

Parent Meeting Minutes 8/16/18

Parents in Attendance: Amy Schwartz, Tiffany Hill, Carrie Martin, David Cruvey, Paul and Camila Greco, Diana Salopek, Dana Wilson, Kaycee Jones, Carlos Jenkins

Staff in Attendance: Denise Liberi, John and Ayana Verdi, Savannah McCay

Introductions:

Ayana welcomed everyone and let everyone know that it was our fourth day of school and our first day of student choice day. She thanked Carrie for helping us get volunteers coordinated for the day.

Brain, Start, Smart: The group took three collective breaths together, and Ayana explained the purpose of the breath and how it helps us to regulate.

Update on School Growth: The last parent meeting, we spoke about needing to get to forty students in order to stay out of the red zone, etc. This parent meeting, we are at 34 students- only 6 students away from our goal of forty. Nature immersion is only three ½ day students away from being completely full. It's the growth that we were hoping for and asking for! With growth, comes growing pains and we must be in constant reflection on how we best serve all of our students. 40 is the right amount of students to remain sustainable, but this also means we need more specialists and staff in order to support more students.

Updates on Church:

- No parking in the front parking lot. Parking can happen on the street, or the back parking lot. When we park in the front, we're taking parking from the elderly individuals who utilize the church for various reasons, and need shorter distances to walk.

Fingerprinting/Background Checks:

- Fingerprinting and background check is a requirement in order to be with our students. Background check levels must be the same for both volunteers and staffing.
- We have a new system this year. It's a mobile fingerprinting/background check system. Ask us about it!
- Staff background check vote: Previously, we've been very strict about the background checks of our staff. We've not allowed anyone to become a member of staff if they've had anything previous infractions on their background check, no matter how minor. Now, we've recognized that we're turning away people who are really talented and wonderful, but they might have made a mistake in the past. **We'd like to have the same**

disqualifiers as the Florida Public Schools, which is set by the Florida Department of Education. This would disqualify those with sex crimes, violent crimes, etc. Here is the link to the FLDOE employment standards: **This would include parents, because they have the same standards for being with the students as our staff.** Example: If a staff member cannot have a DUI and work with our students, then a parent cannot have a DUI and volunteer in the classroom.

<http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/professional-practices/background-screening-requirements.stml>

- Voting was deferred to a remote vote, and will be sent via a link to a voting form.

Volunteer:

- Meetup doesn't seem to be working. We're working on a better way to log all of our hours and to know about volunteer opportunities.
- Contact Carrie for volunteer opportunities and committees. Joining a committee will help Carrie streamline her emails and only email people who she knows is interested in a certain type of volunteer committee. There are also at-home opportunities for those who don't have a ton of time to come in to the school for volunteering.
- If you're interested in being a committee chair, let Carrie know!
- Garden Volunteer Orientation Day is Saturday, August 18th at 3:00pm at the farm.
- WE NEED A WOODCHIPPER!
- Fundraising Committee meets August 22nd. Keep an eye out for an email!
- If you'd like to be apart of FLEAgad (first Saturday of every month), let us know! We're collaborating with the Yoga Garden and Propel (advertising), and the next one will be expanded!

Clarification about last year: Last year, parents really made it clear that they wanted more instructional time for students, but also keep the free explorations. In order to do that, we changed the upper school pickup time (excluding Journeys) to 3:30. Journeys has a pick up time at 3:15 M-W, and 3:30 Th and Fri when they are with Upper School.

Questions? :

When is the window for pick up and drop off?

Journeys: 8:15- 8:30am, 3:15 pickup

Upper School: 8:15-8:30, 3:30 pickup

Is there a schedule of what the kids are learning or how their day is going?

Go to www.verdiecoschool.org/parents for the school calendar, weekly rhythm, course descriptions, etc. Also, an email is coming out with a project description, checklist and run down of what is happening in the classroom. We also send a Weekly Recap every Saturday or Sunday.

Are the parent meetings always at 4:00?

No! Last year, we voted to rotate meetings between 4:00 and 5:30 every month. This allows working families to get here at least half of the time, and families who pick up and live far away to stay and make the meeting.

For Journey's, are there any restrictions or rules that I need to know about?

- All full time students must be in school for 180 days within the year. Our school year is from June to June, which means we have 220 days within the whole year which gives a little more flexibility for students. If you know that you will be gone, communicate with us and we will find a way to help within the law. We must record attendance for auditing purposes.

Where is pickup and drop off on Thursday and Fridays for Journeys?

Pickup and Drop off schedule is on the Weekly Recap. Drop off is at Highland Fellowship Church and Drop off is at Highland House on Thursdays. Drop off is at the Highland House and Pick up is at the farm on Fridays.

Safety:

- Thank you for being very vigilant! John is getting calls and brightwheels letting him know of anything that seems fishy in the area. The kids, staff and volunteers are figuring out the flow and doing a great job!

Conclusion: Collective breath and thanks