**Minutes of the Board Meeting of the JSSPVA**

**February 10, 2015**

**In attendance:** Stacy Smith, Veronica Durdov, M'Liz Simonds, Kathy Garvey, Michele Bacik, Paget Bahr, Betsy Moerschel, Elleke Haggerty, Adrienne Weisenberger, Kelly Rainey, Kimberly Hedley, Kate Denny, Julie Kalainov, Lisa O'Rourke, Kendra Wallace, Elizabeth Cournoyer.

Meeting was called to order by Lisa O'Rourke, President, at 8:35am.

Kate Denny motioned to approve the minutes from the January meeting. Julie Kalainov seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

**Principal's Report**

January has been a busy month at Sears. The students participated in Ability Awareness Month which was extremely successful. Mrs. Wallace thanked the JSSPVA for organizing such a wonderful program, which received rave reviews from the students.

Parent visitation day was well attended by parents. Mrs. Wallace received good feedback about the revised format, Additionally, the 8th grade New Trier informational meeting that was held in conjunction with parent visitation day was very well received by those who attended.

NAEP testing was scheduled to be held on February 3rd, but the administrative representatives did not show up. The school does not plan to reschedule the testing.

PARC information has been sent out to all parents. A link to a sample test was included in the information which parents are encouraged to take. PARC testing will take place in the beginning of March.

**Presidents Report**

The JSSPVA Benefit is just 2 months away. Lisa encouraged everyone to get involved and asked all Board members to be ambassadors for this event. The JSSPVA is able to support the school with our additional programs and events through the funds raised at the annual benefit. The event is being held slightly earlier than recent years, so everyone is encouraged to make sure it is on our radar.

A few new families will be joining our school soon. A newcomers event will be planned for them once they arrive.

**Treasurer's and Past Treasurer’s Report**

Everything is in good standing with the income statement. Our current tax exempt letter is good through the end of October. Veronica is in the process of applying for a new letter.

Taxes have been successfully filed for the year.

**Vice President's Report**

Creative Dramatics:

Twenty-one students have registered for the program. As a result, the students were split into two groups and a second instructor was added. The program started on February 9th, and is off to a great start.

Display Case:

The display case was changed for the World Link team on February 4th and will remain through the end of February. The display case co-chairs assisted the World Link team to assemble it.

Fine Arts:

On Saturday, February 21st members of the Sears Band and Orchestra will participate in the Illinois Solo and Ensemble Contest at Northwood Junior High School in Highland Park. Select students will focus on the most demanding criteria in music performance: Musicianship, Intonation, Technique, Interpretation, Tone Quality and Stage Presence.

On March 3rd, the Junior High Chorus will be singing at the Northwestern basketball game. The game begins at 8:00pm and all are invited to attend.

March is Music-In-Our-Schools month. Student musicians are preparing for a musical fundraiser to raise money for a local charity.

Newcomers:

A welcome coffee will be held in March or April for all of the new families.

Staff Appreciation:

An appreciation lunch will be held for all teachers on February 12th during conferences.

Student Pictures:

All pictures have been completed. Composites will be printed and distributed soon.

**Community Liaison**

The Alliance for Early Childhood Development is busy planning for screen break which is scheduled for March 1st thru March 7th.

The Ability Awareness program was very well received this year. It provided the students a opportunity to gain a greater sensitivity to people with different abilities.

Kimberly Hedley provided a summary of the February Board of Education meeting which focused primarily on issues surrounding the new master schedule. Next month the Board will be coming forward with their recommendations regarding the new master schedule. Some of the issues discussed included:

* Concerns from parents regarding the reduction of lunchtime.
* Current instructional minutes in math are below the state average.
* The importance of social/emotional learning time being built into the day.
* Science needs to have more of a focus.
* Junior High students are currently torn between educational and enrichment opportunities. The proposed schedule would allow more study time and choice of electives in each students schedule.
* Teachers feel that they need bigger blocks of time for more quality learning. They also need more common planning time.
* Students need more social/emotional learning time and more structured play time into the day.
* The master schedule needs to support students to make a smooth transition from 5th to 6th grade and from 8th grade into High School.
* Ensuring that each student’s time at school is customized and utilized effectively. This is another reason why common planning time is important to the teachers.
* Instruction time is an major issue – to maximize this time, the Board is looking at reducing the lunch time.

Some of the public comments that were given at the meeting include:

* Seven people expressed their concern about shortening the lunch period. In general, these people felt that coming home allows their children to unwind.
* Not wanting to discount foreign language in the lower grades.
* Clarity about how study hall time would be used for students.

The next Board meeting will have drafts of the proposed Master Schedule for review.

Julia Jones, Director of Student Services, talked about how to make accommodations for students with an IEP and 504 during PARC testing.

The Board agreed to post the Instructional Facilitator position. This position, along with the Communications Coordinator, are the two new positions created as a result of our new organizational structure.

**Benefit**

The Benefit planning process is going very well. Trolleys have been secured starting at 6pm for transportation to and from the Benefit. If people are planning pre-parties, please let the Benefit Chair's know so they can accommodate these groups. The agenda for the evening is as follows:

6:30 – 7:45 Cocktails

8:00 – 9:30 Dinner and Live Auction

9:30 - ?? Dancing and dessert

ABC organization has been hired for electronic bidding with the auction. People will be able to bid before the Benefit and/or if they are not attending. All purchases (tables, heads and tails, auction items) will need to be made electronically through ABC.

The Benefit Chairs are still looking for ticket donations for the silent auction. February 22nd is the deadline for auction items because of the printing deadline for the program booklet.

Tim Kollar, Kendra Wallace and Kelly Kalinich will be the auctioneers this year.

**World Link**

Roxanne and Molly did a fantastic job with the new display case highlighting the Middle East. The visual impact of this display creates a significant impact on the students.

Michelle and Elizabeth had a great meeting with the Northwestern faculty. They have agreed to partner with us and will bring in some great experts to help educate our students regarding the Middle East. More details regarding the programing will be provided next month.

**Nominating**

Angie has met with her committee and they are making great progress. The goal is to get new people involved.

**New Trier Liaison**

Caroline Degenaars submitted to following report in writing:

NT School Board Open Session February Meeting

Tues. 2/17, 7:30-10pm

Northfield Campus, Room C234

NT Winter Carnival, open to the community, is 2/20 at 5:30.

Summer School registrations opened 1/26 and runs through 3/20.

(Freshman are eligible for enrichment, athletics and introductory academic courses.

Freshman are not eligible for classes that earn graduation credit).

Deadline for online course selection is 2/13 (THIS Friday!).

New Trier's "Fiddler on the Roof" takes place Thursday, March 12 - Sunday, March 15.

Tickets are available at: <https://search.seatyourself.biz/webstore/webstore.html?domain=newtrier&event=>.

Many Sears alumni are performing including James Nash (as the lead), Jeffrey McHugh, Helen Feeney, Bea McManus and Emma Schragle.

**Sears Cafe**

The new basket system has been successful. The tables labeled by teacher has also been very helpful in the MPR. Jamba Juice is in place as an offering once per month. A survey will be sent out in March to get feedback about Sears Cafe for the year.

**Communications**

The next newsletter is going out Wednesday, February 18th. Please turn all information into Kelly by Friday, February 13th.

The April newsletter will not being going our on the typical 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month, because of Spring Break. As a result, it will be distributed on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month. All information will be due to Kelly one week earlier than normal to be included in the newsletter.

As always, please check the JSSPVA website for accuracy and let Kelly know of any changes.

**Enrichment**

**K-2nd Grade Update:**

* January 20th- High Touch High Tech came into the 2nd grade classrooms and did hands on science experiments related to sound (this corresponded to their science curriculum).
* January 30th- the Kindergarteners visited the Emily Oaks Nature Center for their Groundhogs Day Experience.
* February 5th- High Touch High Tech came into the 1st grade classrooms and did hands on science experiments related to sound and light (this coincided with some new topics the 1st grade is piloting in the science curriculum).
* February 5th- the 2nd graders visited the Swedish History Museum as part of their social studies unit on immigration.

**3rd-5th Grade Update:**

* The beginning of the year kicked off with 5th graders improving their presentation skills with help from David Perkovitch.
* In February the 4th graders visited The Grove in Glenview to learn about Pioneer Skills. Each class went on their own day: February 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th.
* March 19th – parents mark your calendars for “The Talk”, which is a presentation by the Robert Crown Center. It will be held at Sears for parents only at 7pm in the auditorium. Parents will learn what is covered in the 5th grade student reproductive education class held at the Robert Crown Center on April 15th.

**6-8th Grade Enrichment and PE/Health Update:**

* On February 4th the 8th graders went to Art Museum for Early American Tour lead by a docent. They had lunch at Navy Pier and attended the Shakespeare Production of Macbeth in the afternoon. 6th and 7th graders also attended the Shakespeare play.

**FAN**

Upcoming events include:

* February 12th and 13th Bruce Petty discussing “Born for Love” - Why empathy is essential.
* February 23rd Ron Liber discussing “The Opposite of Spoiled” - Raising kids who are grounded, generous and smart about money.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45am

Next Meeting is Tuesday, March 17th at 8:30am

Respectfully submitted by:

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Lisa O'Rourke, President

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Stacy Smith, Secretary