

Benjamin Franklin Middle School Home and School Association Zoom Meeting Minutes - December 16, 2020

Attendees: Carol Waldman, Mayumi Brescia, Meghan Agatep, Jen Tesseyman, Laura McGrath, Valerie Auyeung, Anne McAskin, Mr. Orsini, Paul McCarthy, Stacy Malmberg, Lisette Ramos.

Welcome:

- The Zoom Meeting was called to order at 1:30 PM. The BFHSA Co-President Carol Waldman welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. The November 2020 minutes were approved. 1st Approval - Meghan Agatep; 2nd Approval - Mayumi Brescia.

Agenda Items:

- Principal's Report - Mr. Orsini
 - Tomorrow, Thursday, December 17th is a Snow Day and Friday, December 18th will be All Virtual Day.
 - Currently, approximately 35% students are Remote. We started the school year with about 120 students and now just over 250.
 - About 5% of Hybrid students are currently calling in Remote (not Sick).
 - If a student decides to switch to Remote from Hybrid, you can complete the paperwork for the return to Hybrid at the same time (if you know the timing of when you would like to go back to Hybrid). Turn around time for paperwork is about a day at BF.
 - No reported Covid cases as of today; however, encourage families to report any illnesses (including Covid) over the break to Nurse Reilly.
 - Mrs. Stovall has been reaching out to the "All Remote" families and working on putting things in place to assist these students and families.
 - The Pandemic Response Team - have discussed with Group Care Plus about putting programs in place to provide parents with support, guidance and advice in supporting their children through this Pandemic, Schooling, etc.
 - 8th Graders will begin the High School process shortly and will be receiving Teacher recommendations and signing up for High School Classes.
 - The Patterson Gift Drive was a huge success! We were able to give an extra 200 gifts to Toys for Tots through a joint effort between the Dads Night Group from Sommerville and Hawes and the Ridgewood Police & Fire Departments. Thank you to the families who donated gifts.
 - Mr. Orsini has been able to get his Teacher Observations completed and is extremely impressed with the high level of performance and the integration between the "In-School" and "At Home" students. Very impressed with how active the students are and how they interact and collaborate together.
 - As it relates to the Covid Vaccine - Teachers are considered to be in the Second Tier of Essential Workers. Best guess is that it will be offered around Spring Break time. Dr. Gorman is looking to be able to bring the Vaccine into the Schools for Teachers to be vaccinated (similar to how flu shots are provided). Once teachers and the adult population get vaccinated, the risk of spread is reduced. Highly likely that school could look more normal by September 2021; although, expect that students will continue to wear masks for some time. There would still be an option for Virtual School; especially for the most vulnerable students.
 - BF has some money left in the Budget that has not been used due to Covid. Using funds to order new tables for the Cafeteria and to update the furniture in the BF Learning Commons (Library).
- President's Report:
 - Federated Report - Mayumi Brescia:
 - Dr. Gorman has been named the Acting Superintendent until a new Superintendent is hired. Basil Pizzuto and Jeff Nyhuis will manage the High School and Dr. Gorman will return as Principal once a new Superintendent is hired.
 - BOE has sent a Survey to Parents to be used to compile a leadership profile of the candidate. Surveys are due Friday, December 18th.

- Treasurer's Report - Valerie Aeyueng & Laura McGrath
 - Directory -250 Directories have been sold
 - Purchased a Commemorative Tree of Hope that will be planted in the Springtime. Students working with Ms. Fontana (Art Teacher) on a dedication plaque.
 - Holiday Spirit Wear Fundraiser - ended November 17th and we have received a check from Varsity Hues

- Paul McCarthy - President of the Ridgewood Education Foundation (REF):
 - REF is an independent 501c3 and was founded in 1989 by a group of parents. 18 member board. The goal of REF is to work collaboratively with the District Administration, BOE, Teachers, Educators and HSAs to raise private funds to be used to enhance education in all of our schools beyond what our School Budgets allow. Over the years, REF has provided \$1.3 million in grants and sponsorships and 300 grants (academic and arts) across all schools. Three categories of Grants - Leadership, Classroom and Sponsorship. Some examples are the Chromebook Initiative, RHS Learning Commons, STEAM programs, Modernization of Classrooms, etc.
 - Fundraisers:
 - Oktoberfest is held every other year. Cancelled in 2020.
 - 2019 - Multi Night Phone A Thon.
 - Just did a campaign through the new GroupSpot for Giving Tuesday
 - Continue to do outreach through email. REF is trying to expand their message and inform the community.
 - Working on developing virtual monthly programs with online content. For example, a Winterfest Campaign where there may be beer tasting, a cooking class, etc.
 - Donations via Website - www.ridgewoodeducation.org Can also follow REF on Facebook and Instagram. .
 - Mr. Orsini - thanked Paul and the REF for all of their assistance in supporting various Science and Arts initiatives at BF including the STEAM program.

- New Business - Carol Waldman
 - Virtual Book Fair - closed December 2nd. Only had 10 orders. A \$45 credit has been given to Linda Rothchild.
 - Holiday Spirit Wear Sale - just ended November 17th and items just delivered December 15th. We made \$200.
 - Chipotle No Cook Fundraiser - December 17th 4-8pm.
 - Parkwood Deli No Cook Fundraiser - January 15th - \$40/meal.
 - Donut Sale - date TBD but possibly Valentine's Day. \$25/box of mini donuts. BF receives \$5 back on each sale.

Meeting was concluded at 2:11 PM

Minutes respectfully submitted by Anne McAskin, Board Secretary