining money to Greatest Need:

- Education Trips = \$532.56 (but often funded by PTA)
- Virtual Reality = \$1211.54
- Odyssey of the Mind = \$40.38
- Robotics = \$2589.38

Mr. Hancock moved to approve. Ms. Caywood seconded.

C. SWIS (School Wide Information System) Data

Ms. Jepson shared data from the first semester office referrals with the Council. Teams of staff members will look for any trends to proactively identify interventions and solutions. Mr. Hancock had great suggestions on how to review the data, how to potentially encourage classes to model positive behavior.

D. Campus Safety

Mr. Graff reported that tonight, the Vail Governing Board will be doing an initial approval for funding for older schools like Sycamore to have fences raised and crash bars installed. Also need to hire police officers; recently retired officers who are current on certifications, etc. and may be able to do this. They would be hired by the district for site security. Mr. Graff will find out from Mr. Carney (Asst. Superintendent) on the background – what cert is needed, what's needed for this type of certification – and send to us. Radios are still backordered.

Mr. Hecht asked if still considering parent volunteers. Mr. Graff asked Council our thoughts. Council discussed it is probably too difficult to maintain and be more overhead and more of a liability to recruit parent volunteers (need to teach the volunteers on verbiage, need to have consistency to become familiar faces).

Mr. Hancock asked about grant-funded counseling services (Coping Cats – state-funded support for the families). Mr. Graff said a request was put in, as well as another request for a social worker next year. Also reminded that Jake's Law is available for family support where needed. Tami Porter also on-site to provide connections to various support Coping Cats, Jake's Law, Tu Nidito, food assistance, etc.

This will remain on the agenda as a running item.

E. Vail Pride Day

Thursday, 02/16: Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. Argenziano's catering. Friday, 02/17: recognizing the Volunteer of the Year. Staff going to the Fairgrounds in the afternoon for a staff appreciation lunch, recognizing certified/support/rookie staff of the year.

Saturday, 02/18: Vail Pride Day, 8:30am-3:30pm at the Fairgrounds. Band, choir, and orchestra will perform. No classroom displays, just school display. Academic Jeopardy competition, Math Bowl competition, STEM showcase, food vendors, VPD will be kicked off by the parade (club registration by end of this week), StuCo president will be the mascot.

F. Added: School Lunch

Ms. Caywood: School lunch situation. Aramark food quality and quantity has gone down, running out of food items sometimes, sour milk, not ordering enough. Mr. Graff has brought it

up to Aramark mgmt; Sycamore cafeteria manager Leah is working hard with limited staff but food is not up to par. Ms. Jepson has been keeping an eye on it. Mr. Graff and Ms. Jepson to talk with them again tomorrow. Need to improve quality control, menus.

G. Next Meeting

Tuesday, 02/21/2023 at 4:00pm.

H. Adjournment

Mr. Hancock moved to adjourn. Ms. Caywood seconded. Meeting adjourned at 5:49pm.