

SAGAPONACK COMMON SCHOOL SHARED DECISION MAKING COMMITTEE (Sagg SDMC)

MINUTES of the SDMC Meeting November 21, 2013, at 7 PM, at the Schoolhouse.

The following were present at the meeting:

Alan Van Cott (Superintendent and Facilitator)	Diana McGinniss (Head Teacher)
Barbara Albright (Community)	Deborah Quimby (Parent Rep)
Matthew Wilson (Alt Parent Rep and Notetaker)	Bruce Mclean (Parent)
Ted Quimby (Parent)	Darienne Sutton (Parent)
Brian Villante (Parent)	Mark Walsh (Parent)
Marion Wilson (Parent)	

Apologies: Terry Scammell

A pot luck dinner preceded the meeting.

Childcare was kindly arranged during the SDMC by Sagg alumni.

Since a quorum was present the minutes of the SDMC of September 18, 2013 were approved by consensus with minor additions.

1. Deborah Quimby clarified her role as parent rep to the committee and the dispute resolution team: Sagg parents unable to attend the SDMC meeting but with issues which they would like raised should contact her, (or one of the alternate parent reps,) to have their views represented at the SDMC.

2. Superintendent Van Cott presented the District's Goals. (See October 2013 SCS SDMC minutes.) There was some discussion about the District Goals and the goals of the SDMC set out in the SDMC plan by which the school's SDMC is a forum for the meaningful participation by parents, teachers, the school Superintendent, and the Sagg community in the making of Educational & Non Educational decisions about the school in order to improve the educational performance of all the students in the school.

3. Diana McGinniss described their trip at the beginning of October with Terry Scammell to East Moriches *Elementary School, (EMES,)* to see the *New State Common Core Modules in practice in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade* classrooms. Diana McGinniss explained that our school was coordinating with EMES in implementing State issued ELA Common Core Curriculum (CCC) modules at Sagg. EMES had been using these for a year. Diana McGinniss told the SDMC that the New York State Department of Education CCC Modules and texts for ELA had been ordered and that ELA modules were now being used at Sagg in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade. The decision was last minute and there had not been time for discussion at the SDMC although it was presented to the Sagaponack School parent's open house at the beginning of the school year.

There followed some discussion on the new Common Core. Mr. Van Cott referred parents to the Engage New York website for further information. Mr. Van Cott also suggested that parents review The Parent Backpack Guide.<sup>1</sup>

It was asked why it had been decided to coordinate with East Moriches rather than local schools, such as Sag Harbor Elementary, to which Sagaponack School is a feeder district. It was explained that local schools had not been using the State CCC modules last year. Deborah Quimby said that parents of children at Sag Harbor were reporting problems with the implementation of CCC Math in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade and that curriculum transition difficulties with this had been the subject of a recent parent/teacher meeting there.<sup>2</sup> The importance of a seamless transition from 1<sup>st</sup> grade on and from Sagaponack School to its feeder schools in connection with the CCC Math modules was discussed. Superintendent Van Cott said that he would be looking into the schools to which Sagaponack School feeds and that he would report back to the SDMC on this issue.

Matthew Wilson described the SDMC's decision in May 2011 to use the CCC text book *Go Math!* Diana McGinniss said that despite the parent/teacher decision to adopt *Go Math!* in 2011 for all grades, the Board had wanted to "wait and see." In 2011/2012, it had implemented CCC *Go Math!* only in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. Matthew Wilson pointed to a 'disconnect' between *Go Math!* and the CCC modules which assumed the children had completed the earlier CCC modules. The present timetable allotted only 30 minutes a day to math instruction (ELA had an hour.) The very detailed State CCC math modules called for one hour of Math instruction daily, (plus homework.) Diana McGinniss agreed and said the Math timetable and modules were being considered by the teachers. Diana McGinniss would ask Terry Scammell to address math modules timetable and text books at the next SDMC. However, when discussing NYS Common Core Tests, she said, given the small size of classes at Sagaponack School, the teachers were able to adapt quickly. Superintendent Van Cott reported that statewide proficiency as measured by State Tests had dropped very significantly. Diana McGinniss stressed that whilst Sagaponack School's 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade results were confidential last year with so few children in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, (and no 4<sup>th</sup> grade,) however Sagg had always had very good results. Brian Villante stated that he would be happy to sign a waiver to have his child's results released.

5. It was requested and agreed that an informal teacher/parent subcommittee of the SDMC would look into ELA and Math modules and supporting materials. Superintendent Van Cott said that he had already proposed this with the teachers and they had already agreed. Volunteer parents were sought who would be able to meet with the teachers (throughout the school year) to discuss this and to look at the suggested ELA and Math text books and timetable for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade for 2014/2015. Parents willing to take part who were not at the SDMC should contact Diana McGinniss. At least ten minutes would be set aside at the beginning of the December SDMC meeting for a presentation and discussion on these issues. Darienne Sutton whose son would be in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade next year, volunteered to work with Mrs. McGinniss on this. She will come in to observe a module 3 lesson and report back to the committee. Mr. Scammell will speak with a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade parent to observe the module 4 lesson.

<sup>1</sup> Notetaker ref: <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>

<http://www.engageny.org/parent-and-family-resources>

[http://www.engageny.org/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/parent\\_workshop\\_backpack\\_guide.pdf](http://www.engageny.org/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/parent_workshop_backpack_guide.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Notetaker ref: See *Sag Harbor Express* Nov 2012 <http://sagharboronline.com/s3gharborexpress/page-1/concerned-sag-harbor-parents-crowd-pierson-library-for-math-curriculum-workshop-26911>

6. Darienne Sutton brought up the issue of technology. The children were missing Lisa Arrigotti, she said. She suggested, and it was agreed that, as a part of their technology curriculum, the teachers would try to arrange for the children to Skype with her. Diana McGinnis described how Skype had been successfully used last year and said that this suggestion was already in hand.

7. There was some discussion about Spanish classes at the school since the resignation of the new Spanish teacher in September. Diana McGinniss noted a lack of response to advertisements placed by the school to fill the position. Meantime the children were receiving extra music and art classes. Several parents had suggestions for Spanish speakers who might fill the position. Diana McGinniss said that she would be grateful to receive these - details could be forwarded to Jeanette Krempler. There was some discussion about using technology or distance learning via Skype for the twice weekly Spanish classes as had occurred last year. Deborah Quimby suggested *Muzzy* the BBC Spanish language DVD course for children. Online courses, programs and videos were also available. Diana McGinniss said these suggestions would be taken into consideration. This was tabled for discussion at the next SDMC.

8. Darienne Sutton raised the issue of the successful Mystery Reader program which she had introduced last year whereby parents, grandparents, friends, and local community members would come to the school and tell or read stories to the children for 30 minutes once a week. Diana McGinniss agreed and said that this could be tied in with the Common Core State Standards. Darienne Sutton and Diana McGinniss would liaise to implement a rotation for this and to coordinate it with the Common Core State Standards.

9. Christmas art and craft projects for the children were briefly discussed. Parents interested in helping should contact Diana McGinniss.

10. Darienne Sutton suggested that this year's end of year field trip should be to Washington DC with an overnight stay. This could be by Jitney and Amtrak with a local bus chartered in DC. The idea was warmly received. Diana McGinniss noted that parents would have to be responsible for their children; it would need to be after the State tests in April. She would need to discuss it with the other teachers first. Given the logistics Superintendent Van Cott said that he would need to sound out the Board of Trustees before he could support the idea. It was agreed that Superintendent Van Cott would broach the subject on behalf of the SDMC with the Board. The SDMC felt the trip must be made available to all children, (as was essential.) Given the limited annual end of year field trip budget, Ted Quimby suggested that parents fundraise for the trip. A spring fete or fair at the school (with raffles, coconut shies, white elephant stalls, bake sales etc.) was suggested. The proposal was tabled for discussion at the December SDMC meeting.

11. There was discussion about the District's goal to identify and solicit district parents with pre-school age children. The SDMC was told that many of the 392 single family homes in the district were second or weekend/vacation homes. Further research was needed. The question was raised but could not be answered - could the SCS District continue funding the school without a resident student? Mrs. McGinniss agreed to work with parents, teachers, and community members regarding promoting the school and identifying residents with children birth to 4th grade. The following people signed up to work on this committee: Mrs. McGinniss, Barbara Albright, Brian Villante, Debbie Quimby, Lauren Thayer and Ellen Wilford.

12. It was agreed that the next SDMC would take place on Thursday, December 12, 2013 at 2:45 pm at the school.