Benjamin Franklin Middle School Home and School Association Zoom Meeting Minutes - February 10, 2021

Attendees: Carol Waldman, Mayumi Brescia, Meghan Agatep, Jen Tesseyman, Laura McGrath, Valerie Auyeung, Anne McAskin, Sandy Santangelo, Sheila Brogan, Susan M., Nancy Sabatiel, Allison Brown, Laura Waisnor, David M., Stacy Malmborg, Lisette Ramos, Mr. Wu, Ms. Stovall, Mr. Orsini.

Welcome:

The Zoom Meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM. The BFHSA Co-President Carol Waldman welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. The December 2020 minutes were approved. 1st Approval -Gregory Wu; 2nd Approval - Laura McGrath.

Agenda Items:

- Principal's Report Mr. Orsini
 - Shauna Stovall Testing window is March 15th June 11th. Currently, we are in the preparation
 phase and waiting for direction/guidance from the State of NJ as to what testing will look like, next
 steps, etc.
 - o Greg Wu:
 - Student Council Update "Souperbowl" collection 300 cans donated to Social Services.
 - Reading Marathon is underway
 - 15 active Clubs including Brain Busters, Mind Design Sports Club, BF Cares
 - Possibly will do another 6th Grade Fundraiser
 - Introduced Tommy Groenert RHS Junior presented Eagle Scout Project
 - Build a Greenhouse at BF building foundation with a water drip system.
 Location would be by the Track near the benches facing the Cemetery. Would be beneficial to BF Science classes, the Green Club and would allow space to grow and maintain plants and allow for donations to the food pantry.
 - Covid Numbers have stabilized for the first time since Thanksgiving, haven't seen any in-school transmission and we are beginning to see Virtual students returning to Hybrid. Currently, 40% are Virtual.
 - Parent Question is there a transition plan for kids returning to Hybrid from being Virtual to assist with the emotional/social transition; especially for a 6th grade student who is new to BF?
 - Reply Guidance Counselors will work with the families of returning students.
 Email the Guidance Counselor and set up a meeting to discuss the return to school
 - Currently teaching an 8th Grade Peer Leadership class and can see how extremely difficult it is to teach in this environment and the increase in time spent on planning; however, there is a benefit in getting to know the kids and building relationships.
 - Parent Question regarding a possible daycare program at BF 7am 6pm and why is this acceptable when we can't open schools for the students for an entire day?
 - Reply no decision has been made regarding location (Sommerville or BF). An Outside group would be running this program and numbers would be limited due to safety guidelines (classrooms- 15 people; cafeteria- 25-30 people).
 - Sheila Brogan added that Alphabest is the outside group providing before and after care at the elementary schools. This possible daycare program is designed to assist teachers who have young children as well as a small group of Ridgewood parents. It would only have 5-15 kids. Express any concerns to the Superintendent.
 - Diversity/Equity/Inclusion:
 - Stacy Poelstra District Presentation to Principals and HSA Reps.
 - Professional Development for Staff- 20 Day Equity Challenge
 - February 5th First District Parent committee meeting
 - a. BF currently does not have a Parent Diversity/Equity/Inclusion group but open to the idea of starting one.

- Mr. Orsini feels this is an area of strength at BF. BF is very diverse.
 - 10 years ago, seeing inequities in performance between boys and girls and now this gap is negligible
 - Social Norms Campaign encouraged the mixing of tables at lunchtime.
 - Faculty/Staff is diverse.. Look at individual student strengths and build on those strengths. Provide opportunities for Teachers to allow every voice to be heard in a classroom and provide equal opportunity,
 - Use State data from when you register for school to categorize students (ethnicity, race, etc.)
 - Shauna Stovell spoke about the BF 20 Day Racial Equity Challenge 21
 Teachers participated (diverse group across all disciplines including Admin)
 - a. Have met twice and meeting again tomorrow
 - b. Discuss Power/Privilege, Oppression/Equity, implicit bias and reflect, interact and relate to the classroom. Choose from provided activities or select an area of interest. For example, reading, podcasts, engage in conversations, self reflection, written documentation on reflection. Discuss looking at student strengths and building on those strengths. Encourage an equitable environment.

President's Report:

- Federated Report Mayumi Brescia:
 - Groupspot has added HSA events/dates to the calendar.
 - Looking for a Groupspot Chairman for 2021-2022
 - Ridgewood Education Foundation Winterfest February 3rd March 6th.
 - February 3rd Children's Author & Musician Raj Haldar 4pm
 - February 8th Bake Whoopie Pies with Kristen Daffron 5pm
 - February 17th Healthy Stress Relief (Stressbusters with the Calm Crew) with Karen Dillon - Yoga practice and nutrition tips - 7pm
 - February 21st Cook with Claudia, From Scratch. Live hands on demonstration of how to cook an authentic italian dish 5pm.
 - February 23rd Craft Beer Tasting with Three 3's Brewing Company and Park West Tavern - 7:30pm
 - February 28th Artisanal Charcuterie Board with Sara Selects -4pm
 - March 6th Virtual Super Science Saturday 10:00 12:30pm
- Treasurer's Report Valerie Aeyueng & Laura McGrath
 - Fundraisers: Fundraising for Robotics Center
 - Friends of BF is open for donations.
 - No Cook Fundraisers (Chipotle & Park Wood Deli)
 - Stop & Shop sign up and BF earns % back
 - Amazon Smile sign up and select BF as the organization of choice
 - Enroll in Boxtops btfe.com (code is 220622). Scan receipts and submit. Select BF as the School.
- Ridgewood Board of Ed Sheila Brogan- Virtual Super Science Saturday 33rd year 10am 12:30pm
 - Check out the website supersciencesaturday.org
 - Begins at 10am Welcome. LIvestream 2.5 hours. Hope to have the live stream available on the website for a month.
 - 45 minute- Behind the Scenes with Omaha's Zoo & Aquarium learn about penguins, sharks, stingrays and will have a Q&A session.
 - 15 minutes -RHS Science Team Award Winners prototype of water bottle that purifies the water and removes germs. Team has won \$10k to produce the bottle.
 - NASA presentations on Earth Observing Satellites and discussing climate change.
 - Van Saun Bergen County Zoo 20-25 min presentation

- o Rocket Launch- ends the day.
- The website (as well as FIOS 33 and district site) will include at least 23 presenters with 5-8 minute selfie videos about an interest in science. Invite students to do a "selfie" presentation on their science project as well (3-5 minutes).
- Tic Toc Talks Sandy Santangelo:
 - New initiative through Tic Toc similar to TED Talks to inspire kids and open their eyes to all of the
 creative professional fields that exist. A variety of professionals will talk about their career, the path
 they took and answer 5-10 questions about their field of interest.
 - Promoting to Middle School and High School students
 - Located on the website tictoc.org
 - Variety of Speakers:
 - Authors, Video Artists, Graphic Designers, Youtubers, Radio Hosts, Gamers, Broadway, Rappers, Poets, etc.
 - Check out the first speaker, Dani Spies who is the host of a YouTube cooking show, blog and coaching platform. She has over 1.5 million followers and is from Glen Rock.
- New Business Carol Waldman
 - Pandemic Response Team meet weekly to discuss Hybrid vs. Virtual, touch base with Nurse Reilly and our Local Health Department.
 - Reading Marathon Lisette Ramos is the chair. Ben & Jerry's coupons will be distributed to the kids who sign up to participate. Information is on Facebook, Groupspot and the Ridgewood Library website.
 - Parkwood Deli No Cook Fundraiser January 15th \$40/meal. Made \$270 which included a \$50 anonymous private donation.
 - Parent Questions:
 - What is the correct avenue for Parents to express concerns? Are our kids ok?
 - Suggest HSA to send out a parent survey to ask what the gaps are and what can be changed to help our kids?
 - Administration is constantly changing the way they are teaching and approaching kids to try to find new/better methods. Studying grades each marking period and looking at on average how grades have changed. Create individual plans for students who are struggling. Administration has noticed a larger number of kids not joining zooms/videos since January. Trying to encourage kids to come back to Hybrid. Administration also provides Professional Development for the Teachers and encourages them to talk with each other to share experiences, ideas, etc.
 - Suggest creating a Parent Support Group by Grade to share ideas, best practices, concerns. Possibly create smaller groups for kids to make connections.

Meeting was concluded at 8:30 PM

Minutes respectfully submitted by Anne McAskin, Board Secretary