

SHARED DECISION MAKING TEAM MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 29, 2011

In attendance were:

Lee Ellwood
Diana McGinniss
Lisa Arrigotti
Terry Scammell
Patrick Guarino
Ellen Wilford
Christina Martin
Hilary Louchheim
Stacie Selfe
Brian Villante
Christoph Mueller
Elizabeth Kearns
Matthew Wilson
Jaime Schmidt
Barbara Albright
Barbara Mueller
Debbie Quimby

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Lee Ellwood, Superintendent. Hilary Louchheim offered to take the minutes for this evening's meeting, until a SDMT Secretary was elected for the 2011-2012 school year.

2. Mr. Ellwood discussed the Emergency Phone Chain. Liz Kearns, Hilary Louchheim, Tracy Villante and Deb Quimby volunteered/were designated to make the calls in the event of a school emergency. Liz Kearns would call the 3 parent volunteers listed above, each of whom will call/text the remaining parents as directed. Once each parent has completed their calls, they report back to Liz. When Liz has heard back from all three parent volunteers, she will call the school at 537-0651 or 513-0765 to confirm the parents who have been notified and those who still need to be contacted. In the event of an emergency and the school needs to be evacuated, children are walked down Sagg Main Street to the Sagaponack Post Office, the nearest government agency.

3. Mr. Ellwood discussed school closings and delays. Parents may check for updates on WLNG, WALK, Channel 12 News and the school website (www.sagaponackschool.com).

4. Mr. Ellwood asked those in attendance to review/approve the June 11, 2011 SDMM minutes. Three attendees asked for revisions, as follows:

Hilary Louchheim proposed amending item #5, which pertained to the discussion of recess. She passed around a revised draft for review. Those present approved the following revised version of item #5, which will now read in its entirety:

“Hilary Louchheim shared the research on outdoor/cold weather recess that she had been asked to compile at the previous SDMM. Hilary reported that there is no formal New York State policy on outdoor/cold weather recess, and that it is therefore left up to the individual school districts to devise their own. School policies vary widely as a result. Hilary said that she and many other parents feel that the Sagg School policy is overly conservative, and that this should be re-evaluated, updated and formalized. Mrs. McGinniss mentioned that even when they do not go outside, students still get recess indoors. Mrs. McGinniss said that it was an unusually harsh winter. All present at the meeting agreed that outdoor recess is important. Attendees then discussed how parents, teachers and the school board could work together to support outdoor recess, even during winters as cold and icy as 2011. Suggestions included: snow removal on the playground, ice removal on the basketball court, parent volunteers to help monitor playground activity and assist in getting students dressed in winter gear, and collecting warm clothing to be kept at the school for children who show up without certain items. Hilary was then asked to put together a synopsis of the discussion and the report’s findings to present to the school board. All agreed to revisit the issue at the next SDMM in the fall.”

Matthew Wilson proposed amending item #3, which pertains to the new math curriculum for the 2011-2012 school year. He did not agree with the following wording:

“The math program chosen is Go Math.”

The revised and approved wording will now read: *“We have chosen to evaluate Go Math.”*

Patrick Guarino proposed amending item #2, which pertained to the discussion of a possible SDMM in early July. A discussion followed regarding whether or not a July meeting had indeed been discussed and agreed upon. Those present approved the following revised version of item #3, which will now read in its entirety:

“To start off, Patrick Guarino asked if there could be another meeting the first week in July to get Shared Decision Making Committee names in order and begin going over the management plan that he has already established by himself. A few parents agreed with another meeting on July 7th, where some were opposed. It was pointed out that the SDMP is not up for renewal until February 2012.”

5. Lee Ellwood distributed a memo from Joe Louchheim, School Board President, to all Members of the Shared Decision Making Team in which he expressed the Board’s appreciation to those who have invested their time and energy in researching state guidelines and evaluating the existing Shared Decision Making Plan. Joe Louchheim also requested a draft of the updated SDMP on or before the December board meeting. In his memo, Joe Louchheim made the following suggestions regarding the composition of the SDMC: 4 parents (one per grade), up to 3 teachers, 2 community members, 1 superintendent, one facilitator and one secretary. A discussion followed regarding the makeup of the SDMC. Those present agreed that all parents of children in the school should be able to vote at SDMMs, but that each grade should designate one parent who can commit to attending all SDMMs for that school year. These designated parent representatives would be responsible for sharing pertinent information with other parents from the same grade who were not able to attend the meeting. The parent representatives who were designated to be on the SDMT for the 2011-2012 school year are:

- Grade 1 – Matthew Wilson
- Grade 2 – Patrick Guarino
- Grade 3 – Stacie Selfe
- Grade 4 – Jaime Schmidt

Lee Ellwood then asked if those present wanted to designate community representatives at that time. Hilary Louchheim suggested that since we have had the same community representatives for the past few years, perhaps it would be a good idea to try to cultivate some fresh interest in the positions. A discussion followed regarding how to spread the word within the community that the school was looking for no less than two, and up to three, community members who would be interested in attending meetings and offering their input. Those present agreed that this information should be posted at the Sagaponack Post Office, on the school website, personal phone calls, and by sending a letter to Sagaponack parents with children in grades K and 5-12.

6. Lee Ellwood suggested the following SDMT meeting dates for the 2011-2012 school year: September 29, October 20, November 17, January 19, March 15 and May 24. The meetings are scheduled to occur bi-monthly, though the October 20 meeting was added to allow for more time in preparing the updated SDMP before the December 15 school board meeting/deadline given by Joe Louchheim. The finalized SDMP must be submitted to New York State by February 2012. Lee Ellwood stated that more SDMT meetings could be added if necessary.

7. Lee Ellwood read descriptions of the SDMT facilitator and secretary positions. Brian Villante agreed to serve as SDMT facilitator for the 2011-2012 school year, and Hilary Louchheim agreed to serve as secretary for the same.

8. Lee Ellwood noted that if somebody has an issue with a teacher or situation at the school, they should speak with the teacher or himself directly. He suggested not communicating these issues via email. He also requested that the school clerk, Jeanette Krempler, not be put in the middle of such issues.

9. Lee Ellwood offered his suggestions with regards to the outdoor/cold weather recess issue, as follows:

- a. Recess will be held if the temperature is 25 degrees or more, factoring in the wind chill.
- b. Parents must clothe children appropriately for outdoor/cold weather recess.

- c. The school is not responsible for calling parents when their children arrive at school without appropriate outdoor clothing.
- d. If children do not have appropriate clothing, they will still go outdoors for recess.
- e. Jeanette Krempler will send a memo to all parents requesting donations of clothing (hats, mittens, parkas, etc.)
- f. Children will not be kept in at recess to make up or complete schoolwork.
- g. The board has approved shoveling and salting of the basketball court when snow and/or ice are on the ground.

Hilary Louchheim then pointed out that the school board, in their September 13, 2011 meeting, had asked the SDMT to present recommendations for a recess policy at a future board meeting. Hilary pointed out that the board is currently updating the school's Policies and Procedures Manual, including the section pertaining to recess. Hilary also pointed out that the school's Code of Conduct currently refers to "New York State Guidelines" on recess, and suggested that because such guidelines do not actually exist, the Code of Conduct should be amended accordingly. Hilary then distributed a draft of the recess policy she proposes to present to the school board at their next meeting, which was reviewed and approved by all present. The proposed recess policy reads as follows:

"The Sagaponack School recognizes the physical, mental, social, behavioral and academic benefits of outdoor recess. Therefore, Sagg School students are given the opportunity to play outside whenever possible. Temperatures above 25 degrees (including the wind chill) and light precipitation are not considered impediments to outdoor recess. Children should come to school appropriately dressed for outside play, year-round. If a parent prefers that their child not spend recess outside due to a medical condition, they should send a note to the school nurse requesting that the child be kept indoors during that period of time. Generally speaking, however, a child who is well enough to come to school is considered well enough to play outside."

Hilary Louchheim then passed around a draft of the recap of the outdoor/cold weather recess issue for presentation to the school board. This was reviewed and approved by those present.

Patrick Guarino proposed that, in order to allow for more fresh air for the children, they eat their lunch outdoors when weather permits. A discussion followed. Some parents agreed with the idea, and said that this would enable children to eat a more complete, paced lunch if they were already outdoors and did not therefore feel the need to rush through their lunch in order to get outdoors. Teachers stated that there was an issue with yellow jackets in the fall, and that outdoor lunch was more possible in the spring. Mrs. McGinniss stated that teachers prefer to have lunch before recess, and not after recess, because slow eaters can hold up the transition from lunch to learning.

10. Lee Ellwood adjourned the meeting at 8:25 pm.