



**Ridgewood Avenue Home & School Association
Meeting Minutes**

Friday September 8, 2023 - RAS Courtyard @ 8:45am

Officers present:

Stephanie Haller- President; Kristina Donnelly and Ashish Parmar – VPs
Carol Florczak – Treasurer; MT Reinert - Secretary

Principal's Report (Dr. Donovan)

Off to a great start to the school year! HOT but thank goodness for the RAS AC system!
Covid protocols this year - students who test positive must stay out 5 days from the positive test, and then mask for an additional 5 days.
Back To School Night (9/7) was a great success - lots of positive feedback from both teachers and parents. Please watch the teachers' videos on their webpages.

New Staff:

Sandy Russo- School Psychologist
Sara Grosfield in for Ms. Ely/ Special Ed
Brigette Larrivieri, Mariette Bazalar, Aisha Hardy- New Paras
Ms. Crouse moved from FAS to 3rd Grade
STILL SEARCHING- Permanent Subs - will take all recommendations!

GROW Program- Heather Kobylinski excited to move to RAS from GRHS and work with students regarding mental health issues.

Spanish Class- Language Learning Network - now offered via Zoom with a teacher present to oversee - and is going well so far. May open students up to being able to take different languages in future.

Homework should never become overwhelming for students. If taking too long or causing any issues at home, please let Dr. Donovan know.

Recess- in addition to the playground and sports areas out front, the Courtyard and Makerspace areas are always open to kids who prefer quieter activities or want to craft/create.

Rhino Reading- Response to Literature continuing in curriculum.

Safety & Security - administration cannot accept forgotten items due to security reasons. Dr. Donovan worked with the local police department to come up with a visitor management system. New 'digital tickets' will be created for assemblies/school events. A new lockdown system with strobe lights has been installed as well as additional cameras to monitor the front lawn area.

Communication: Facebook & Instagram are always great to check for information - but anything important will always be emailed home at 2pm as well.

Testing: MAP- may change windows and test 2 times (as opposed to 3x/year).

NJSLA results from Spring 2023 available in Skyward

Heights and Weights - never announced by the nurse.

There are 3 marking periods each school year. Report cards will be available in Skyward.

Reminder to add funds to MySchoolBucks account. If ever low, the system can back charge.

Working on Kindness Wreath and will offer erasers for fixing mistakes.

"Family Meeting" will be held with 6th graders this afternoon and with the entire school on 9/11.

Curriculum:

Implementing a new SS Curriculum and are continuing with Reviewing Science.

Implementing Phonics in 3rd Grade and Morphology in 4th Grade

RAS now has 9 Inclusion Classrooms with both Special Ed and Gen Ed teacher.

Offering a Writers' Workshop- writer's notebooks

Technology

Chromebooks given to 6th Graders to take home. All other grades will have access to chromebooks in their classrooms.

If any inappropriate terms are googled/typed, the school will be alerted by the Go Guardian program and will handle each case individually (involving parents if need be).

THANK YOU for Home & School for Support

1st Day Balloons were a bit hit!

Thank you to Stephanie and Kristina for delicious empanadas on prep days and overseeing the School Supplies fundraiser and distribution.

Faculty Report (Amanda Goodwin)

Thank you for delicious lunch on prep day and organizing and delivering school supplies.

Teachers enjoyed BTS and meeting the parents

BOE Report (Jocelyn Gottlieb)

Upcoming BOE meeting - Tuesday 9/12/23. All are welcome!

Summer BOE meeting included a retreat on school climate. Parents may be interested in seeing the presentations shared by each school on current activities, and the one that was given by Dr. Maurice Elias of Rutgers Socio-Emotional Character Development Lab.

All of them are linked on Mr. Phillip's webpage, under 7/25/23.

Treasurer's Report (Carol Florczak)

Next report will have more activity and include numbers from the Back to School Night spirit wear sale.

\$31,637 available in uncommitted cash

President's Report (Stephanie Haller)

School supply orders were completed over the summer and delivered to school the week before Labor Day. Lots of volunteers helped distribute the packages to the classrooms, and it went quickly and smoothly. It gave kids the opportunity to get inside and meet teachers!

BTSN was a success. Lots of new faces and lots of people signed up to volunteer.

School photos next week 9/12 - 9/14. Schedule will be emailed out.

3rd grade Parents' Night Out is in the works. This is the first time we are combining all three lower elementary schools. Looking for a Thursday or Friday this Fall and trying to coordinate with other schools so we don't double book a night.

HSA purchased lunch for the staff on 8/31 when they were getting the building ready. Empanada trays in varying flavors from Anthony's Cheesecake.

HSA bought balloons to put at the entrances on the first day, as well as the lunchroom tables for the kids to identify tables by number.

The Sheets N Treats fundraiser kicks off today. Information/Ordering forms will be sent home in folders.

Committee Chair openings include: Enrichment, Discovery, Paver Stones, NJ Devils, Community Service, Lost & Found (ideally someone would handle every other month), Social. Can co-chair with another person!

THANK YOU to our 6GP chairs Tara Arnett and Katie Renoff & School Supply chair Kristina Donnelly.

Committee Reports:

School Supplies - Kristina Donnelly

376 kits were sold and raised \$4,474. Kids loved helping to hand out and getting into the school to meet their teachers. Parents love the convenience of not having to shop for individual items!

Class Parents – Tricia Greene and Ashish Parmar

Class parents will be point person for working with teachers to organize class parties, field trips, Rhino Rhomp, etc. Sign up was posted on Facebook and emailed home. Two per class needed.

Sheets 'n Treats - Pamela Colledge

Order forms/brochures sent home (or will be) in students' folders. All can be ordered online. RAS gets a 40-50% kickback from sales. Ordering closes 10/6. Wrapping paper is always a big hit.

School Photos - Amy Slovitt

School photos will be taken in the auditorium next week 9/12 - 9/14 with Tony. Schedule will be emailed home this afternoon.

Spirit Wear - Rachel Klein

Online ordering will be live 9/15 and tons of new items (chromebook covers, drawstring backpacks, etc) have been added. Orders will arrive in time for holidays. Sale at BTS night went well!

Library - Deirdre Carlough

Volunteer opportunities available when your child's class has library time. New volunteers will have to be trained. Sign ups will come out soon.

Library looks great with the new floor. Computers were taken out and redistributed throughout the district.

Important Upcoming Dates:

9/12-9/14: School Photos

9/25: School Closed for Yom Kippur

10/6: Sheets 'N Treats Sale Closes

10/9: School Closed for Staff Professional Day

10/23 - 10/27: Red Ribbon Week (focusing on kindness, inclusion)

Meeting Minutes

June's Minutes approved by Carol and Kristina.

Next RAS HAS meeting will be November 3rd @ 8:45am.

Meetings will now be every other month.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:42am.