

SRDS Parents Guild Meeting
Thursday, April 3, 2025

- I. **Welcome & Approval of March 2025 Minutes** – The April 2025 Parents Guild meeting commenced with a welcome to all parents / guardians from the PG's Co-President, Heather Holder and the approval of the past meeting's minutes.
- II. **Welcome and Update from the Head of School**
 - **Jalaj Desai, Head of School**
 - It is an exciting time for our school as we begin construction of the Dr. Kristen Walsh Hall of Science and Entrepreneurship this spring. The completion date goal for the new building is June 2026 and we plan to have it ready for the academic year 2026/2027 starting in Fall 2026.
 - Some of the near-term plans include the parking lot which is targeted for a 6–8-week completion and the playground may have to close after school; however, we are working through the site availability. We have purchased a new playground to insure the footings are properly installed and that will be going up in the next week.
 - A busy time as we head into the end of year with graduation upcoming and Chrissie Signore is in the middle of the planning process.
 - Four to five years ago we implemented Math and STEM classes/programs, and we can see those now coming to fruition as students are completing those courses.
 - Our teachers, across all divisions, are strong and mostly will remain for the upcoming 2025/2026 academic year. We do not have a need to hire more teachers at this point because we have very low turnover. New hiring is mostly when we are offering new classes and have student growth.
 - Over the spring break, we had several updates to our buildings, including a new projector system in the PAC, new LED lighting in all the buildings, new septic - thank you to Mona for her dedication during this time.
- III. **Lower School Update**
 - **Anastasia Kelly provided the update on behalf of Dana Stern, Head of Lower School**
 - **Upcoming events include:**
 - April 11: Ms. Moore's PreK will hold their Project-Based Learning; the 2nd grade will have their Porch Light activity.
 - May 1: The 4th grade is planning to visit the Seeing Eye Institute.
 - May 8: PreK and Kindergarten will visit the Turtleback Zoo.
 - May 13: Please plan to attend the Lower School Spring Concert.
 - No school on April 18, 2025.
 - Remember to check in with your child's teacher for class-specific events.
- IV. **Admissions Update**
 - **Geoffrey Bowman, Director of Admissions**
 - Due to a scheduling conflict Mr. Bowman was unable to attend the PG Meeting.

V. Middle School Student / Club Spotlight

- **Jessica Leigh, MS English Teacher and Head of SRDS Odyssey of the Minds**
- For the past 3 years middle school has participated in the Odyssey of the Minds Club where students have an opportunity to create, perform and coalesce around an idea to make it come to life with communication and dedication; we have two teams participating at the state level this spring. Teamwork and communication are integral to the success of these teams.
- The Lower School has begun to participate via N-Block and Coaching Academy.
- Participation in this club fosters leadership skills - Ms. Leigh noted those students who were part of the club in middle school, and now in the upper school, have strengthened their skills and have become confident in their abilities to lead and manage time. "No" is never an option.

VI. Middle School Update

- **Anastasia Kelly, Head of Middle School**
- We are pleased to welcome Kerri Casper to our SRDS community as a full-time Middle School Learning Specialist. She will join Brooke Braunstein in the Learning Support Room.
- As we finish the 3rd quarter, students should be checking in with their advisors and teachers to ensure their assignments and work have been completed. The 4th quarter begins, and we are emphasizing students remain focused on finishing the year strong.
- The MS Happenings document is the source for all events, and it is updated throughout the week – please remember to review. A few of the events:
 - N-Block has begun! If your student is playing a sport, please remember to send them with the appropriate gear/equipment, in addition to the permission slip to participate.
 - Course registration is in progress and being discussed with students and advisors.
 - An Upper School preview will be held for 7th grade families on Friday, April 4 at 9am.
 - The 7th grade will go on the Boston Trip on Thursday, April 10th – it is an overnight trip and most students are attending.
 - On April 10th, the 8th grade will participate in Career Day. They will leave school early and go to the American Dream Mall and return for the school for the annual tradition of sleeping on campus event.
 - No school on April 18, 2025.
 - The week of April 28th, there will be a math assessment with two one-hour assessments.

VII. Upper School News and Upcoming Events

- **Shai Zacaraev, Head of Upper School**
- It is an exciting and busy time of the year as we are ending the 3rd quarter and beginning the 4th quarter. Grades will be available at the end of April.
- Upcoming happenings include:
 - Course selection and sign up – the deadline is April 11th. This helps us plan for the 2025/2026 academic school year; however, changes can be made after if needed.

- April 3rd – Perform Against Cancer Showcase at SRDS.
- April 4th - Math Con in Boston.
- April 9th – Gateway Diploma Night at SRDS.
- April 16th – TEDx presentations – they all look great!
- April 23rd – US Concert. Students have been working hard, and it will be a great show!
- April 24th – Junior and Senior Prom; junior students will need permission to take Friday off if they want to do so.
- April 30th – SRDS Walkathon.
- The Student Council will have new committee members at the end of April.
- We will be partnering with St. Joseph for various volunteer opportunities – thank you to Christine Lebovits for her work on this effort.
- Thank you for the wonderful gift – so very thoughtful!

VIII. Community Engagement at SRDS

- **Updates** provided by **Heather Holder** on behalf of **Chris Lebovits, Director of Community Engagement and Assistant Director of LS Admissions**
- The Rebel Readers Book Club- April Book Club will meet on April 15th and the book is ***Same As It Ever Was***. The May Book Club will meet on May 29th and the book is ***Write for Your Life***.
- Crafty Rebels Floral arranging will be held on April 16th – please sign up if you are interested in participating in this event.
- Pickleball will be held on April 9th in the gym from 7:45pm-9:15pm, at \$20 per person- all levels welcomed.

IX. Athletics Update

- **Heather Holder** provided the update on behalf of **PJ Petrow, Athletic Director**
- In Upper School, spring sports have begun, and competitions begin this week. Check the SRDS Athletic site for all game dates and times.
- Pre-registration begins for the Fall Season and the Red Bulls Camp dates will be sent out this week – check out that information if you child is interested.

X. Parents Guild Annual SRDS Gala and Upcoming Events

- **Heather Holder, Co-Presidents of the Parents Guild**
- **SRDS Gala 2025** will be held on April 26, 2025, and our theme this year is “Off to the Races” and will be held at The Rockleigh. We will have a fabulous evening of dancing, auctions and food for everyone.
- The event site is open for ticket sales, 50/50 raffles, ad journal purchases, and sponsorship opportunities.
 - Our 50/50 raffle, with only 200 tickets is a unique opportunity to win up to \$10,000; all proceeds go back to the school and students to continue innovation and learning efforts.

- XI. Motion to Adjourn - Next and final 2024/25 school year meeting Thursday, May 1 in Alford Hall – PAC**