

**SRDS Parents Guild Meeting –
Thursday, December 5, 2024**

- I. Welcome & Approval of November 2024 Minutes** - The December 2024 Parents Guild meeting commenced with a welcome to all parents / guardians from the PG's Co-Presidents, Heather Holder and Jacqueline Vasquez and the approval of the past meeting's minutes.

II. Admissions Update

- **Chris Lebovits, Director of Community Engagement and Assistant Director of LS**

Admissions provided an update on behalf of Geoffrey Bowman:

- Early contracts to returning students who are moving to a new division - 5th and 9th grade next year will go out December 6th via email around midday.
- We hosted a third visit day on Monday with students coming for all 3 divisions and are once again full with 20 students visiting for 9th grade alone. Final official group visit day for MS and US is Thursday, January 9th.
- After the great response to our morning November 13th US open house, we added another one for Wednesday, January 8th at 9:00 am. Register at <http://www.saddleriverday.org/visit>
- We will begin reviewing new early decision applications for students applying to MS and US this week and will begin sending out decisions on December 12th. The due date is December 17th.
- We have had a fantastic fall with tours and visitors, and we already have a big group of students who are committing to SRDS early as their first-choice school for 9th!
- Thank you to all our parent volunteers and student ambassadors for helping with our events and making our visiting students and families feel so welcome. We constantly hear about how warm and friendly everyone is and it makes a great impression on our visitors!

III. Upper School News and Upcoming Events

- **Dr. Shai Zacaraev, Head of Upper School**

- Thank you to all parents and the PG for your continued support.
- We had a successful US visit day and there is one more planned this year.
- Key events include:
 - College application decisions are coming in, which can be an exciting but stressful time for students.
 - Juniors must complete surveys for the college counselors.
 - Fund raisers, food and toy drives are currently underway.
 - Each US grade participated in an activity relevant to their current focus.
 - A yoga event for the 9th grade was popular and other grades have requested to have their own yoga session.
 - The prom committee is being established, and various fund raisers have been and will be held to help defray the costs.
 - Pancake Breakfast will be held on the last day before the break.

- Refer to the Upper School Happenings document for the latest events and important updates.

IV. Upper School Student Feature

- **Anastasia P, Fine Arts Portfolio & Exhibit**
 - Anastasia provided insight into how she became enamored with art, since she began attending SRDS, and has enjoyed various art classes at SRDS.
 - The SRDS Art Program is important to Anastasia, and has helped form her interests into different media, such as charcoal, graphite, etc.
 - Her work has been in exhibitions in various galleries, and she continues to follow her passion in the field of art.

V. Lower School News and Upcoming Events

- **Dana Stern, Head of Lower School**, provided the following updates:
 - Reminder to all – please label your children’s clothing.
 - It is a busy time of year with admissions, the LS concert, the LS/MS Holiday Market, Diwali concert with costumes as a part of the experience. Note, there will be no aftercare on the day of the LS Concert.
 - Check in with your children’s teachers for the LS party.
 - The Pancake and Pizza Day is planned right before the winter break.
 - There is a spelling bee planned for January and a math competition in January/February (details to follow in the next meeting).

VI. Middle School News and Upcoming Events

- **Anastasia Kelly, Head of Middle School**
 - Math competitions for MS in January and February, as well as a spelling bee.
 - Stem Honors Society – remember to log the time in Schoology. Since SRDS joined the society in June, any STEM summer 2024 classes and/or activities are eligible towards the hours required for this program.
 - Bootcamp planned for January.
 - The Winter Concert is scheduled for December 18th and the Diwali presentation will be great fun.
 - N-Blocks are in progress and students seem to be enjoying the courses.
 - Ongoing discussions about navigating social media appear to have a positive impact on Middle School students.
 - Check the MS Happenings Doc for the up-to-the-minute information - changes are reflected during the week.

VII. Community Engagement and Upcoming Events at SRDS

- **Chris Lebovits, Director of Community Engagement and Assistant Director of LS Admissions**
 - Thank you to the parents for their continued involvement in US happenings.
 - Career Day, April 10th from 9am to 1pm for 8th to 12th students: Great opportunity for parents to share their careers with the students. An email will be sent for sign-

up; there will be a presenter orientation. The students have expressed an interest in adding careers in the following fields: Event Planners, Arts, Hospitality, Medical Field, Science (other than Medicine), Sports Announcers, Architecture, Fashion.

- **Community Events:** We have a robust calendar of events for a variety of interests including Yoga, our Rebel Readers Book club (postponed to January) and Pickleball. Rebel Dads – save the date for January 16th, details to follow.

VIII. Holiday Market

- **Judy Han & Cindy Mueller Giardina**

- The LS/MS 2024 Holiday Market will take place on December 13th, from 8:50am and finish at the end of the school day.
- The goal for the event is for LS and MS students to shop for family and friends for gifts priced up to \$10.
- The set up will take place on December 12th starting at noon.
- Join the volunteer list for both days and have fun with us and the students at this magical time of year!

IX. Athletics Update

- **PJ Petrow - SRDS Director of Athletics**

- Winter sports are in full swing with Wrestling, Fencing, Basketball.
- We are looking forward to spring with the JV and Varsity sports.
- The girls' soccer team had a successful season, and several of the girls received All County awards. They are continuing the good work with a Toys for Tots toy drive for the holiday season.
- Clinics: There will be a baseball clinic on December 15th and January 5th. There will be a softball clinic on January 3rd for current and prospective students interested in this sport.

X. Ladies Night Out 2024 Update

- **LNO** was a tremendous success! Thank you to all the volunteers for their hard work and for making it a fun evening for all. We appreciate all the support and look forward to giving further updates in our next PG meeting.
- Ladies' Nashville Trip on April 4-6, 2025, at the Four Seasons and many fun activities to enjoy. There are still openings, please sign up if you intend to go on this fun Ladies' trip.
- Around the corner – SRDS Gala! We are organizing the key details and will be sending out information in January.

XI. Motion to Adjourn – Join us for the next meeting on January 9, 2025, in Alford Hall, PAC.