



Sunshine Academy

1658 Beacon Street
Brookline, MA 02446
617-734-5250 - office
781-998-6408 - fax

www.sunshineacademy.com

Parent Advisory Board Meeting Minutes Thursday September 29, 2016 4:30PM - 6:00PM

In attendance: Emily Rabe, Andrew Haber, Ryan Cooper, Melanie Barone, Erin Williams Hart, Richelle Sopko, Julia Levine, Sara Raposo, Zeynep Belge, Aaron Levine

After introductions, Andrew and Emily explained for the benefit of new members the role of the Parent Advisory Board: to advise on policy and procedural changes, set up parent social activities (e.g. clothing swap), and act as “room parent” liaisons. A number of items were discussed during this meeting.

Teacher Benefits:

Teacher benefits are reviewed annually with input from the PAB. Andrew handed out a Summary of Teacher Benefits and explained them in some detail. Benefits include: performance bonuses, medical/dental/vision plans, a minimum of 14 paid leave days per year, and tuition/student loan assistance, among others. All of Sunshine’s teachers are teacher certified and salaried (not paid hourly), and each classroom has a team of 3 teachers. Sunshine has a comparatively low turnover rate. The PAB suggested the addition of some amount of paid parental leave; currently teachers are entitled to 12 weeks of unpaid parental leave.

City Fresh Catering Menu Changes:

City Fresh has a new chef and new dietician, and they are receptive to feedback from the school. They have a 3-week menu cycle, and introduce one new food item every other week. Sunshine will be getting some changes in the next week or so. Morning and afternoon snacks are bulk ordered through City Fresh. Some concern was expressed over lunches that might have a lot of sugar, such as french toast with maple syrup. Emily assured the PAB that the “sugary” items are usually sauces (maple syrup, bbq sauce, etc), and are usually portioned out in very small quantities by the teachers or not used at all.

Family Music Project:

A reminder that Sunshine is doing a Family Music Project again this year, and welcomes suggestions of music that is important to your family. If submitting music in another language, please include a translation and phonetic transcription or recording of the pronunciation. Suggestions can be emailed to music@sunshineacademy.com.

Halloween Carnival Date:

Halloween falls on a Monday this year. Andrew suggested that holding the school's Halloween Carnival on the Friday before might be beneficial for several reasons, and the PAB enthusiastically agreed. It will be held on Friday, 10/28, from 4:45-6:15, and Emily will send out invites next week. Someone raised the idea of holding the carnival on the Friday before Halloween every year.

Parking Lot/Spaces:

- The parking lot has been recently repainted to show the No Parking areas (immediately to the left and right inside the entrance). Emily emphasized that those spots should not be used at all, as there have been several accidents involving cars in those spots.
- The school lost 2 parking spots in front - to the left of the building, but gained 2 in front - to the right. Sunshine may have another opportunity to request the town install 15-minute parking signs in spaces in front of the school.
- Please note that the town has recently changed its parking meters to 12 minutes/quarter (was formerly 15 minutes), and free after 8:00pm (was formerly 6pm).

First Aid Training:

Sunshine is holding a First Aid training session for its teachers on Wednesday, October 12th (6:45-9:00pm) at 302 Harvard Street. Parents are welcome to attend as well at a cost of \$25 per person. Email Emily if you are interested in attending. A CPR session will be held for teachers only; there may be an opportunity for parents to attend a CPR session in February 2017.

Questions/Suggestions/Ideas from the PAB:

- A suggestion was made to send out school-wide email notifications of illnesses and teacher changes instead of or to limit paper copies being distributed. The PAB felt that email reminders of upcoming holidays and school closings would be helpful as well.
- A parent asked if teachers could periodically email photos of the children, similar to the monthly newsletter. Andrew noted that several hundred photos are taken each day and the school uses a facial recognition software, and parents can request photos of their child at any time. However, they have opted not to purchase photo sharing software as they prefer to keep the focus in the classroom on teaching.
- A question was raised as to why teachers are not allowed to babysit students. Andrew and Emily gave several solid reasons for this policy and reiterated that a current teacher babysitting a current student is grounds for immediate termination of both the teacher and the family. Andrew noted that the family directory will be released soon and suggested that parents contact other parents if they are looking for babysitter recommendations.

Other:

- The PAB will discuss next year's school closing days at the next meeting.
- Emily will send out surveys to determine how many children will likely be away for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, in order to plan for teacher absences and food orders.

The next PAB meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 14th, 4:30-6:00pm.