

PARENT MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, 9/19 5:30-7:00PM

VERDI ECOSCHOOL STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Denise Liberi, Rachel Miller, Angela Lavernia, Sydney Coman

PARENTS IN ATTENDANCE:

Amanda and William Brant, Margaret Dunlap, Friederike Orend, Jessie McCutcheon and Luke Henning, Kristin and Chris Allen, Jan MacInnes, Lucy Pruss, Dana Wilson, Mira Springer, Samantha Gonzalez, Deborah Webster

BRAIN SMART START - Rachel - Swab the Deck

Brain Smart Starts are activities that often start our students' day. They unite, connect, disengage stress, and ask students to commit to one another.

BREATHKEEPER RITUAL - Angela - Pretzel

Three deep breaths shut off the "fight or flight" system and shifts us to our higher centers of the brain. This active calming technique is an essential component of emotional health.

WHAT'S GOOD?

What we can celebrate.

CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE PARENT NIGHTS

We had a great turnout at our first Conscious Discipline night and learned a lot together and with support. The next session is Thursday, October 10. 5-7pm.

Feedback on CD parent nights from Margaret -different approach to parenting, relating to your kids as if they're an adult. Reframing of discipline

NEW SCHOLARSHIPS

All funded by the Florida Department of Education

FAMILY EMPOWERMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Family Empowerment - income-based

The Family Empowerment Scholarship program is Florida's newest private education scholarship for low-income and some middle-income families. To learn more about program eligibility (Kindergarten students only), visit the **Family Empowerment Scholarship program webpage.**

HOPE SCHOLARSHIP

A student enrolled in a Florida public school in kindergarten through grade 12 who has been subjected to an incident of battery; harassment; hazing; bullying; kidnapping; physical attack; robbery; sexual offenses, harassment, assault, or battery; threat or intimidation; or fighting at school the opportunity to transfer to another public school with capacity or enroll in an approved private school under the Hope Scholarship.

ALSO STILL ACCEPTING:

McKay Gardiner, and Florida Tax Credit (FTC)

Being mindful of scholarships coming for budgetary reasons. Also being mindful of McKay scholarship students being enrolled. We have to review their ILP and the students have a trial week so that we can ensure we are able to meet their needs. Some students have more intensive needs and accommodations than we are able to meet. We need to make sure our students who are coming in will also keep the students we have safe.

The school is being more stringent about who is accepted. The families have to be accepting of the philosophies of the school. Accepting students and families who are really excited about being at this school. Assessments need to be done ahead of time. All students have a trial day and dependent on the reasons a student is applying, they may have a longer trial.

\$15,000 DONATION - NANCY AND RICK DILLEN

Unrestricted. \$6K used for professional financial audit. Brainstorming ideas and will take a community vote on how to spend the rest of the funds.

Third-party financial audit to help the school balance the budget in big-picture ways (where we can streamline). It would open us up to be able to have a GuideStar profile (on-line website for non-profits where people who want to make donations can find organizations they want to donate to).

Question: Will it cost \$6,000 annually for audit? Answer: I don't think so. Let's ask Ayana to be sure.

Possible investments:

Market-Garden is to also raise money for the school

Ms. Mikael will be helping us create the market garden and will help design the ways our students will develop the garden.

Making renovations to the 1861 Highland house so that it is more comfortable for the students. We will have to make special accommodations to meet ADA (breezeway between

buildings) and fire code requirements. Ways to create sound-insulation (cork boards on wall). Suggestions (shipping-code conversions, building up). Taking down some walls.

Curb appeal branding-painting the school houses the colors of our brand and make our place look more cohesive, new Verdi Ecoschool sign

Plant trees

Question: is the school going to accept more students?

Answer: At this point we are at capacity. We want to keep it small so that class sizes stay small and so that students still receive individualized plans. We will revisit together as school family to decide expansion/number of spaces available next school year.

DREXEL UPDATE

Ayana travelled to New York and Chicago to meet with the other founders and to focus on leadership, time management, and budgeting. She will be visiting 20+ model schools this school year!

Request: Keep a blog or let us know in some other way what school's you're going to so we can check them out, too.

AMAZON SMILE

Shop through this link and a percentage of your purchases go to school!

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/81-3174974>

FOOSANER CAMPS ON CLOSED WEEKS

As a hybridized year-round school, we are closed the entire month of June and Fourth of July week with four weeks of summer running as part of the school year. We spread out the extra weeks of vacation throughout the school-year rather than in the summer. Helps prevent the summer-slide. The schedule also helps educators with our project based learning so that educators can stay refreshed without teacher-burnout to keep quality courses and allow reflection.

The schedule can be challenging for parents working full-time. A potential solution is at Foosaner which is willing to run camps during our closed weeks. Price will be verified. They need at least five students in a four-year age span to run a camp. Same hours as our school day without after-care. We will have a link for sign-up with costs. This will be for future school breaks. Not affiliated with Verdi Ecoschool. It is completely run by the Foosaner. Not available for upcoming Sept 30 - Oct 4 break, but will be for other two mid-year breaks - February 3 - February 7 and May 11 - May 15.

Other camp suggestions: surf-camps, working parents take a day-off and rotate watching each other's children. School will help facilitate Foosaner camps during closure, but any others would be up to parents to organize.

WHAT'S HOOD? **What we can improve.**

PARENT COMMITTEES AND CREWS

Parent Committees and Crews

Parents are responsible for running the committee. Faculty members are a liaisons. The idea is that a parent will become the representative for the committee.

PARENT REPRESENTATIVES

Samantha Gonzalez - Nature Immersion

Dana Wilson - Journeys

Sandra Walder McMillin - Upper School (on the board)

Gives parents another channel to voice concerns. Parent reps are your allies and your voice in situations in which you may be uncomfortable discussing issues with faculty or administration.

Parent reps will be invited to attend board meetings and add agenda items/concerns to address with board directly.

Ms. Savannah is going to be running Student Government next semester so that we can have a student rep on the board as well.

UPPER SCHOOL SCIENCE LABS

Fundraising for field trips and special guest fees or parent opt in for fee based special events for upcoming terms.

Lab/experiment fee for future terms.

Traditional materials fee doesn't cover special costs for science for things like microscopes, etc. We want to make sure it isn't cost-prohibitive for any families. If it is a financial hardship, the families can contact the school so that it can be covered.

Suggestion-using our large donation, getting a grant for the funds (not always feasible because of the time grants take to write).

Field trip logistics for drop-off and pick-up: Renting vans (Monica's van)

Monica's transportation drops-off and picks-up students. A service some of our families are using. Highly-recommended. Servicing areas around the school down south to Palm Bay. One way is \$40/week. You can contact Denise to get more information.

PARENT COMMITTEE UPDATES

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Deborah Webster updated-meetings will be announced. October's is Monday October 7th at Tropical Smoothie.

TROPICAL SMOOTHIE SPIRIT NIGHT

FUNDRAISING EVENT

Monday, 10/7 3:30-7:30

660 E Eau Gallie Blvd Suite 2, Indian Harbour Beach, FL 32937

15% of all sales go to school!

Must have flyer with you.

Opportunities for helping:

Lucky's Market "Bags for Change;"

First spirit event at Tropical Smoothie Indian Harbour Beach from 3:30-7:30 on October 7th. You need to have a flier with you. They will give us 15% of the purchases.

Saturday, October 19th, kick-off of Annual fund (annual fund is through December 31st). Annual funds help cover costs that are not covered by tuition. Adult Halloween Party. Possible costume contest. Mary Beth is the leader of this function. Goal is 100% donation participation for parents and educators. No dollar amount is too small of a donation. 50/50 raffle. We need parent volunteers to take on the raffle. It will be a potluck party. An email will be sent out shortly to give the details.

Lands End clothing company will have spirit items for purchase. The school logo will be monogrammed onto various items. A link will be shared by Deborah.

Base Camp project management system has a free version which is being used by the fundraising committees. Deborah will give lessons on it to anyone on the committees who are interested.

Electives question-This first semester we will not have an elective week after the Fall I term.

GARDEN COMMITTEE

Garden Action Day - 9/21 - 9am-1pm

We need garden assistance!

taking turns leading action days and checking on our school animals on the weekends

- collaborating on keeping our action item lists
- maintaining our seed bank organized and clean
- starting seedlings at home to plug into our market garden
- Providing our educators with specific garden projects the students can take on (building, planting, etc..)
- maintaining our garden beds and compost
- ordering soil and mulch deliveries
- Selling produce at FLEAGAD
- Communications (email updates and social media)
- Creating community connections with local businesses and garden programs

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

LUCKY'S MARKET BAGS FOR CHANGE

Until November 9

"Table" at Lucky's Market by encouraging shoppers to put their dime in our slot!

[Sign up here to help.](#)

GARDEN ACTION DAY

Saturday, 9/21 9:00am-1:00pm

SPACE COAST PRIDE FESTIVAL

Saturday, 9/28 in EGAD

Contact Carrie Martin if interested in volunteering mrscarrie1974@gmail.com

FLEAGAD

Saturday, 10/5 12:30-4:30pm

Eau Gallie Square

Contact Ayana Verdi if interested in volunteering

ayana@verdiecoschool.org

SPACE COAST ART FESTIVAL

Sunday, 10/20

Space Coast Daily Park, Melbourne

Contact Denise Liberi if interested

denise.verdiecoschool@gmail.com

UPCOMING

SCHOOL CLOSED FOR ALL

Monday, 9/30 - Friday, 10/4

CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE PARENT EDUCATION NIGHT

Becoming Brain Smart

Thursday, 10/10 5:00-7:00pm

1851 Highland

GARDEN ACTION DAY

Saturday, 10/19 9:00am-1:00pm

HALLOWEEN PARTY

(Adults Only!)

Saturday, 10/19, 6:30pm

Turtle Island Clubhouse

SPACE COAST ART FESTIVAL

Sunday, 10/20, 12:00-6:00 p.m.?

Space Coast Daily Park, Melbourne

Contact Denise Liberi if interested

denise.verdiecoschool@gmail.com

Jan and Dana interested in helping

SCHOOL CLOSED FOR ALL

VETERANS DAY

Monday, 11/11