

Blind Brook PTA
General Meeting
Thursday, September 17, 2020
Via Zoom
AGENDA

1. Call to order

2. Superintendent's Report: Dr. Patrick Brimstein

- We have had a relatively smooth first few days of the school year.
- Schools are safe, they're open, and the kids seem to be enjoying themselves.
- Dr. Brimstein visited a sixth grade class on Zoom, with Mr. Pesce, who blended different media very well, and the kids were very engaged.
- Arrival has been working smoothly at RSS.
- Question: High thermal imaging unit scans 35-40 people at a time. Has the school considered using a system like that to take kids' temperature when they arrive? (Staff are taking kids' temperatures individually when they arrive, even though parents have completed the app.)
 - i. Answer: One day the app wasn't working properly, so we started taking temperatures in order to mitigate risk. The thermal imaging equipment can be costly, but that idea is on the table. I appreciate the suggestion.
- Question: The original time of RSS drop-off was 8:15 and it will shift to 8:20. I can't imagine the kids can all get into school within 10 minutes. Are we moving to 8:20, and if so why? The kids are already in school for such a limited amount of time, why cut it shorter?
 - i. I will look into it. I have been out front, and I have seen the traffic build. That's an issue. I don't know why that would have changed.

3. Acceptance of Minutes

- Alex Boruch moved to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2020 PTA meeting.

4. Co-Presidents' Report: Cameron Sager and Correy Stephenson

- We have been trying to work with the administration on what they need. We'll be purchasing 85 units of touchless hand sanitizer dispensers for all three schools.
- We are still coordinating with the schools on other items that will be helpful this year.

5. Treasurer's Report: Lynn Glantz

- The PTA has received revenue from:
 - i. the summer school supplies sale (\$5900),
 - ii. the fall Membership drive (\$7600),
 - iii. the recent clothing sale (total pending),
 - iv. and rewards programs (\$67.54).
- The PTA spent funds on:
 - i. curriculum enhancement at BMPRSS (\$560)
 - ii. and the fifth grade and high school graduations (\$807).

6. Committee Reports

a. Ways and Means: Kate Marino and Alicia Scala

- School Supplies
 - i. 2020 sales came in - it was a huge success, netting \$5900.
- Back to School Spirit-wear Sale
 - i. Sale held from Sept 8-10 at B.M.P. RSS. It was the biggest spiritwear sale in recent memory!
 - ii. Thank you to all the amazing volunteers and the many customers!
- First Annual Mum Sale - Saturday, 9/26
 - i. Pre-Sale of mums began 9/14
 - ii. Pre-Sale to end 9/18
 - iii. The sale will be held at the MS/HS parking lot 9/26 from 11am-1pm
 - iv. Donuts donated by kneaded bread, cookies by Haley Wilk, cupcakes donated by Cerbones to be sold
 - v. The sale will also feature spirit-wear tables.
- School Pictures
 - i. B.M.P. RSS to host school pictures in Spring 2021
 - ii. MS/HS pictures may remain in Fall 2020, if they can be done outdoors
- Square Art - TBD
- Holiday store/Winter Fundraiser
 - i. Company being used TBD
 - ii. Open to suggestions

- We are also going to do a scarecrow fundraiser, to bring fall festivity to the neighborhood in early October. They will be delivered to customers' front lawns. We will need volunteers to help deliver scarecrows.
- ASA (after school activities)
 - i. Flex Academy runs great enrichment programs for us
 - ii. This fall, families can sign up for *virtual* enrichment programs.
 - iii. We get 10%
 - iv. If anyone is looking for virtual activities, you can do them through flex academy and the PTA
- Question: Could we sell spirit wear online?
 - i. Answer: When the PTA tried that over the summer, customers did not pick up their items, and there was little space to store the products. We can discuss the possibility further.

b. Programming: Amanda Gitkind and Stacy Sakellariou

- The annual Kindergarten Social couldn't happen in person. Instead, with the PTA, we were able to make some "Welcome To Kindergarten" goodie bags, which were dropped off a couple of days before school began. Thank you to everyone who helped.
- Would love to plan programs kids enjoy, as the Harlem Wizards and Magic Night have been popular in the past. Will try to implement some of these ideas virtually!

c. Building Liaisons

Elementary School: Rachel Lerner

- Start of school has been as good of a start as can be expected. Working on a couple of glitches and kinks.
- **Transportation:** There are 10 buses running per cohort. If anyone has any questions related to bus transportation email jzhindon@blindbrook.org
- **Remote Learning:** Working on uniformity of specials. Think of them as a 2-week cycle where children have a combo of live and prerecorded specials. Google classroom is for teachers and students, not parents. If parents want to communicate any questions/concerns please email the teacher directly, do not post comments on google classroom. There are no dedicated remote-only teachers.
- **Arrival:** eZscreen app takes a while to update so please make sure to submit answers an hour before arrival. They also are doing thermal thermometer checks on every child. Staff have been instructed not to touch student cars, unless the parents signal to ask the staff member to open the car door for the child.

- **Cleaning:** cleaning protocols have been shifted to ensure all classrooms are getting the same attention in between cohorts allowing more consistent results. Hired extra custodial staff. Electrostatic spray is used everyday in between cohorts and after school.
- **General:** 10% of families had opted to do only remote learning and some are now less hesitant so switching to hybrid. Kids are excited to be in school. Please be patient with the teachers. They are trying to get the children at home to connect with them the same way they would as if in class. Parent open house dates are coming out shortly.
- **Questions/Comments:**
 - Please mention to Mrs. Taylor that some parents are trying to avoid the car line by dropping off in the middle of Ridge Street or in the Lower Lot, which introduces potential hazards.
 - Please ask Mrs. Taylor to allow for more time at arrival. Doors don't open until 12:30 for the afternoon cohort, allowing only 10 minutes for all of the students to arrive.
 - Ask Mrs. Taylor to allow walkers to exit at the front OR back, depending on where they are walking to.
 - In the interest of efficiency, at arrival, could there be a color code posted in the car window, to indicate whether staff should open one's door to help the child out of the car?
 - Perhaps Mrs. Taylor should set a rule that staff will open all doors. If you are not comfortable, you should park your car and walk your child in.
 - Bus riders report that kids are sitting diagonally from one another, they are wearing masks, and the windows are open.
 - Does the RSS work with the Rye Brook traffic commission and the police department? Answer: RSS does communicate constantly with RBPD. The PD did post on social media, saying they would allow parking on a certain side of the street. They outlined suggestions.
 - The district should get numbers on how many people are not using the bus.

Middle School: Alex Boruch

- Mrs. Lambert is in attendance to offer an update.
- Thank you to everyone in the PTA for hand sanitizer stations. We were worried about having hand sanitizer available as you walked through the door to every classroom.
- As kids enter a classroom, they will sanitize their hands and then wipe down their own desk.
- The MS and HS have been remote for the first two weeks.

- Everything is an experiment. Proud of staff at how conscientious they are in implementing online learning. Parents and students should see a big shift this year.
- The MS will move to the hybrid model this Monday, 9/21.
- The average in-person class size will be 9-12 students, and desks will be spaced 6 feet apart
- The MS has gone to great lengths to reduce the amount of contact between students. Sixth graders will stay in one classroom, with teachers rotating through.
- Seventh/eighth grade will be cohorted in the same room as much as possible.
- We have lots of plans, and it will take time to get things up and running. We have to be flexible and be ready to pivot when something comes up.
- We will probably have delays at arrival at first. 50 kids will come through each entrance.
- 4 adults at each door to check the app and process entry as efficiently as possible.
- School photos: We can plan something outdoors, but not indoors this fall. If the photographer needs to be indoors, we prefer spring.
- We have a boxload of yearbooks that were not picked up. If you ordered a yearbook, we will make sure they are delivered to students once they are in the building.
- Back to school night is scheduled for 10/1. Each grade level team will do a video together, where each teacher gives a 10 minute talk on their curriculum and expectations.
- Tomorrow, we are sending out hybrid and fully remote learning plans. We've been sending out videos every day, showing the kids the signage and what to expect in the building.
- **Questions/Comments:**
- Why not do photos outdoors, since we are open now, and there is a chance schools could shut down at some point? Perhaps class parents could organize a composite, outside of school.
- Question: MS EZ Screen App- Do students show the app on their phone? Answer: Staff at the door will have a list of all the students with a green light or red light. If it's red, we will take the student's temperature and contact the parent. We are strict about phones- we can't handle additional wifi load.

- Kids can enter at 7:40 at the earliest. If kids arrive at class late, will teachers be understanding? Answer: Yes, teachers will be flexible, but students need to go directly to their classrooms. We encourage kids not to loiter in the halls.
- What time do parents need to complete the app by? We don't quite know yet.
- Please update us on the construction at the MS? The Fab Lab looks really good. It should be ready in a month or so. It's all cordoned off now, kids can't get back there. The final flooring isn't down yet, final touches are in progress.

High School: Jen Savner

- We should figure out how early parents need to complete the EZ screen health attestation. The reality of getting the kids up by 6/6:30 is not likely. I'll ask Dr. Chirles.
- Dr. Chirles has a big job, and she's getting used to it.
- Dr. Chirles thanks the PTA for the hand sanitizer units!
- HS students completed senior driving night. It was virtual, about a distracted driving accident, where a woman ended up paralyzed and her parents passed away. It was impactful to the students; some got emotional. This is one step students must complete to get a parking spot.
- Back to school night: Tuesday 9/29 on Zoom
- 10/7 parent/principal conversation at 9am on Zoom.
- Soccer, Cross Country, and Tennis start 9/29. Kids are excited. It goes through the end of November.
- The HS is going to try to offer extracurricular activities, virtually for now.
- The seniors get to start painting the rock on Monday. It's a rite of passage at Blind Brook. Class officers are organizing groupings by cohort.

Pupil Services: Kiki DeBari

- The SEID Committee leaders, Kiki and Tina Steinberg, compiled a Q&A document with Mr. Burg and Ms. Herlihy. They shared it with the SEID Committee, and it is available on the district website.
- We are putting together our own SEID executive board to broaden expertise, experience, and to share the workload.

Everybody's situation is very individual, so this will really help us to solidify our group.

- I want to encourage new members, new kindergarten families to the district. If kids have learning issues or have regressed, you can [join the group](#) by emailing blindbrookseid@gmail.com.
- We hope to plan some events this year on Zoom.

d. Membership: Bree Candee and Stacy Kapner-Lerch

- Membership is going strong. We made the 2020-2021 membership active in SchoolBee on the 14th. Student classes are now organized in SchoolBee.
- 429 families have joined, and requests to join are still coming in.
- There are 155 requests for the dial-a-friend. Once ordering closes at the end of Sept, we will start printing the dial-a-friend.

7. New Business

- **Community Coalition: Monique Tricario and Debra Cohen**
- Community Coalition is funded by a 10 year federal grant. We target 7th-12th graders, sometimes also 5/6th graders. We want to educate kids before they develop bad habits. Our first meeting will be October 19th. We will try to alternate the days we meet. The schedule will be posted on the district website.
- This summer, we co-sponsored a drive-in movie night with the village. We are planning on doing another movie night, this time Halloween-themed, on October 30th. It's a healthy option for teens looking for an activity or a place to hang out. We will talk with the MS/HS principals about having kids vote on the movie.
- We sponsor distracted driving night each year.
- Grade 9 - we usually sponsor a trip to the BOCES outdoor education facility. It's a team-building leadership class for 9th graders. We still plan to do a program for the class, but this year it will be virtual. We're bringing in Andy Duran to talk about social justice, citizenship, etc. We try to mix up the groups so that students speak with students they don't usually interact with. We aim to get the kids out of their comfort zone and talk about important topics.
- We are looking out for interesting speakers-- suggestions are welcome.
- At the HS Open House, Monique Tricario will have a class on Dr. Laurie Santos and happiness.

- **Heard in Rye: Tina Steinberg**
- We'll be kicking off the speaker series next week, with a talk by Dr. Molly Ness on How To Support K-8 Children in Virtual and Hybrid Learning. The talk will be Wednesday 9/23 at 7:00pm on Zoom. Look out for an email. You'll need to register in advance in order to join the online meeting.

Attendance:

Alex Boruch

Ali Altman

Alicia Scala

Amanda Gitkind

Anna Romanella

Anna Marciano

Anne Rossman Weisz

Arpita Buesing

Ashley Welde

Betsy Morse Rohtbart

Cameron Sager

Cindy Zahl

Colin Nates

Concetta D'Inverno

Correy Stephenson

Debra Cohen

Erica Wiener

Lynn Glantz

Hedy Cardozo

Ilyssa Karasik

Itzel

J&A Capon

Tami Herzog-Rodriguez

Jayna Zelman

Jana Berman

Jaime Coffey

Jody Frieman

Johanna Gonzalez

Josh Adelson

Julie Averay-Cuesta

Katherine Hallissy Ayala

Karen Lin

Kiki DeBari
Lankyong Gu
Lisa Lane
Luci
Jen Savner
Monie's Phone
Monique Tricario
Nancy Parra
Naomi Riley
Nethra Bhatt
Paige Mittelman
Patricia Lambert
Patricia Schofield
Perri
Rachel Lerner
Rebecca Reiss
Rebecca Zaltas
Rebecca
Richard Donohue
Robin Elkowitz
Robyn Scutero
Samrat Saran
Sara Wolf
Stacy Kapner
Stephanie Biderman
Tina Steinberg
Tonianne Rigano
Vivienne Gutierrez
Wendy Corbin
Yuka Hashimoto
Yvette