



## Laguna PTO General Meeting Minutes Wednesday, December 7, 2011, 9 am Cafeteria

- Meeting called to order at 9 am
- Mr. Chris Asmussen, Principal of Mountainside Middle School
  - Mr. Asmussen has been at MMS for 11 years; staff is also full of veterans. Mr. A hires only about 1 or 2 staff members each year. The school is 20 years old.
  - Mr. Asmussen believes that half of what happens in middle school is emotional/social. Emotional/social elements have to be addressed first or learning cannot happen.
  - Relationships with kids have to be made first, then the learning has to be made relevant, and finally learning can be rigorous.
  - Mr. A encourages ongoing discussions with him
    - ✓ Email [casmussen@susd.org](mailto:casmussen@susd.org)
    - ✓ Phone: 480-484-5110
  - Incoming sixth graders will tour MMS in April and will start school alone/early in August.
  - WEB: Where Everyone Belongs program introduces kids to MMS. Seventh and eighth graders lead the program.
  - Mr. A's philosophy on class scheduling is that kids need to be well-balanced
  - Mr. A asks kids to do five things.
    1. Be Well-Balanced: in addition to core classes, art, computers, PE (not required, but schedules a lot of PE for sixth graders who need to get up and run around), technology, choir, and health and family sciences (fitness, nutrition) are offered. Student government, band, yearbook, strings, and some

languages are also offered. Gifted program offers Independent Investigations but program is changing.

2. Be Well-Rounded: Debate, plays, American Sign Language, art club, guitar club, writing club, knitting club, and athletics. Clubs are \$30; athletics \$60. Athletics start in seventh grade with tier one (for all) and tier two (All Star competition).
  3. Be Well-Read: 20 minutes of reading every day, no exceptions.
  4. Be Well-Dressed: Mr. A is a stickler on the dress code. Highlights of the dress code include the following: when arms are held straight down, all shorts must reach beyond a student's fingertips for shorts (no shortie shorts), no hats, and no pajamas or slippers. Mr. A noted, "Target has a dress code, so should middle school."
  5. We Well-Spoken.
- Most kids stay in a single house for all of their core classes. House concept means that in a school of 850-900 students, your student will feel like they are in a class of 125.
  - Class schedules will come out late July/early August.
  - Math placement is tailored to each student's needs.
  - Classroom numbers range from 23 to 36 but can vary based on a lot of factors. District can find money and target a program, for example.
  - Discipline: positive reinforcement for good behaviors. Shout outs are made during morning announcements to students who "do good." Every Monday a drawing is held for a gift card for one student chosen randomly from the kids who got a shout out the previous week (funded by the MMS PTO).
    - ✓ Mistakes are ok! About 3% of MMS kids get in trouble. School has only had about 70 steps this semester. First step: warning sent home. Second step: warning. Third step: privileges lost and a conversation with a counselor; there is an opportunity to earn back a step.
  - Mr. A has no office. His secretary has his office and Mr. A is out and about and his secretary sits in his office. Being out and about means that he knows the kids.

- Cell phones: students must turn them off and leave them in the backpacks all day.
  - Technology: as a community, the Desert Mountain complex is talking about technology and its place in young people's lives. I pads etcetera are entering the classrooms on a limited basis. Equity challenges must be considered, as well as the problem of the rapid change in technology.
  - For parents who missed Mr. A's talk, a parent meeting at MMS will be held at January 26<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 pm.
- President's Brief Report
    - Subway day this Friday, December 9, at the Subway on Via Linda and 90th
    - Future Wolves night is also Friday, December 9, at the Desert Mountain High School Basketball game. Kids get in free if they wear their Laguna spirit wear. Adults are \$5. 5:30 and 7 pm game times.
    - Toy Drive is going on for St. Josephs through 12/16/11.
    - Student Council is sponsoring our ten Laguna "in-need" families for the holidays; will purchase gift cards for those families.
    - March 24<sup>th</sup>: Wellness Expo at Scottsdale Ranch. They are doing a fun run/charity walk (\$15 to enter) and will be renting our parking lot. Charity walk entry fee can go to Laguna/Boys and Girls Club/Wounded Veterans. We will have a booth to sell water. We need ten volunteers to work two-hour shifts.
    - We also need volunteers to help re-pad our teacher's die cut set. These sets are used to cut the shapes and letters used in our children's classrooms. Please join us in the PTO room Friday, 12/9/11 at 9:00am. Lunch will be provided.

Please see the PTO Board Meeting Minutes for the remainder of the officer reports