

**Benjamin Franklin Middle School Home and School Association  
Meeting Minutes - January 19, 2022**

**Attendees:**

- Carol Waldman, Mayumi Brescia, Meghan Agatep, Jen Tesseyman, Laura McGrath, Valerie Auyeung, Anne McAskin, Colleen Tansey, Sandy Santangelo, Laura Waisnor, Katie Freeborn, MJ, Ada, Sarah Traband, Kelly Krumenacker-Choong, Young Hwang

**Welcome:**

- The Zoom Meeting was called to order at 1:01PM. The BFHSA Co-President Carol Waldman welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. The October 2021 minutes were approved. 1st Approval - Laura McGrath; 2nd Approval - Mayumi Brescia.

**Agenda Items:**

- Student Council Report - Jonathan Tom (President), Quinn Caulfield (Vice President), Jalyn Yang (Secretary)
  - “Soup”erbowls - collect soup cans in the Homerooms. Grades can earn Spirit Points. Support Kids Cancer.
  - The Student Council has begun a Lunch Bunch with students from the RISE/SAIL program once a week.
  - Attended a Virtual NJ Student Council Conference with other schools from Bergen County. Shared and discussed ideas, new practices, diversity, and ways to improve communication.
  - Working on implementing programs that improve communication among students. Currently using a Discord App which allows you to create channels and servers and a tool to distribute news/information.
- Principal's Report - Mr. Orsini
  - Happy New Year!
  - Increase in Covid cases since the New Year; however, currently, we have no classes being held in the Auditorium and if any teachers are absent, we currently have enough coverage to cover the class in the classroom. Continue to have waves of students out with Covid. Since January 3rd, we've consistently had about 100 students out due to Covid and contact tracing. There is no “virtual/remote” learning option which would have to be mandated at the State level.
  - Thank you to Ms. Karch and Ms. Reilly for all of their help in keeping the students safe, contacting and advising families, and keeping everyone informed. Thank you to all of the Teachers as well who also put the safety of our students first.
  - Mr. Ordini - Play Practice is going great. 3rd Practice today. Guest Zoom Speaker, Barry Pearl, from the original cast of Grease will be speaking with the kids today. An Email will be going out to the parents soon about asking for help.
  - Linda Rothschild - Media Specialist -
    - Author Visit - March 29th- Jerry Craft to discuss two graphic novels. “New Kid” - won the first Newberry award for a Graphic novel and “Class Act”. Hoping to hold this event “in person”. Will be selling the two graphic novels as well as a few of his older books. Author Visit ties in with an 8th Grade Graphic Novel Unit.
    - Book Fair - February 14th - 18th. Still need volunteers,
    - Thank you to Mrs. Rothschild as she is Retiring.
  - Hiring for mid year retirements and leave replacements. We have filled 99% of the open positions.
    - Charlotte Ayes - 8th Grade Science - an experienced teacher coming from West Orange
    - Ms. Geraghty - Special Ed - also an experienced teacher
    - Kelly Lee - 8th Grade English - an experienced teacher starting soon.
  - Ms. Mahoney - Guidance Counselor - School Safety Team Meeting - meet monthly

- There have been 6 HIB investigations; 2 of which have been confirmed. No repeat offenders.
    - School Safety Team works to foster a positive and safe school environment.
      - 60 plus Clubs offer kids a way to get involved and stay busy
      - Gratitude Assemblies
      - Anti-Bullying Assembly
      - Turkey Trot and Gift Drives
      - Professional Development for Teachers
      - Advisories - discuss Bullying
      - School Announcements / Messages recognizing students, sending out positive messages, etc.
      - Discuss Cyber Bullying in Digital Citizenship class
  - Mr. Wu discussed School Clubs:
    - Currently have 35 active clubs. Approximately 380 students (out of 700) are involved in clubs. Highlighted a few of the clubs:
      - Open Gym - 7:00 - 7:30AM
      - Unified Club
      - Jazz Machine
      - Crystal Club
      - Brain Busters
      - You be the Chemist
      - Science Club
      - Volleyball - beginning in February
      - Chamber Orchestra - will have a Spring Concert
      - TREPS - planning for June 2022
      - Yearbook Club
      - The Green Club
      - Creative Crafters
      - Book Club
      - BF Voices
      - Pokemon
      - Magic and Gathering
      - Dungeon Dragons
      - Homework Helpers
      - Moter Head
      - BF Cares
      - Finger Boarding
      - Finance Club - with two High School Students
      - Drama Club - School Play
  - Ms. Stovell Update:
    - Discussed potential 8th Grade Trip - work in progress
      - Planning around State Testing. Spring State Testing should be the 2nd week of May and will be a little longer than the Fall testing. Planning 8th grade trip at the end of May or 1st week of June.
      - Possible Trip to Connecticut:
        - Mystic Seaport
        - Sturbridge Village
        - Aquarium
        - Possible Ghost Tour
        - Possible Dave & Busters
      - Challenges - how to keep it safe with our numbers (i.e., how many hotel rooms, number of buses, etc.)
        - Higher Price range - \$650 - \$800 for 3 days / 2 nights and would include tours, tour guides, and hotel)

- Due to Covid, prices have increased
    - Would need to have an empty hotel room in case anyone becomes sick with Covid. Parents would need to be able to pick up sick child.
    - Thank you to the Parent Group who has been patient and helpful in working towards putting this trip together.
  - If there is a financial hardship, please contact Ms. Stovell
  - Discussed Extended Day Program which will begin February 8th - April 6th
    - Run 3 days (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday) and split by subject and grade
    - Using IXL program to identify goals/objectives
    - Identified students based on the Start Strong Assessments as well as current academic progress/performance.
    - Small Group Instruction teaching lessons, assessing students progress/performance and using IXL materials for practice and reinforcement.
      - Will allow for more 1v1 time
      - Help strengthen fundamental skills
    - Parents should reach out to Teachers if have any concerns
  - Ms. Mahoney will be meeting with the current 8th graders over the next month to talk about High School course selection and Teacher recommendations. Parents can contact Ms. Mahoney with any questions. RHS Supervisors will be coming to BF to speak with the 8th graders about the High School programs.
  - Band/Chorus concerts are coming up in a few weeks. Masks required.
- President's Report:
  - Federated Report - Mayumi Brescia:
    - Due to Covid, the Wizards game as well as the Ridgewood Got Talent Contest will be rescheduled to the Spring .
- Sandy Santangelo:
  - Tic Toc Art Docent - volunteer in the classroom to discuss arts, art movements, artifacts and introduce culture to our kids
    - Children Series Theatre
    - Art Docent - Elementary Schools
    - Rotate collection of art on the walls at the Middle School
    - Would like to expose Middle School students to Technology and Creative Fields and class opportunities offered at RHS (i.e., RHS offers approx. 42 Art Classes - architecture, culinary arts, creative design, film etc.)
      - Exploring the Arts Event - before 8th graders sign up for classes
        - One day 25 min period during lunch or recess - sign up for 3 out of 10 stations - 8 minutes each. See videos, speak to RHS students, Tic Toc Talks,
        - Larisa Shlahet - helping to put this together at BF but needs volunteers. Stay tuned and look for a Sign Up Genius to come.
- Treasurer's Report - Valerie Auyeung & Laura McGrath
  - November Chipotle No Cook Fundraiser - raised approximately \$180
  - October Spirit Night raised approximately \$7,000
  - Amazon Smile has raised approximately \$54. Reminder to sign up for the Free Raisers - Box Tops & Amazon Smile - designate BF HSA as the charitable organization.
  - November Goffle Brook Farm Fundraiser raised approximately \$197
  - 380 Families have paid HSA Dues.
- New Business - Meghan Agatep
  - BF Day - April 23rd 1pm Yankee's Game. \$85/ticket - field level seats, hotdog, drink and backpack

- Super Science Saturday - Virtual - March 5th 10:00am - 12:30pm. More information to come in February.
- Parent Questions to Administration and Other Discussion:
  - Discuss the effects of the pandemic on our children. Students miss having more time at their lockers, being able to decorate lockers.
    - Mr. Orsini explained that the Student Council is requesting and addressing feedback/suggestions from the students. Addressing birthdays on morning announcements and discussing other ways to recognize birthdays. There will be no change on lockers.
  - Question regarding why there isn't a "Virtual Learning Option" for those who are immunocompromised during times when Covid numbers are high.
    - Mr. Orsini explained that this decision is not a local level decision and is mandated by the State of NJ ; however, teachers have been instructed to have their Google Meet on in the classroom and keep Google Classroom up to date for those who are home with Covid.

**Meeting was concluded at 2:23 PM**  
**Minutes respectfully submitted by Anne McAskin, Board Secretary**