

Orchard Home and School Association January 2022 Meeting Minutes

Attendees (Principal and Board Members): Mary Ferreri; Jimmy Judge; Patty Leung; Jenna Hammond; Tara Klaff; Tia Ly; Jennifer DeSisto.

Other Attendees: Amy Gill; Todd Rothman; Sarah McCourt; Becky Chin; Marya Larkin; Lisa Arillo; Michelle Jones; Adrian Walker; Britt Erica Tunick; Danielle Scalzo; Liz Suri; Melanie Amores; Sarah Kline; Judi Lee; Anabelle Andon; Shweta Dixit; Johnny Segarra; Kristen Hedden

Treasurer's Report:

- Tara described that Orchard donated over \$2,500 to the Social Service Association of Ridgewood with funds raised from the Jingle Bell Jog. She also noted that the Ladies Night raised an estimated \$380.
- Jimmy shared that the Friends of Orchard campaign has brought in about \$14,000 in donations to Orchard.

Vice President's Report:

- Jenna noted that the Reading Marathon will be held throughout the month of February. Teachers will distribute flyers to students by Friday, January 28th. The goal is for students to track their reading throughout the month and submit their reading logs to Ridgewood Public Library. Students will earn a coupon for a free ice cream cone at Ben and Jerry's. Jenna indicated that the campaign is a nice initiative to get kids involved and parents can contact Michelle Elias (michelleaelias@gmail.com) with any questions.

Corresponding Secretary's Report:

- Tia asked committee chairs to send her any updates by Sunday night so she can include the latest information in her communication to parents.
- She reminded everyone that class parents will reach out for volunteers to help with the upcoming Valentine's and St. Patrick's Day parties.

Committee Reports:

Bingo Night

- Amy noted that Bingo Night, which was originally scheduled for January 21, has been moved to February 11. She stated that the K-4 students will have a chance to participate virtually, and 5th grade students will be able to join and run the event at Orchard. They plan to sell prepackaged kits that include items such as candy that can be used as markers for the bingo cards. There will also be lots of prizes to win.

Wizards Game

- Federated HSA is working on scheduling two new consecutive dates for the Wizards games. Once the dates are confirmed, they will reopen the competition for a chance to sing the national anthem at the game.
- Todd noted that the games must be held indoors and on consecutive dates. Todd also mentioned that they will reach out to sponsors once the two dates have been confirmed.

Talent Show

- Sarah stated that the talent show will be virtual again this year. However, unlike last year, they will hold an in-person informational meeting for all parents on January 25. There may also be an in-person dress rehearsal to give students the chance to practice on stage. She reminded everyone that Google forms will be due on February 2 and videos are due on March 10.

Science Fair

- Becky noted that the Science Fair will be virtual again this year. She emphasized the fun aspects and possibilities with a virtual fair and described that “Focus is on fun and not fuss.” Students will record their science experiments in a video approximately 3 minutes long. All video submissions are due by February 28 and the virtual fair will launch on March 3.
- Class parents will reach out for volunteers to record an experiment for students to watch and to conduct in their classrooms. If there are no volunteers, Becky will provide a video for the class to use.

Green Team

- Marya shared that the Green Team’s previous initiatives included eliminating single use plastic water bottles at school events. She announced they have expanded the Green Team to involve more individuals including some staff members. She stated that the new mission statement will be shared in e-news shortly. Currently, the goal is to achieve bronze certification this year. In order to do this, Orchard has to complete a certain number of action items. There are over 100 items listed and there are different committees for each item. To learn more about the program, visit www.sustainablejerschools.com.
- Jimmy emphasized that this will be a great volunteer opportunity for students and parents.

Auction

- The theme of this year’s auction is An Evening in Monte Carlo. Britt and Lisa and will distribute flyers to all students soon. Tickets are \$80 per person and sales will begin next week. Parents will have a chance to earn \$200 in casino money if they buy tickets early. Britt stated there will be a Valentine’s Day raffle. Each raffle will cost \$5 and parents can win a set of tickets for the auction. Each week, they will highlight special auction items. If anyone is interested in donating an item for auction, please reach out to Britt and Lisa.
- Lisa reminded everyone that the event will be held in a covered, outdoor area on April 29. All details including information on silent auctions and how the earnings will be

allocated to benefit students at Orchard will be shared with parents in the upcoming weeks.

Yearbook

- Liz will send out reminders for parents to take and submit photos of their children participating in upcoming winter events (for example, talent show, science fair, etc.). The Yearbook Club which is comprised of 5th graders has been meeting once a week to help assemble the yearbook. They will meet and vote on a cover this week. Although there is no set date, Liz hopes to start year book sales this Spring.

Co-President's Report:

Friends of Orchard

- Patty sent out letters to describe the Friends of Orchard fundraising campaign.

Alternative Schedule Survey

- Jimmy noted that he will re-share the link for the Alternative Schedule Survey to the Orchard community in case anyone has additional ideas.

Long Term Planning Meetings

- The meetings will take place immediately following the HSA meeting to establish a list of priorities for how the auction earnings will be allocated.

Teachers' Report:

- Michelle Jones provided the teacher's report for this meeting. She shared that everyone is getting settled in after a long winter break. She described that it was nice to welcome Jessica Lintner as the new librarian. She added that there will be guest speakers either virtually or in-person to speak about Black History Month.

Principal's Report:

Assessment Update

- Mary shared that since students had not taken state assessments in the last 2 years, 4th and 5th graders were required to take the Strong Start Assessments last Fall. Test results were mailed home before winter break. If any parents have concerns or questions, please reach out to her and the child's teacher. Students in grades 2-5 will also take mid-year assessments soon.

Covid Updates in the New Year

- Mary noted that there were a lot of teacher coverage adjustments that had to be made when students and staff returned from winter break. She has noticed a major increase in student attendance this week. She emphasized that parents should continue to reach out to her and Nurse Horton regarding any questions.

LSHSA/DEI Committee Update

- Sarah stated that LSHSA and the Special Education Department will hold a meeting at the Education Center on 49 Cottage Place on February 15.
- Meghann reminded everyone that the DEI Committee meeting will be held at 10:00am on January 20. She shared that the new librarian has been working with students on creating a unity reef in celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. The DEI committee is also working on “Steaming into Black History Month.” The goal is to shift the focus from famous athletics who are often highlighted to other professionals in science and engineering. One idea is to encourage students to interview local community members and share their stories during the science fair. Meghann also mentioned that there will be different activities for the Lunar New Year, St. Patrick’s Day, International Night, World Autism Day and much more. Anyone interested in volunteering or sharing ideas should reach out to Meghann at meghbierly@gmail.com.
- Meghann shared that a local Eagle scout presented his final plans for the Story Walk project and will reach out to Dr. Gorman for approval to proceed. They hope to complete the project by the end of June.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53pm.