

Essex Parent Council Meeting

Minutes from Thursday, April 23, 2015

Welcome and Introductions

- Attending: Laura, Sue, Jim, Natalie, Jean, Samarra, Jack, Lynette, Nancy, Idas, Ana, Adriana, Milisa

Helping Our Children Fulfill Their Potential – Milisa

- Workshop based on *Mindset: the New Psychology of Success* by Carol S. Dweck, Ph. D.

Real Food for Real Kids Presentation

- Sample food was shared and short presentation by *Real Food for Real Kids*
- Nut-free, local meat, up to half organic ingredients
- School is thinking about offering hot lunch 2 days a week, maybe Tuesdays and Thursdays, if there is enough interest from the parents from both Essex and Hawthorne combined.
- No service available for children with anaphylactic allergies to ingredients other than nuts
- Minimum number of children needed – 50
- Subsidy provided for 1 student with every 20 full pay students
- Can come out on curriculum night for parents to taste and possibly sign up early in the year
- Next steps are to assess the interest in our community for a twice a week hot lunch paid program

Principal's Report – Jim

- Ms. Revesz, Mr. S., and another teacher from Hawthorne went to a presentation around a new curriculum project *Mind Up* – Mental Health initiatives for next year
- Students experienced another Prologue performance-Tor-Q Strings Quartet
- Outstanding success from the Glee Team (on Breakfast TV, won many awards & a new Yamaha electric keyboard for the school). A huge THANKS to Ms. DaCosta, Ms. Bowie and Mr. Ruan for all their hard work and dedication.
- “Invention Convention” was a huge success. Many amazing ideas presented by all grade levels. Our school superintendent was in attendance. A huge THANKS to Ms. Cappel and Ms. Cervinka
- New full lunch program continues to go well. All students in grades 1-8, from Essex and Hawthorne, (JK-SK continue to eat in their classrooms) eat at the same time together in the gym. School may look at moving lunch outside when the weather gets warmer.
- Dental screening is now complete for most, if not all, of the students (10% required follow up).
- Earth Day clean up was a hit. Let's keep it clean and green Essex!
- School Staffing Update: Ms. Patterson is leaving under the board's '4 over 5' program. She will return to another school after a year. A new VP will be hired and announced as soon as possible. A position has been posted and interviewed for a Junior/Intermediate MID teacher. Teacher TBA. Essex is allotted an additional ½ time clerical position in the office for next year. Ms. Greenberg and Ms. Davies are returning next year.
- Next Year's Class Make-up: A Grade 1, 2, 3, 4/5, 5/6, 7, 7/8, 8, Int. HSP, Junior HSP (grades 2-6), 2 Kindergarten classes, 5 Special Education Intensive Support Classes (Primary, Junior and Intermediate Mild Intellectual Disability Class as well as two Grade 7 and 8 Developmental Delayed classes).
- Essex's reputation is improving: Enrollment is up by 25 students for next year & a waitlist for grade 7 & 8 was created.
- Essex will be looking for lunch room supervisors again for next school year
- Solar panels are running now.
- School continues to wait for a formal date to repair the Overhang roof leak and removal of lead based paint flaking onto the ground.

Communications Report - Sue

- Difficulty connecting with this year's Class Parent Reps. Ideas were requested for how to improve the position/role for next year. A clear description of the role was suggested prior to parents volunteering along with an informal meet and greet early in the school year.
- Looking for other ideas to entice volunteers (sign up sheets were not as successful as anticipated). More face-to-face, grassroots approach was suggested.
- Parent Council bulletin board outside of the main office is due for a change. Appeal for ideas to the Parent Council. After some discussion, a new fundraising focus on the planned Kindergarten playground was decided.

Health and Well-Being Update - Milisa

- 2 Lunch Buddies have taken place already. Both were a huge success. Some students from the junior and primary grades were invited.
- May 21 is the next scheduled Lunch Buddy. Organizers are thinking of maybe holding a picnic.

Treasurer's Report - Samarra

- Garage Sale made \$815.05 (better than last year). Improvements for next year may include flyers, more communication, and different table layouts.
- Focus is officially switched to our upcoming Spring Fling. Expenses needed now for Spring Fling t-shirts and bouncy castle down payments.
- Attention drawn to the Essex Clothing Sale line in the budget – need to factor in reimbursement from Model School for around \$1,000.
- Lunch Buddies now formally added into the budget.

Fundraising Report - Samarra

- Spring Fling, May 29, is our new goal – meetings have been taking place since January.
- Need Essex parental help gathering donations for the Silent Auction. Please contact Ana, the Silent Auction Coordinator, if you can help canvass, springflingeh.com. Committee's goal is to collect 30-50 prizes.
- Call for Volunteers to commit to helping on the day and donating items for the Bake Sale. Contact the Volunteer Coordinators, Adriana, Heather, and Ruth at springflingeh@gmail.com, if you are able to help.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, May 20 at 6:30