

Sands Montessori Parent Organization

SMPO February Rudder Meeting Minutes

February 15, 2022 / 7 PM / Zoom Meeting

SMPO LEADERSHIP ATTENDEES:

Heather Gerker - President

Courtney Ryan - Vice President

Dave Rolfes – Executive Secretary

Becky Economou – Business Manager

Michelle Durban – Business Manager in Training

Allyse Sonnega – Parent at Large

Sarah Lord –Principal

3-6 Teacher Representative

Vanessa Barth – 6-9 Teacher Representative

Lisa Bowden – 9-12 Teacher Representative

Robyn Appino – Fine Arts Representative

Kris Spurgeon – Intervention Specialist

Nikki Marksberry – Community Coordinator

Rachel Danhires – SEP Coordinator

– Volunteer Coordinator

Holly Fritz – Fundraising Coordinator

Brittany Able – Communications Coordinator

Chris Vockell – Athletics

LeAnn Gardner – Technology

Richard Groose – LSDMC

Kim Fulbright - ILT

SMPO Rudder Meeting - February 15

Our mission is for families, staff, and students to work together to strengthen the Sands Montessori community of lifelong learners.

February 15, 7pm via Zoom, registration link:

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUpc-CtqjspH9HceCvzV1LxN76wB9FOg1_B

TIME	CONTENT
7 - 7:10	<p>Welcome and call the meeting to order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check-in chat: what was a favorite outdoor activity you enjoyed as a child? ● Mission review - will be reflected on at the beginning of every meeting ● Approval of minutes from January meeting ● Out of the 60+ schools, Sands was one of 4 that was recognized for a clean and safe environment, because of Mr. Bob and his team. The admin celebrated him with a certificate and decorations in the halls on Wednesday last week and the SMPO delivered treats on Wednesday to say thank you.
7:10 - 7:45	<p>Reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Principal Lord ● Community Coordinator (Nikki Marksberry) ● Business Manager (Becky Economou)- link to the budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Current balances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We reconciled our accounts for the past 2 years, which allowed us to move \$25,000 from checking to savings. Our balances now: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Checking \$35,819.06 ● Savings \$61,100.11 ● Fundraising updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Readathon (March 4 - 18) updates on planning - Beth Delay and Brooke Rice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Help spread the word for registering! Share on your social media, tell other parents in your child's classrooms, and teachers please share with your communities! ▪ Tracey Baptiste - Family Reading Night ○ Spring Carnival/Event (April 9) updates on planning - Emily McNicholas and Erin Woods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need Entertainment Chair and Sponsorship Chair for the planning committee ▪ Additional volunteer request coming soon! ● Volunteer Coordinator (Amy Hueneman) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Room Parent Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We REALLY want to get this process back in order so we can increase engagement with parents and families and

	<p>streamline requests for volunteers for the rest of this year and in future years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Missing Room parents from the following classrooms: 1002, 1003, 1004, 1005, 1009, 1012, 1014, 1015, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2017 ▪ REQUEST: Teacher reps - for the above classrooms, please ask teachers to confirm if they have a Room Parent or not. If they do, I need their contact information in the sheet. If they do not, mark that they do not on the sheet so I can reach out to the communities in those classrooms to solicit for a Room Parent volunteer. It would also be helpful if teachers can include this request in their communication to families. We have two BIG events coming up so it would be great to have Room Parents identified for all rooms for our solicitation/communication to support them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NEED: Field Day Co-Chair - scheduled for 5/23, rain day is 5/24. ○ Readathon and Carnival Co-Chairs: It looks like the co-chairs are soliciting for their own volunteers. Please confirm with Amy if you need any support to solicit volunteers. ○ Nominating Committee: SMPO Rudder - confirm with Amy Hueneman if you intend to run in your current position or if you are interested in a different role on the SMPO. Nomination communication will be sent out by the end of February per the bylaws. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent At Large & Parent Liaison (Alysse Sonoga & Debbi McCoy) ● Athletics (Chris Vockell) ● ILT (Alissa Paasch & Kim Fulbright) ● LSDMC (Erin Seidel, Priya Rolfes, Richard Gross, & Sharice Wood) ● 6-9 teacher rep (Vanessa Barth & Sarah Fullen) ● 9-12 teacher rep (Lisa Bowden) ● Fine Arts rep (Robyn Appino) ● Any questions on reports listed below? <p>View reports sent via email below.</p>
<p>7:45 - 8:15</p>	<p>Old Business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outdoor Campus discussion and vote <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First review process of what approval for this project ● Reminder of the SMPO book club for grown-ups: Feb. 28, 7-8pm. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Speak No Evil by Uzodinma Iweala ○ Any adult with a connection to the Sands or Mt. Washington Elementary community is welcomed and encouraged to join. Library copies will be available for book selections and participants can receive 20% off at Joseph-Beth by mentioning the book club. ○ Interested in joining us or have questions? Please email Margo at margoannsmith@hotmail.com. ● Any other "old business" to address?

8:15 - 8:25	New Business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mini-grant cycle - Heather will lead this effort but needs 2-3 additional folks to serve (it will likely be about 1-2 hours of reviewing/editing the application and process) Reminder we are awarding up to \$10,000 to Sands staff.
8:25 - 8:30	Wrap up and questions - a reminder to review reports sent via email below!
8:30	Adjourn

Reports sent via email:

3-6 teacher rep (Caitlin Lavine)

- No news to report.

Intervention Specialist rep (Kris Spurgeon)

- We are finishing up winter benchmark assessments, MAP for Reading and Science (4-5), iReady for Math ensuring accommodations for all students with IEPs. We will be interviewing for a new Intervention Specialist to replace a retiring staff member (not sure if I can say the name). No other updates at this time.

Communication Coordinator (Brittany Able)

- The E-newsletter is now bi-weekly, keep that in mind when sending Brittany blurbs in case they are dated. Also, Facebook will be in real-time so anything anyone wants to be posted on social media can send it to Brittany and she will post it accordingly. Brittany's email: britthuff@gmail.com
- Be sure to send an end date for announcements so Brittany knows when to remove them from the e-newsletter and FB.

Technology (Leann Gardner)

- Working with Brittany to keep everything up to date. Please send website edits or suggestions to Leann: secen81@gmail.com

Sands Extracurricular Program - SEP (Rachel Danhires)

- Scholarship checks have been issued. Classes are underway and those canceled due to weather have scheduled make-up days.

Other announcements

- [SMPO calendar here for review.](#)

SMPO Rudder Meeting Minutes - February 15

Meeting Called to Order by **Heather Gerker & Courtney Ryan**

Review of Mission

Richard Groose motioned to approve the [minutes from January meeting](#); LeAnn Gardner seconded it. Minutes were approved.

Heather mentioned the recognition for Mr. Bob.

Sarah Lord with Principal's Update:

- Everyone is proud of Mr. Bob and his staff for keeping the building clean and beautiful. Also the Who Dey Hallway Challenge was awesome.
- Academically things are going well with teachers implementing the new Montessori program and hope to formally get there by early 2023.
- Currently celebrating Montessori week & Black History month at school including having a book as part of the announcements.
- Great collaboration with Walnut Hills on reading plan as well. The Read-a-thon is on the way! Nikki did a great job building a great display in the main hallway.
- ILT and LSDMC are working hard with budget reductions. About a 15% reduction and staffing is now based on class size limits which means reduction for one 6-9 and two 9-12 teachers at this moment but hopeful that enrollment will go back up to allow for those teachers to return.

Nikki Marksberry Update:

- School Zone sign brought up to Mt Washington CC and there is an owner on the CC that will advocate for changes. It was also raised to Mark Jeffries (Cincinnati City Council) to see if he can help.
- Nikki & Ms. Robyn running a "New to You Book Swap" as part of the Read-a-Thon. Nikki would love donations of chapter books from the SMPO, we need about 100 to make sure that all kids can get a new to them book.

Michelle Durban Finance Update:

- Checking at \$35,819 & Savings at \$61,100 – recent transfer per by-laws to move funds from checking to savings due to annual amounts remaining over.
- Rachel Danhires asked about deposits for SEP but the answer wasn't readily available. Rachel will contact Becky.

Fundraising Updates:

Beth DeLay w/ Read-a-Thon

- Moving along and need some ideas to kick start registration for the program. Beth outlined the ways that have been utilized thus far & is looking for ways to move the needle on registration.
 - Ideas floated around as Vanessa Barth offered to include a few sentences in email that the teachers can use. Also discussion of a text message registration from Sarah Lord and it will be Robyn's focus for classes next week. It sounds as though things will get moving and folks are optimistic that it will help. Sarah Lord also offered to use robo call program as well. Also a discussion to use the room parent list that Amy Hueneman has been working on.
- Robyn will be sending some info about bookmark contest, family reading night, and the author visit (Tracey Baptiste) as well. It will be included in the newsletter as well. Children will be able to check out a book from the author as well.

Emily McNicholas w/ Spring Carnival

- See notes above; they are looking for volunteers for events as well as sponsorships at both family & business levels. Carnival is scheduled for April 9 with a TBD rain date.

Amy Hunneman – Volunteer Update

- Not able to attend; working on room parent program. See the list in the notes.
- Still need Field Day Co-Chair. Scheduled for May 23 and rain date of May 24. There was a little confusion over it; Heather to follow up with Sarah & clarify the date.
- Anyone with a position on SMPO Rudder should email Amy to indicate interest for next school year on whether to stay in role or move to a new role.

Allyse Sonnega - Parent at Large Update:

Providing meals for conferences the next two Thursdays

Chris Vockell – Athletics Update:

2 weeks left in basketball; soccer is getting up & running. Amanda Robinson is working on the logistics & details. Registration is closed & looks to be on track for a spring soccer season.

Kim Fulbright - ILT Update:

- Working through budget & teacher staffing updates based on what we know and expect for next year. There seems to be a misunderstanding out there about the fact that Sands is turning people away, but we are not.
- ILT is looking for ways to support the community – yard signs which need budget; opportunity to highlight students or teachers through newsletter. “Regal Eagles” is proposed name. Courtney Ryan mentions the yard sign idea was \$6/\$7 a sign and can be budgeted for next year.

- Richard Goose asks about why enrollment is down; Sarah Lord mentions some factors including handling of COVID in 2020-2021; we've tried to keep class sizes low at Sands which is now possibly hurting the budget allocation; lottery has also impacted due to the fact there is now only one round of lottery now as compared to the past. Also an impact due to Spencer Center & Hyde Park School.

Richard Goose – LSDMC Update:

Discussion of funding and possibly giving teachers more money if they need it; though of course we cannot directly fund teacher positions

Vanessa Barth – 6-9 Rep Update:

100% participation in Mr. Bob's contest & it was a lot of fun. Conferences are coming up soon & winter testing is complete at this point. Scope & Sequence is being worked on as well. Trying to do it so there is more uniformity amongst the classes.

Lisa Bowden – 9-12 Rep Update:

Testing is done & working hard on Black History Month with a variety of programming including having a visitor come and talk to the kids.

Robyn Appino – Fine Arts Rep Update:

Ms. Linger asked to share that there are some new instruments in the music room. Ms. Angela is working on getting 3D printers up & running. Bookmark contest is ready to go & the kids are excited.

Heather Gerker points out that the rest of the reports are available for consumption.

Old Business

Heather Gerker - Survey Results – 2 items were highlighted included in Montessori materials as well as outdoor campus. Based on broader work happening we will not be moving forward with material refresh.

Courtney Ryan – Outdoor Campus Presentation

Courtney has been working on it and has worked with the teachers; the general feeling is too much grass and not enough other items to stimulate the senses & not enough shade; currently looking at partnership with Native Root;

- current proposal is 47 trees for about \$15,000
- recycled plastic picnic tables a proposed to have 4 for a total of about \$6900
- discussion of shade structure on blacktop area
- discussion of stencils on blacktop
- gaga pit needs a little work to minimize mud
- nature playscape as well which Courtney has been picking up which is low dollar but heavy volunteer
- other minimal costs for supplies
- total cost of current proposal \$27,400

Richard Groose asks about paying a little more for bigger trees which would provide benefits sooner. Courtney has a variety of plans as well that she will share out but this plan seemed most appropriate based on number of trees and diversity.

Other thoughts for funding include asking families to put more money back in as “sponsorships” for the trees or sand pits, etc.

The plan will to be approved by Rudder, LSDMC, and ILT prior to general parent meeting in April. Then Sarah needs to go to district for approval as well.

Richard Groose makes motion that plan and timetable to be accepted. **Michelle Durban** seconds a vote. The vote is taken in Chat & approved unanimously. Chat transcript below:

Sarah Lord to Everyone (8:22 PM)

Great research and presentation, Courtney!

LeAnn Gardner to Everyone (8:22 PM)

yes

Kimberly Fulbright to Everyone (8:22 PM)

ILT- Yes

Richard Grosse to Everyone (8:22 PM)

yes

Vanessa Barth to Everyone (8:22 PM)

yes

Holly Fritz to Everyone (8:22 PM)

YES!!!!!!

Rachel Danhires to Everyone (8:22 PM)

Yes SEP

Dave Rolfes to Everyone (8:22 PM)

Well done Courtney! I approve

Chris Vockell to Everyone (8:22 PM)

Yea

Becky Economou to Everyone (8:22 PM)

business manager - yes

Allyse Sonnega to Everyone (8:22 PM)

yes

Thomas Wood to Everyone (8:22 PM)

yes

Sharice Wood to Everyone (8:22 PM)

yes

Michelle Durban to Everyone (8:23 PM)

Great job, Courtney!!

Kimberly Fulbright to Everyone (8:23 PM)

Congrats Sands!

LeAnn Gardner to Everyone (8:23 PM)

awesome work

Sarah Lord to Everyone (8:24 PM)

This will be a HUGE blessing to our students and staff. Thank you!!

Reminder that SMPO Book Club meeting on February 28.

New Business:

Heather Gerker mentions the mini-grant process is around the corner & looking for a partner or two. **LeAnn Gardner** offered to volunteer to help. **Vanessa Barth** asks about timeline and best guess for now is March/April.

Richard Groose motioned to end the meeting and **Michelle Durban** seconded. Meeting adjourned.