

SRDS Parents Guild Meeting

Thursday, October 9, 2025

I. Welcome & Approval of September 2025 Minutes

Alana Murphy and Heather Holder, Co-Presidents of the Parents Guild, welcomed attendees and started this month's Parents Guild meeting with the approval of the September 2025 meeting minutes.

Heather provided information about the "One Click" program that raises money for Ladies' Night Out and Gala class baskets. Parents Guild is a self-funded group so the money raised from these baskets is a main source of funds for the other Parents Guild sponsored events throughout the year.

II. Ladies' Night Out 2025

- Claudia Sasso and Rosanna Young, Co-Chairs of Ladies' Night Out, announced the "Lady Luck" theme (think "Vegas Glam") and fun details for the upcoming LNO on November 13, 2025 including ways to get involved. Invitations were mailed last week and registration is now open.

- Parent volunteers are needed to help with decor, basket wrapping, sponsorship and vendor opportunities.

- The third annual SRDS Ladies' Night Trip will be to Mirbeau Inn & Spa in Rhinebeck NY, January 23-24, 2026, offering a king bedroom, group dinner, private culinary class at the Culinary Institute of America, wellness activities (spa, yoga, etc) and exploring the quaint town of Rhinebeck.

III. Athletics Update

- Mr. PJ Petrow, SRDS Athletic Director, shared an update of the thriving athletics department, highlighting boys soccer's win against Eastern Christian on Senior Day and wins for the Girl's Soccer Team.

- The Upper School Volleyball team is currently in first place in its division and has qualified for County Tournaments. The US Tennis team is at the top of their division right now, Eva Burgess and Ella Tobarov won the County Championship in the BIT. The US Cross Country Team had seven boys and one girl qualify for County Tournaments. US Girls' soccer remains undefeated with 9 over 1.

- Middle School sports are doing well too with 91% of MS students participating this year.

- Construction updates include progress on tennis courts, turf field, and the concession stand with plans to start on a lower field next season.

IV. Admissions Update

- Mr. Geoffrey Bowman, Head of Admissions, provided an update on admissions including upcoming open houses, Upper School visit programs, and applications for the next school year. The Early Decision and Regular Admissions processes are ongoing

- The first Admissions Open House is on Saturday, October 11 before Homecoming, and a second Open House is scheduled for October 23.

- Due to construction, the admissions process has been adjusted to limit student shadowing; however, visits for accepted students will be planned later in the Spring.
- Parents Guild's support in Admissions is acknowledged, emphasizing the SRDS community's positive role in the Admissions process.

V. SRDS Fund and Fall Day of Giving

- Ms. Lynn McCormack, Director of Development, discussed the importance of fundraising and the upcoming Day of Giving on October 23.
- The SRDS Fund supports unrestricted giving, professional development, and innovative tools like BenQ Boards and Bloomberg terminals. The SRDS fund also supports immersive experiences, innovation and the infrastructure of the campus.
- Every gift matters and the community is encouraged to make Saddle River Day School a top philanthropic priority. A direct mailing will be sent out to remind the community about the Day of Giving.

VI. Community Engagement at SRDS

- Ms. Chris Lebovits, Director of Community Engagement and Assistant Director of LS Admissions, talked about the Book Club, recommending the book "Wild Dark Shore" by Charlotte McConaghy and mentioning the December Book Club selection is "The Usual Desire to Kill" by Camilla Barnes.
- The upcoming Crafty Rebels Workshop is "Paint a Pet" on October 22 and a cooking experience at HealthBarn is planned for December 3.
- Admissions is always welcoming SRDS Parents to volunteer and assist with new and potential families.

VII. Lower School News and Upcoming Events

- Presented by Ms. Lebovits, Director of Community Engagement and Assistant Director of LS Admissions on behalf of Ms. Dana Stern, Head of Lower School.
- The 4th grade Pink Pop-Up Shop for cancer is being moved to Monday, October 20 and picture day for third grade is scheduled for next Monday, October 20 because of the field trip.
- Lower School Coffees are scheduled for the following week and LS Trunk or Treat is planned for Wednesday, October 29, 5:30-6:30pm. October 30 will be PJ Day for LS and class Halloween parties will be October 31.

VIII. Middle School News and Upcoming Events

- Ms. Anastasia Kelly, Head of Middle School, provided an update on MS activities, mentioning the PSATs and Picture Day on October 15.
- The Middle School Social is scheduled for October 24 and is Halloween-themed so students can wear their Halloween costumes.
- An architecture field trip to New York City for 8th graders is planned for October 28. The 8th grade will also visit the Jack O'Lantern Blaze on October 29th. Ms. Kelly is asking parents to sign the permission slips for planning purposes.

- MS Advisory is focussing on community, empathy and friendship. MS students will also participate in an Advisory trick or treat later in the month.
- Parents are encouraged to check the MS Happenings document regularly for more information as changes can be made throughout the week.

IX. Upper School News and Upcoming Events

- Dr. Shai Zacaraev, Head of Upper School, discussed the upcoming Homecoming pep rally and first Homecoming dance, highlighting the excitement and activities planned.
- The new building design is being shared with US students and they will have opportunities to provide feedback.
- Club Etra visited the NASDAQ exchange.
- US picture day is scheduled for October 13 and 14. October 16 and 17 are Senior Portraits, encouraging seniors to wear business casual.
- PSATs are scheduled for October 15th in the morning and students will have two classes in the afternoon. Parent conferences are planned for November 6 and 7.
- Mentioned US Mini Course presentation and US Field trips including visiting BAPS Temple and the videography trip to LA.
- Junior College Night is scheduled for November 18, and the Upper School Fall event is planned for the first weekend in November.

X. Rebels Make an Impact: Upper School Clubs and Volunteer Opportunities

- Ms. Kristin Myers, US Club Co-Coordinator and Community Service Coordinator, highlighted the involvement of students in clubs, community service opportunities and the Peer Mentor Program.
- There are 54 Upper School Clubs, with students leading and organizing activities. Students in 10, 11, and 12 grade can start a club. Clubs start in September. To start a club, a proposal has to be submitted including three goals, what a general meeting will look like, and an “elevator pitch” about the club. Students have access to club information and updates on the GroupSpot App.
- The Peer Mentor Program helps 7 and 9th graders with communication and peer issues.
- Examples of community service clubs include Rebels Against Cancer and Students for Senior Citizens. Students are taking initiatives to serve and help other people. Upcoming student organized drives include a shoebox drive for Christmas, a used toy drive and food drive.

XI. SRDS AI Courses and Opportunities

- Mr. Steve Osvold, Dean of AI and Student Agency, explained the concept of AI and Student Agency, emphasizing the idea of students having a voice and choice in their learning experience.
- The goal is to teach students how to use AI correctly, not just for homework but to explore areas of interest. The program aims to help students learn how to teach themselves and pursue their passions.

- Teaching MS students (7th and 8th graders) once a week a new course called “AI and Student Directed Learning” to help them learn how to use SRDS.AI, with the goal that they learn about themselves and learn how to explain who they are to the AI and hopefully AI can help them explore areas of their passions and interests.
- Upper School students are helping to improve the program, providing feedback and suggestions.

XII. Parent Guild Events and Announcements

- Parent Guild events include Homecoming on Saturday, with food trucks, activities for kids and new swag available for purchase.
- The first REBELS Dads event, “Cars and Cafe,” is scheduled for November 2, featuring a racing simulator, luxury cars, breakfast and a coffee truck. This event is for Dads only.
- Parents Guild coffee meetings are held at Panera Tice’s Corner, providing a relaxed setting for parents to connect and catch up. The next Parents Guild Coffee meeting is scheduled for October 15, with another one planned for November 18.
- Parents are encouraged to volunteer with the upcoming events and reach out with any questions.
- The meeting concluded with a reminder to check the school's calendar for upcoming events and activities.
- The next PG Meeting will be on November 6 @ 8:30am in Alford Hall - PAC.
- Closed the meeting with Motion to Adjourn.