



SYCAMORE RIDGE

General PTA Meeting 03/13/2025

Attendance: Sara Lake, Lara Gordon, Heather Wesselo, Kathy O'Neill, Ana Pons, Kate Kim, Sesilie Bascombe, Sandy Tanaka, Jody Folk, Britta Loesel, Jill Maher, Bianca Plotkin, Megan Scanderbeg, Nicholas Mariuz, Stefania LaPiana, Lesa House, Lou Lu

Location: Sycamore Elementary School

Conflict of Interest & Antitrust Avoidance Affirmation: All attendees affirmed that they are not engaging in any conflicts of interest or activities violating antitrust regulations.

Welcome/Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order at 8:22 AM.

Treasurer Report/Approvals

- **Approval of Checks #3671-3674**
 - Motion to approve: Lara approved, Ceceli seconds, all in favor.
- **Treasurer's Report and Approvals – March**
 - Motion to approve: Jody approved, Kate seconds, all in favor.
- **Approval of March Minutes**
 - Motion to approve: Sandy approved, Kathy seconds, all in.

General Updates

Board Slate

- **Nominating Committee Update:**
 - **President:** Kate Kim
 - **Executive VP:** Sandy Tanaka
 - **Treasurer:** Jody Folk
 - **VP Health & Safety:** Dr. Bianca Plotkin
 - **VP Communications:** Sara Lake

- **VP Programs:** Sesilie Bascombe
- **Recording Secretary:** Ana Pons
- **Corresponding Secretary:** Heather Wesselo
- **Financial Secretary:** Priya Merrill
- **Parliamentarian:** Kathy O'Neill
- **Historian:** Britta Loesel

Motion to approve the board as presented: Motion by Kathy, seconded by Lara, all in favor.

Guest Speaker: Jamie Phillips, Director, Child Nutrition Services

- Surveys and Feedback:
 - The district regularly conducts surveys to gather insights from students and parents, which help improve the nutrition services offered. Feedback has been varied, providing both positive and critical insights to guide future decisions.
- Breakfast & Lunch Program:
 - Breakfast offerings must meet strict nutritional guidelines, including fruit, vegetables, grains, and milk. Popular choices for students include cereals and waffles, all adhering to the necessary regulations for balanced nutrition.
Schools undergo audits every five years to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements for school meals. The district aims to prepare as many meals from scratch as possible, reducing reliance on engineered products.
All food items are carefully selected to comply with federal safety standards.
 - Food dyes used in meals come from real ingredients, rather than artificial dyes, to maintain nutritional integrity while still meeting color and visual appeal standards.
- Communication with Parents:
 - It was noted that clearer communication with parents could help increase confidence in the food provided in schools. Providing more information about food sourcing, preparation methods, and nutritional value may help parents feel more at ease.
- Farm to School Program:
 - The district has expanded its use of locally-sourced produce through the "Farm to School" initiative, supporting local farmers and providing students with fresh, seasonal fruits and vegetables.

- **Waste Reduction and Donations:**
 - Efforts to reduce food waste have been successful, with significant donations made to local communities. Last year, 17,000 pounds of food were donated, and this year, the district aims to further optimize food donations while continuing to minimize waste.
- **Share Coolers:**
 - The "Share Coolers" program allows students to take extra food that others have left behind, which helps reduce food waste. However, concerns have been raised about the cleanliness and organization of the coolers, with feedback indicating some issues with messiness and functionality.
- **Sycamore School's Kitchen Status:**
 - Sycamore is one of the last schools in the district to receive a full kitchen. Unfortunately, there is no current funding available for this project, which means the school will continue relying on offsite kitchens for meal preparation.
- **Suggestions for PTA Involvement:**
 - The PTA can support the district's food programs by improving kitchen facilities, reducing plastic use in food packaging, and enhancing food quality. Hosting informational sessions or food stations at school events could also help parents better understand the district's commitment to healthier choices.

Meeting Adjourned: 09:45 AM

The next PTA Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 10th, at 9:15 AM at Sycamore Ridge.

Ana Pons

X

