

Saratoga Education Foundation
13 February 2008
Meeting Minutes

Meeting came to order at 8:55 a.m.

Attendees:

Marybeth Smails, Kristi Petters, Susan Vukovatz, Jacki Berlinberg, Cheryl Bailey, Jen Fraisl, Stacy Alexander, Liz Guy, Beth Polito, Nancy Ondrejka, Mary Moriarty, Kelly Berryhill, Terrie Creamer, Beth Kingsley, Katherine Tseng, Kelly Green, Paige Berardo

President's Report:

Jen Fraisl reports January was a busy month:

- 1) The Phonathon was an enormous effort and success. Thank you to everyone who helped! Kristi Petters to provide details later in the meeting.
- 2) Katherine and Jen met with school board last month. The meeting format was different from previous years in that it was a smaller group to keep ideas better focused. The school board is keen to support SEF and wants to know how. The three main topics Jen and Katherine spoke to are:
 - 1) Awareness. Help us build awareness through school community for what SEF does and that it's a partnership between parents, teachers and administrators.
 - 2) Articulation. Make sure that along with the regular school programs, SEF programs are well articulated through K-8.
 - 3) Assessment. Make sure that feedback goes to the appropriate source and that SEF teacher receive regular assessment and that the district is aware that SEF teacher assessment happens regularly.

The meeting agenda is available on SUSD website. The school board offered to support SEF with these requests.

- 4) Website committee is moving quickly. We anticipate having something to see by the next meeting.
- 5) It's time for nominating for roles next year. SEF needs 3-4 volunteers to be on the nominating committee. The nominating committee works to find next years board members. SEF does not have a parliamentarian. New board members are welcome and encouraged so please keep Jen or Katherine updated.

Kelly Berryhill volunteered to be on the nominating committee. Stacy Alexander also volunteered as did Cheryl Bailey.

Meeting Minutes:

Cheryl Bailey motioned to approve meeting minutes. Kristi Petters seconded. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Phonathon:

Kristi Petters reported there were 125 volunteers on the day. 1,203 call sheets were processed of which 170 were NOs, 158 were UNDECIDED, and 355 were YESs. SEF received \$180K in pledges, however, 520 of the total call sheets were not reachable (no one answered the phone).

A possible explanation for such a high number of unreachable families is the Alain Pinel caller ID.

Emails have been sent reminder pledges to pay. Before spring break another postcard reminder will go out. Late April / early May those who pledged but haven't paid will be contacted by phone.

Joanne Lee has volunteered to be co-chair for next year with Tacey Tucker. This year Joyce Lauro called all Alumni and Joanne Lee called new parents. To date there are no statistics available regarding their specific success rates.

Kristi requested feedback on how to improve Phonathon in following years.

A discussion followed on from the Phonathon report regarding parent awareness and the need to educate parents that their public school education is not free. Discussion about contacting new parents when they come in via new parent letters was one suggestion.

Jen and Katherine again extended their thanks for all your effort.

Jogathon:

Liz Guy reports that most positions for Jogathon have been filled. The date is May 9th, which is the Friday after testing. Leadership event is same day. She acknowledged the timing is not ideal as there may be parents who make Leadership at Jogathon who will need to be informed immediately that they can attend the event. On a positive note, most pledges tend to arrive in advance.

PR for the event will commence Monday after spring break. A couple of "work days" have been organized. There is a cash incentive for kids to bring in permission slips and envelopes on time mainly to avoid having permission slips become a gating issue. Prizes this year will as before be offered for different levels of money raised however there will be more smaller prizes this year instead of a few big ones. Liz suggested that Target Gift Cards might be a good gift and using that to promote the event would be fun. Liz put out a plea for help with marketing the event as her hope is to make this a great event. She hopes through articles and education about what the Jogathon does we can increase community involvement.

Financial Report:

Stacy Alexander, projecting ahead, anticipates \$150k from Phonathon yet to be tallied, and is hoping for another 60k from Jogathon. That added to 843k that we already have will put us about \$200k short of our goal. We are below where we had hoped to be at this time. Stacy suspects a soft economy could be having an impact.

Stacy's concern from a financial standpoint is if we don't reach our goal, will SEF have to cut something from the program next year? She raised the idea of a survey again, to ask the community to stack rank priorities to help us make the decision of what we drop/cut. And she encouraged the board to think about refreshing our fundraising ideas so that we can continue to make our goal.

Discussion arose out of incidences where parents donated to PTA thinking they donated to SEF... the problem does not appear significant enough to have helped SEF reach its goal however it does reinforce the need to educate parents about the difference between SEF and PTA.

Discussion of communication ensued regarding awareness building with parents of what SEF brings to children's lives.

Cheryl Bailey recommends a communications push to educate parents before the end of the year in order to increase donations. Jen suggests we wait a month to assess before proceeding. Jen suggests a multi-pronged marketing program.

Kristi Petters reminded the board of the upcoming article in the Saratoga News about Phonathon.

Superintendent's Report

Beth Polito provided a summary of last night's board meeting. Lane reviewed the quarterly report which is available on the SUSD website. The 'spotlight presentation' was from Foothill 5th graders who read the Declaration of Independence at the meeting. There was a public hearing discussion regarding Certificated Teachers Association contract renegotiation. Topics being discussed in contract negotiations are on the website, but in summary, compensation and benefits, rights, use of instructional aides, professional development, class size, are all included.

Beth spoke to the possibility of budget cuts. It looks likely that Saratoga will be approached differently from other districts. There is concern that we may be asked to give back 2.4% of our budget to the State, equivalent to about \$300k for the 08/09 school year. SUSD are preparing by way of evaluating what might be cut if the cut is requested.

Beth also reported that summer school is being reviewed. SUSD are reviewing the academic structure and asking what if anything could be done differently? SUSD is looking at other school districts to see what they are doing and will continue with current program this summer. These evaluations are for possible changes to next year's curriculum. Beth's hope is for increased continuity between academic summer school and what happens when they go to school the following year.

Also coming up, school accountability report cards. These will be available for all schools on websites today or tomorrow. These reports are a State requirement.

Also happening, math instructional materials are being evaluated. Many materials are being reviewed. The process is that SUSD selects pilot materials for every grade that will then be used in the fall. Parents, teachers and students will evaluate the pilot materials. There is opportunity to participate in evaluation process and pilot materials will be made by the end of this school year.

Principals Report

Kelly Green, Redwood Principal, attended Phonathon and was amazed. She is very thankful for SEF's work.

Nancy Ondrejka, Foothill Principal, offered her support and can't imagine which program they would cut if cuts were required. She is very thankful to SEF. She will take back to her staff our request to strengthen communication with parents about what SEF does. Visitation Days coming up at her school and SEF reps will speak at them. Foothill has a visual representation of what PTA does vs what SEF does. Artwork was put in windows at school and was much viewed and appreciated. Foothill was nominated to be a Distinguished School and she contributes that in part to SEF's work. She feels it's the honor is representative of the entire district.

School Reports

Cheryl Bailey reported that Saratoga Visitation Day was yesterday and 3 students went along with each group of visitors. 90% of attendees were kindergarten parents. They were divided them up with parents and children. She reported lots of feedback about SEF programs and their popularity among children.

Beth Kingsley reports that they recently had the Redwood Art Reflections program this year and the 1st place winner goes on to State competition. Jogathon enthusiasm is ramping up.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.