**The Mount Washington School**

**School Family Council**

**Meeting: 12/1/20, 6-7PM (Virtual via Zoom)**

**Attendees:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Leaha Charles-Pierre | Co-Chair, SFC Representative-Teacher, Parent |
| Amalie Ward | Co-Chair, SFC Representative-Parent, 4th Grade |
| Bethany Jacobs | Administration-Assistant Principal |
| Michael Johnson | Administration-Assistant Principal |
| Reynilda Carino | SFC Representative-Teacher, Middle School |
| Barbara Drummonds | SFC Representative-Teacher, 4th Grade |
| Karen Ginyard | SFC Representative-Teacher, 3rd Grade |
| Amie Luther | SFC Representative-Teacher, 1st Grade |
| Elizabeth Piatt | SFC Representative-Teacher, K-8 Music |
| Kathryn Chib | SFC Representative-Parent, Kindergarten |
| Niki McCormally | SFC Representative-Parent, 1st Grade |
| Tavian Cardwell | SFC Representative-Parent, 2nd Grade |
| Alicia Marner | SFC Representative-Parent, 5th Grade |
| Laura Green | SFC Representative-Parent, Middle School |
| Deborah Harburger | SFC Representative-Parent, Middle School |
| Marshalynne Seavers | SFC Representative-Parent, Middle School |
| Matthew Day, Sr | SFC Representative-Parent, Community Representative |
| Josie Raney | SFC Representative-Parent, Community Representative |
| David McMurray | Parent, PTO President |
| Mike Addabbo | Parent |
| Leslie Allen | Parent |
| Ilene Berman | Parent |
| Jocelyn Casser | Parent  |
| Bridgette Chambers | Parent |
| Warren Chambers | Parent |
| Martha Johnson | Parent |
| Dionne Mitchell | Parent |
| Sharon Small | Parent |

**Notes:**

Old Business & Updates:

*November minutes:* Notes from the November meeting were approved by attendees without change.

*3rd Grade Representative:* The request for a representative will be sent out again as well as posted in the 3rd grade Facebook page.

SFC/PTO Giving Drive: Dec 14-18: Mrs. Long approved the use of the lobby/main office for an SFC/PTO Giving Drive during the week of Dec 14-18 from 8:30-3:30, with one evening drop-off from 4-6pm on Thursday, Dec 17th. A flyer will be sent out by the PTO through Class Dojo and Facebook and will be posted to the website. The plan is to have the administrators staff the collection for the evening drop-off.

Parents and caregivers can drop off gifts for teachers and administrators during this time of virtual school. The PTO will provide gift bags for any teacher gifts, which should be clearly labeled.

There will also be a book drive for the Maryland Book Bank. Children’s books are redistributed in packets to children and the books for adults are resold to fund the activities. MWS will need to obtain sturdy boxes that can seal, count and collect the books, and bring them to the Maryland Book Bank. Volunteers are needed to count, collect, and drop off the books. Boxes are also needed. After the holidays, the books will be counted and dropped off. Leaha Charles-Pierre will work with Jocelyn Cassert to organize the drop-off.

During this week, MWS will be collecting blankets, mittens, scarves, and gloves to be donated to the Daniel C Torsch Foundation. Gently used items are permitted in addition to new items. They also accept new undergarments.

Family & Community Engagement Committee: The Committee is trying to organize a Fitness Night and a Trivia Night. The Committee had wanted to have the Trivia Night in the first two weeks of December and the Fitness Night on January 8th. However, it may make sense to move Trivia Night into February. (The Talent Showcase is on January 29th.) Jocelyn Casser will work on creating the trivia in Kahoot. Ms. Jacobs will check with Mrs. Long to confirm the date of January 8th for the Fitness Night.

Attendance Committee: The Committee is working to identify incentives that work in a virtual setting. The suggestion is to do a posting on Dojo for the first quarter and a certificate when materials are picked up next quarter.

IB Expansion & Marketing Committees: Brochures are going to be drafted and there is interest in highlighting the full program from K-8 to include the IB expansion and the elementary and middle school offerings. There was some input about the importance of highlighting both parts in a single brochure for continuity. There is an interest in highlighting IB as well as the STEM components of the MWS middle school. A single concise brochure can direct people back to the website, which can have a lot more detail and be more tailored. It will include PYP, MYP, Honors, and other programs.

Josie Raney identified a community organization that will be willing to design a brochure pro bono. Additionally, there has been a lot of activity over the past month to support marketing activities for the Middle School, with new powerpoints, videos, and promotional materials that are going to be used to help develop the brochures and can be used for the website as well as in the meetings and presentations with students and parents.

Safety & Climate Committee: The school is following Baltimore City’s direction in terms of preparing materials for a return to the building At this point, the plan to get wipes and sanitizing materials is on hold.

There is interest in further discussing uniforms and the distinction between the middle and elementary schools. This will be on the agenda for January to plan for the 2021-2022 school year. (If the school returns in-person, there will not be uniforms this year.)

There is an openness to having a Student Council and need to figure out what that would look like.

Grade Band Representatives: Teachers need support from parents but there is a challenge with how to communicate with the other parents. Grade band parents do not have email lists or ways to communicate other than with the people that they are friends with or who their children are friends with. **Grade band reps should contact the homeroom teachers and ask them to send out messages on behalf of the SFC representatives.**

Schoolwide, one of the concerns is that the students are not engaging and are not turning on cameras. This would make a huge difference for the teachers. They would appreciate seeing their faces while teaching so they can see what they are doing and if they are participating. **The goal is for the majority of students to have their cameras on, most of the time**. Teachers understand there are circumstances that mean the camera won’t be on but the goal is for the majority of them to be on.

Parents noted it is helpful for a “break” sign to be on the screen so parents know when the class is on a break. It is also helpful when teachers communicate what the class will be working on so parents can ask questions and follow up on assignments. In the 2nd and 3rd grade, the students need support to ensure they are completing the asynchronous work, such as watching the Great Minds videos. They also need to be supported to take notes while they are watching videos.

The assignments also need to be completed in a timely fashion. Students throughout the school are turning assignments in late, which delays grading.

Parents should be supported to get daily and weekly reports in google classroom.

Ms. Piatt will follow up with resource teachers to help make sure that the deadlines are included with their assignments so that parents can help support the teachers.

Parents might benefit from a google classroom tutorial because the teacher view is different from the student view, so it’s hard to help the students navigate.

A request was made to post the grade band representatives in class dojo to support parents and teachers.

There was not a back to school night this year, which means that the parents did not hear directly from their students’ teachers. The school could have a series of asynchronous video messages from the teachers that orient the parents through key expectations and priorities. This could be in addition to a back to school night, which could happen in the new year.

**The suggestion was made to develop a tips & reminders post to send on Class Dojo with the top reminders:**

1. All caregivers should ask their students’ homeroom teachers for access to Google Classroom to receive daily and weekly reports. Caregivers should check Class Dojo daily for announcements and reminders. It is available as an app and as a website.
2. Students need to ensure they are watching assigned asynchronous videos and completing asynchronous assignments, including taking notes on what was watched. (Particularly 3rd-5th grades)
3. Caregivers should make arrangements to pick up the resources from the school so students have the workbooks and other materials.
4. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of office hours! They can meet with the teachers to get support to complete assignments and get help with specific content.
5. Students should be supported to complete their work on-time! This lets teachers know what the students understand and where they need help. Delays have a ripple effect on the teachers completing grading as well.
6. Caregivers are asked to check in with their students to find out what they worked on during the day and to help their students to advocate for themselves and ask questions, particularly in the youngest grades.
7. Students and caregivers are asked to cut back on excess noise like televisions or music as much as possible. Some noise is expected, particularly from other students or parents who are working, but televisions, music, and casual conversation are distracting. Please consider getting students headphones.
8. Students should keep their cameras on! The goal is for most of the students to have their cameras on for most of the day. It is very difficult for teachers to engage with students when their cameras are off or facing the ceiling.
9. Caregivers are asked to help their students log into the correct resource class on the correct day. This is a significant challenge in the 4th and 6th grades.
10. Caregivers and students should reach out for help when students need it or something is unclear. Please remember that the teachers are doing their best and working hard while balancing their own lives and challenges during this pandemic. Teachers understand that families are managing a lot of stress right now and ask for the same consideration.

Parent Representative Concern:

There was a request for clarification on the policy for substitute teachers and how much synchronous learning is expected (and how it gets made up when a lot of synchronous learning is missed). MWS contacts substitutes when they know that a teacher is sick or unavailable but there is a substitute shortage. All of the material the teachers are using is available in Clever. For the youngest kids, it can be better for them to do asynchronous work rather than developing a new relationship with a substitute teacher that they do not know. Similarly, the middle school students are able to do more independent work and can do asynchronous work as needed.

A budget subcommittee will need to be established in January to start working on the issue.