

GSF 2/8/19 Parent Forum Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Tami McCall, Kyri McClellan, Jason Richardson, Kelly Somer, Lisa Patrizia, Josephine Billisi, Molly Nute, Katie Pohl, Kathryn Elia, Beth Sauls, Jaclyn Guelfi, Tabatha Baker, Alison Rabb, Subha Mannargudi, Claudia Callejas, Kristin Maguire, Jennifer Chandler, Tami Weis, Coach Ben Freeland, Adam Treewater, Gina Hagen, Christelle Blumin, Keala Landry, Aliza Davidi (24 total)

Welcome @ 9:03am

(Kyri McClellan) Welcome, Thank You, and Intro. Welcome Coach Ben from National Academy of Athletics. Today grew out of a commitment in the Fall to gather input around the PE program/instruction going forward. Board meetings for the rest of the year are posted online.

(Mr. Richardson) I had said at the beginning of the year that I wanted to get feedback on the PE program. I mentioned that to Coach Ben and he said he wanted to be here. From a school prospective we need to provide a rich PE program that meets the state requirements, including number of minutes. We also need to have a plan in place when a teacher is out, which the National Academy of Athletics has, and it has been fantastic. We have not had a day where we had to cancel PE because of an absence. We also want to make sure we can administer the California Fitness Test (AKA Presidential Fitness Test) for 5th Graders. They created a plan for making Field Day happen and are hosting the Class Olympics at the end of the year. I want to open it up to everyone...I got two emails from families that couldn't be here.

(Coach Ben) I want to say Coach Quest and I have really enjoyed working with the students here. You will always have kids that act up but you keep them under control and active.

(Mr. Treewater) Teachers are really appreciating the program. They are professional. Kids have said PE is a little hard now, which is a good thing. They are doing circuit training.

(Coach Ben) For November we did fundamentals, focusing on how to play together. We played four square. For December we did our Sports 101 program, that focused on basketball. Each class focuses on a skill, and we have drills. For January we did circuit training, which is like boot camp. Kindergartens loved it the most. Right now we are

doing capture the flag, and moving into whiffle ball in March. We have kick ball coming up and hoping to try ultimate frisbee, and grass volleyball. Last two weeks will be the Class Olympics.

(Tabatha Baker) My kids are super happy. One question I have is how long have you guys been around and what other schools are you in?

(Coach Ben) We are here in Marin and Sonoma County. We have been in Sonoma County for 4 years. We are definitely getting more interest. We've been doing camps since 2012. Started in 4 cities, and now in 88 cities. We try to give each school consistency with the same person/people. I am the area captain here, in Petaluma and in Novato. Sam is the Sonoma County captain.

(Gina Hagen) What is the philosophy on sportsmanship and how is it incorporated?

(Ben) Our biggest thing is if you don't have anything nice to say, then don't say it. We have a team concept. It's not always about winning, it's about having fun and learning to love the sports.

(Tabatha Baker) What if there is one kid that is constantly causing issues?

(Coach Ben) We'll involve the Teacher if we need to, or send them to the office.

(Beth Sauls) I heard from a kid that a coach said "don't give me that little white boy crap?" I just wanted to make you aware.

(Mr. Richardson) This is the first I am hearing about this. It was not reported. If you do hear something that is concerning to you, it is good to fact check things.

(Alison Rabb) What is your hiring process? Credentials?

(Coach Ben) We do background checks and fingerprinting. We do phone and in-person interviews. We look for people that have worked with kids in the past. We often get college kids. I bring them in to work with me to see how they run classes and handle situations.

(Katie Pohl) So they're not credentialed teachers?

(Coach Ben) No, not usually.

(Richardson) Throughout the District PE Teachers do not need to be credentialed.

(Alison Rabb) What if Coach Quest leaves? Is the school involved in the rehiring process?

(Coach Ben) We have Coaches on stand-by, and I am working on expanding the program. The school is welcome to help be a part of the hiring process in the future.

(Sarah Brewer via email) I have heard good feedback. I have also heard there is a lot of warm-ups and training and just playing the sports at the end of class.

(Coach Ben) That was during the circuit training. If kids are messing around the warm-ups take longer.

(Kyri McClellan) Can you put together a couple sentences at the beginning of each unit for Mr. Richardson to send out to the parent body?

(Coach Ben) Sure.

(Kirstin McGuire) My kids have been pretty positive about PE now. They are proud they can do the hard stuff. They love the games and are having fun too.

(Beth Sauls) Briefly what are the 5th Grade physical fitness test standards?

(Coach Ben) Cardio, strength (upper body: push up, pull up, or pull and hold), curl up test. Also called the Presidential Fitness Test. Some tests have options and I let them pick, others we don't (no pull up bar) so they have all been doing the same test. We also do height and weight (privately).

(Mr. Richardson) They tally all the results and those will come home in report cards.

(Molly Nute) In general I have heard it is hard work for them, which I think is great. They love when they are learning a specific sport. I like that it is balanced. One of the things that came up was that they thought it was unfair that there was language that the boys are stronger or faster than the girls. It brought up a good conversation about how boys and girls are built differently. The girls want to be challenged.

(Coach Ben) I know when we were doing basketball we had an issue with hoop and ball size. I always recommend that they practice with the right size hoop and ball, so they are having fun. They have also asked about the numbers for the Presidential Fitness Test, and there are different numbers for boys and girls. I always encourage them to do their best and not worry about the numbers. I always appreciate feedback.

(Keala Landry) The messaging to some of the girls feels like they are weaker than the boys. They were told they couldn't have an all girls team because they wouldn't be able to compete with the boys' teams.

(Molly McEvoy) Maybe more words of encouragement instead of focusing on "boys and girls standards".

(Aliza Davidi) What is the process for identifying kids with special needs?

(Coach Ben) I have been made aware of some of the kids. We do not have any specialized training for special needs kids at this point.

(Mr. Richardson) I will make sure the classroom teachers make him aware of those kids.

(Josephine Billis) Is there a way that parents can let the coaches know if their kids have sensitivities? I feel it empowers the parents.

(Mr. Richardson) I think it should be communicated through the classroom teacher.

(Josephine Billis) At this age is it really necessary to let the kids know what the standards are?

(Coach Ben) I only said something when the class asked. Not every kid loves PE, and some will come up with any excuse not to participate.

(Kathy Brown) For the Presidential Fitness Test you are weighing them, but are you explaining why you are doing it? It's for BMI index. I heard some of the girls were uncomfortable.

(Gina Hagen) I think it's a great opportunity for all the kids to know why, but it is also a great opportunity for the parents to talk to their kids about being healthy. We want kids to have a healthy acceptance of their weight. Data shows it is affecting kids.

(Kyri McClellan) Maybe the Principal or teachers should send home an email explaining that the Presidential Fitness Test is happening and what the pieces of it are. Then the parents can have a conversation with their kids.

(Mr. Richardson) When I mentioned it to Coach Ben, he got started on it right away.

(Josephine Billis) I hear a lot of positive things about PE from my kids. I love the curriculum and specific sports. I feel like the kids are smart enough to understand the reasons for the test if we communicate with them about it. They should be doing the best that they can.

(Kyri McClellan) They are offering a camp during Ski Week. A number of families have asked for an afterschool class on Wed, and they are looking into that. Coach Ben, let us know how we can help with Field Day.

(Tabatha Baker) It might be easier if we stagger the grades for Field Day for the families with 2 kids.

(Alison Rabb) Do you get any female applicants?

(Coach Ben) Some, but not really in Marin. We advertise through several outlets.

(Josephine Billis) Is PE a place where we can start touching on body awareness?

(Mr. Richardson) That happens in 5th Grade and is done by the classroom teachers.

(Kyri McClellan) We have a contract with them through the end of the school year. The feedback we have received led us to extend the contract after this past December. The expense is almost the same as our previous PE expenses.

(Coach Ben) We love to give back to the communities we work in. We are also planning to do Summer camps this year.

Parent Forum Meeting ended @ 10am