

Orchard Home and School Association November 2021 Meeting Minutes

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

Other Attendees: Dana Jeong; Amy Gill; Marya Larkin; Shweta Dixit; Marissa Madison; Adrian Walker; John Walker; Jill Grillo-Sorensen; Katherine Inoyama; Liz Suri; Melanie Amores; Britt Tunick; Tracy Parrinello; Maria Sanchez; Doseok Cha; Joan Guerrero; Danielle Scalzo; Abigail Birnbaum

Treasurer's Report:

- Tara described that Orchard currently has over \$75,000 in its account. She noted that school events such as Fun Day and the Book Fair raised a lot of revenue. Tara also reminded everyone that the Charleston Wrap and the Bag a Lunch fundraisers are still active. Tara shared that Jingle Bell jog collected over \$2,300 so far in cash for the Social Services Association (SSA). SSA is still accepting donations.

Vice President's Report:

- Jenna thanked Shweta Dixit for coordinating the Diwali celebration.
- Jimmy added that anyone interested in volunteer opportunities for the auction should reach out to Jenna and Lisa Arillo.

Committee Reports:

Fun Day

- Jimmy reported that Orchard spent about \$1,100 in expenses and earned over \$8,000 in revenue. He described that it was a very successful event and parents appreciated that the event was on a Friday rather than over the weekend this year. He thanked Rebecca Rothman and Jen Szilva for organizing the event. He also thanked parent volunteers for putting together the haunted house.

Jingle Bell Jog

- Jimmy stated that the Jingle Bell jog raised over \$2,500. He shared that the SSA expressed their appreciation and families can still contribute via PayPal.

Charleston Wrap

- Dana Jeong reported that families have spent \$2,600 and about \$908 of which is payable to Orchard. Dana will distribute flyers to remind families to shop before the campaign ends on 11/29.

Book Fair

- Jimmy noted that the book fair raised \$10,480 and it is the highest revenue Orchard has earned from book fair sales. Jimmy attributed the increased sales to the fair being outside in the amphitheater and remaining open after school.

Holiday Luncheon

- Amy Gill stated the holiday luncheon will be on December 10th from 11:45-12:45pm. She stressed that parent volunteers are needed in the classrooms so that teachers can attend the luncheon. Volunteers are also needed to help set up and clean up after the event. This year, the luncheon will be set up in the gym rather than in the cafetorium. Amy shared that any donations will be greatly appreciated. Jimmy reminded everyone that donations should be noted as “Holiday Luncheon” in PayPal.

Wizards Game

- Amy described that the Wizards Game will take place on two nights at Ridgewood High School. She explained that teachers from the district play against the Wizards players. Unlike previous years, concessions will not be available for purchase at the games. Amy stated that Save the Dates will be sent out in December and tickets will go on sale in January.

Ladies Night Out

- Jimmy shared that Orchard earned about \$380 from sales at the Kristin Dahl boutique.

Green Team

- Marya Larkin noted that she has met with the district’s energy specialist and representatives from Somerville Elementary School. She explained that Orchard is on track to obtain certification this school year.
- Previous goals included reducing single use plastics. Students were encouraged to bring water bottles, and plastic water bottles were no longer provided/sold at school events.
- Marya reminded everyone that another goal is to reduce paper products. She stressed that committee chairs should distribute flyers via social media and/or email.

Co-President’s Report:

Federated Meeting

- Patty described that last week’s meeting was very positive. It was discussed that Covid transmission rates have been low and schools are now waiting for Murphy’s plan on mask mandates.

Friends of Orchard

- Patty explained that Friends of Orchard is another fundraiser. Since it is an auction year, Patty described that they will not distribute letters. She will send out a reminder about companies matching donations.

Long Term Planning Meetings

- Patty explained that all families have an opportunity to voice their opinions on how to allocate funds raised from this year's auction.

Teachers' Report:

- Marissa Madison provided the teacher's report for this meeting. She thanked all the volunteers for the school events thus far. She shared that the students are excited to be in school and are maintaining classroom routines. Teachers have been holding and will continue to hold goal setting conferences.

Principal's Report:

- Mary shared that it is American Education week and encouraged students and their families to send thank you notes to their teachers. She will distribute service awards to teachers who have completed 5, 10, etc. years of service at CBA. Mary also noted that Orchard will continue to collect monetary donations as well as food items for the SSA.
- Students will also have an opportunity to participate in the holiday change drive for SSA. The drive will start on 11/29 and end on Friday, 12/3.

Staffing Update

- Mrs. Gribben is officially on maternity leave and Ms. Sierra started on Monday, 11/15. She will be with the kindergarten class until April 2022 upon Mrs. Gribben's return.
- Mrs. LaBarr is retiring at the end of this calendar year. She has been at Orchard for 26 years. Mary noted that Orchard will celebrate and honor her in a special CBA. Mr. Kreisler has written a verse to the Orchard school in honor of Mrs. LaBarr. A replacement teacher will join Orchard as Mary continues to interview candidates for the position.

Concert and Performances Update

- Mary emphasized that they are so happy to have parents back in the school. The Kindergarten class will kick off the first performance of the school year with their Thanksgiving sing-a-long. In grades K-2, there is one performance during the school year. 3rd and 5th graders will put on a play. 4th and 5th graders will have 2 performances during the school year. Every child can have two family members attend a performance, and attendees will need to wear a mask.

Lunch Update

- As the temperatures drop, Mary stated that she feels confident in moving students indoors for lunch. She noted that Covid rates have been low and all students identified as close contacts have tested negative. Students will remain sitting in numbered seats for contact tracing. If anyone feels uncomfortable with indoor dining, families are welcome to sign their children out for lunch and return them for recess. Mary reminded children to dress appropriately, as they will continue to play outdoors for recess.

Halloween Thoughts

- Mary described that it was fun to see both the kids and teachers dress up. She encourages everyone to share feedback on the Halloween festivities at school including the parade, going home to change into costumes and then returning to school. Mary suggested possibly eliminating the need to go home for changing into costumes and moving the parade closer to the end of the school day.

LSHSA/DEI Committee Update

- Shweta Dixit shared that the Diwali celebration activity went very well. She thanked Mary, the teachers and volunteers for their support in coordinating such a successful celebration. Jimmy also shared that the students were super excited to help create the mural.
- Jimmy noted that there will be a special guest reader on 11/26. Please reach out to Meghann Bierly at Orcharddeicommitee@gmail.com if you are interested in volunteer opportunities.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46pm.