

GSF Parent Forum - Nov. 3, 2017

In Attendance: Tami McCall, Kyri McClellan, Jackie Bissett, Jaclyn Guelfi, Anne Mueller, Cheryl Riley, Keala Landry, Heather Woollen, Dena Richardson, Sarah Brewer, Kim Goodhope, Katie Pohl, Kristin Maguire, Alison Rabb, Kim High, Ashley Walter, Christelle Blumin, Rebecca Lapins, Stephanie Robison, Emily Green, Angela Martin (21 total)

Opening @ 9:11am
(Kyri McClellan) Opening/Welcome/Introductions

(Stephanie Robison) The school has grown a lot in size. Opportunity to create a more “family” environment. Private schools compel you to volunteer at each grade (i.e. 4th Grade puts on the Auction). I am more likely to volunteer in my kids class versus like yard duty. Biggest change is the amount of money that is asked of us. A lot of things are paid positions now, like crossing guards.

(Kim High) New to Glenwood, from Mass. Universal problems. There is such a need and so many opportunities. I am trying to figure out how to prioritize the volunteering in the classroom and outside it.

(Kristin Maguire) Widespread trend on lack of volunteers, even at preschool level. Lots more working parents now.

(Kim Goodhope) There seems to definitely be less parents coming in.

(Dena Richardson) Homes are getting expensive so we have to think about who is going to start moving into the neighborhood. Likely two working parent families.

(Tami McCall) Sun Valley just hit 90% participation for annual giving. Why are we having so much trouble getting families to participate financially?

(Anne Mueller) We're at 42% participation, but just over 50% of our annual Thrive goal.

(Rebecca Lapins) We plan to pay on the Dec. 14th due date for Thrive. *wrote check today*

(Jackie Bissett) We are asked to contribute to Thrive and Auction. Sun Valley doesn't have a big Auction.

(Ashley Walter) I have been at a Co-Op. We started a “Parent Buy-Out” option. Maybe reschedule the day so that parents can volunteer easier (not midday). Maybe we need an Outreach Board, doing more morning coffees and less emails. Doing more fundraisers like parent nights.

(Katie Pohl) The Auction parties should be opened up to people who do not go to the Auction. I do feel some disconnect and like I am not included. Want more togetherness.

(Kim Goodhope) There are some people who try to include everyone, we need to find those people and get them involved.

(Cheryl Riley) Crab Feed is coming up, 1st Friday in Feb. Adult-only event.

(Keala Landry) You meet a lot more people when you volunteer. A lot of the community building is volunteering and getting to know new people. I think there are people that want to help out there.

(Christelle Blumin) I have always been involved at school. Here all we get are emails and it is not always clear what is needed. It is so much easier when someone personally reaches out to you to volunteer for something very specific.

(Dena Richardson) I felt like I needed "Glenwood for Dummies" at the beginning of the year. I was very confused about everything that was going on. It would be nice to know what to expect and what is coming up throughout the year.

(Kyri McClellan) Maybe we need a New Parent Handbook.

(Jackie Bissett) Make it easy for people to identify how they can volunteer given their working situation. What opportunities are for working people versus people free during the day.

(Ashley Walter) Bookmark with volunteer opportunities was great at the beginning of the year.

(Sarah Brewer) We have 1st Grade Kindie Liaisons that should be helping Kindie Parents. Every way we try to communicate with people only hits a fraction of the population. Maybe people are overwhelmed. Less than 40% open the emails.

(Angela Martin) Came from a Co-Op and was burnt out. One idea is to have a Buddy Family, an older family pairs up with an incoming family. They meet up, maybe at a coffee, and help explain things. It's a connection. Maybe a couple parents that want to become reps and help the new incoming families.

(Kim Goodhope) We're trying to build the Nest out to be more inclusive and eventually be a support net with the families.

(Cheryl Riley) Maybe if there is a parent in each grade that helps personally reach out to families.

(Kristin Maguire) The burnout is a real thing. Consider resizing the volunteer commitments, like the Auction.

(Kyri McClellan) We did a parent survey and have looked at the results. If we don't have volunteers for an event, do we need to keep doing it? Maybe create something else?

(Kyri McClellan) Let's discuss solutions. Maybe form a working group of parents to create a manual. Let's take our ideas...what are we going to do with them? As a Board we are trying to be responsive to what we have received. Board can be like-minded but we want to be open to new ideas.

(Rebecca Lapins) What is the expectation for money and time? I want a clear understanding.

(Kim Goodhope) We're looking at events and seeing what are fundraisers or community building events.

(Katie Pohl) I think you guys are doing a great job of switching it up on the Board this year. This Parent Forum was a great idea. Maybe ask parents "What was the one thing that made you get involved?"

(Ashley Walter) As a new parent I really didn't understand what Spring Sing was.

(Kyri McClellan) What is this group willing to commit to, to address these problems?

(Katie Pohl) We could set individual goals to introduce yourself to 5 new people. Just chatting.

(Kyri McClellan) Was this meeting time better for you? *several yes responses*

(Dena Richardson) Maybe do a conference call link?

(Kim Goodhope) Maybe a Room Parent meeting. Those are parents that are involved.

(Jaclyn Guelfi) Emails coming from the Room Parents are the most read emails.

(Sarah Brewer) Open to changing the day we send out the GSF email blasts.

(Kim Goodhope) We could change the day we send out the office emails. Will connect with Sarah.

(Kristin Maguire) I am willing to help with a working parent group. (Jackie, Angela, Kim, Ashley)

(Keala Landry) Would love to help get the Nest families together. There is a good mix of families.

(Emily Green) Something about having this mom you know (Room Parent) send you an email makes it a priority. I think it makes a huge difference.

(Heather Woollen) Idea of a one-month calendar. Putting all events on there so working parents know what is coming up and ways they can get involved.

(Kyri McClellan) Thank you!

Closing at 10:10am