

**Milton Academy Upper School Parents' Association
Meeting Agenda
September 23, 2019, 8 a.m.**

Upper School's Parents' Association Executive Committee Members Present:

- Leah Goldberg
- Claire Walton
- Libby Kinnealey
- Shadi Farokhzad

Featured Speakers:

David Ball - Principal, Upper School

Andrea Geyling-Moore - Director Upper School Community Engagement Programs

Adrian Anantawan, Music Department Chair

President's Welcome - Leah Goldberg, President

Meeting was called to order at 8:10am

I. Community Service Announcements:

a. Andrea Geyling-Moore - Director Upper School Community Engagement Programs

Andrea gave an overview of CEPP and opportunities for weekly engagement. At last week's "shoparound" fair, over 200 students signed up for weekly commitments to Milton public schools, Boston schools, and elder centers. Parent volunteers are always needed to drive kids back and forth between activities. Students can also participate in one-time commitments such as Special Olympics, a local blood drive, and face painting events. There will be two off-campus service trips this year: Puerto Rico (March) and New Mexico (June). There will be further information during Parents' Weekend. For more information, email community_engagement@milton.edu

b. Adrian Anantawan - Music Department Chair

Milton Academy has partnered with an Inclusion School called the Henderson School to initiate an Inclusive Orchestral Program. 18 students from Henderson, half typical, and half atypical with a range of disabilities such as Cerebral Palsy, Autism... will be provided private and group music lessons. Both Milton students and parents can volunteer to teach these students. Minimal music knowledge is needed. Find out more: miprogram.org

II. Featured Speaker followed by Q&A - David Ball, Upper School Principal

David shared that at a recent meeting with all faculty, he disclosed 2 major objectives that he hopes to focus on this year.

1. Opening of School and Transition Program

This year marked a significant shift in the Transition Program. In years past, the Transition Program was intended only for students of color and international students in class IV. This year, it was opened up to the whole of class IV, in an attempt to be more inclusive and

welcoming to all students. Overall, the administration is pleased with how the program went. They have done some targeted assessment to see the impact of the Transition Program by measuring habits of connection, comfort levels between students, specifically between boarders and day students, and international and non-international students. They have received feedback from older mentors that participated in the program and will be monitoring the feedback of class IV over the next 4 years to see the ultimate success of this new program. If parents have any feedback regarding this program, please let the administration know.

2. Scheduling and Calendar Changes

This has been a critical topic of discussion for some time with the idea that time is limited and precious, and how do we maximize it with changes in scheduling and the calendar. These proposals would be introduced to the faculty for consideration possibly this spring and would not change the schedule until the 2021-2022 school year. The school is working with ISM Consulting that specializes on schedule design. Also, all faculty are reading "Deeper Learning" to understand the goal of these changes. There is a potential enthusiasm for shifting the 2 semester system earlier and creating a month in May for deeper focus for all students and not just class I. This year there has been a change to exam weeks as well as Thanksgiving break which will be a great test of future calendar changes. Also, the new grading policy implemented for class IV last year was continued this year because of the positive experience from last year.

Questions and Comments:

-Question about assessing the Transitions program specifically for students of color. David responded that in October there will be further opportunities to bring students of color together. Also, the school is building metrics for assessing engagement and connection of students and seeing the difference between the kids' experiences. However, this will take several years to fully see results.

-Question about wellness check and vaping. David responded that the school does a health survey every two years to assess risky behavior. Our results are comparable to other peer programs. The issue of vaping is definitely causing alarm and as a result they may change their disciplinary policy on how they deal with vaping incidents in the future.

-Question about using block programming with future schedule changes. David responded that longer blocks of time is definitely in consideration, however these can often complicate community engagement commitments and private music lessons students have.

III. Introduction of New Board Members

IV. Review of annual calendar and upcoming PA events - Leah Goldberg

- All upcoming PA meetings were announced
- The PA will be hosting several events on Parents' Weekend including socials for Classes I, II, III, and IV on Thursday night (6:30pm) and a wine and cheese reception for all parents on Friday afternoon. There will also be refreshments during the weekend sports events. If interested in helping out with any of the activities, reach out to Leah Goldberg.

V. Review of Annual Budget - Claire Walton

- Budget is around \$50,000 a year mostly from dues.
- There will be a few fundraising events, mostly regarding the Faculty Appreciation Event
- All events funded by dues have a budget and it is important if you are organizing an event to stay within budget.
- Reach out to Claire if you have any questions or if you have any receipts to submit.

VI. Communications Update - Libby Albright and Lisa MacGillivray

- Launching for the first time a PA social media account (Facebook and Instagram).
- Posted on these sites will be meeting reminders, links to notes for meetings, pictures of events...

VII. Student Activities Update - Jennifer Jordan

- Donut days several times a year.
- Barn Babies during exam week.
- Spring Fling event.
- If interested in volunteering, please reach out to Jennifer.

VIII. Parents' Independent School Network - Virginia Putnam and Eve Waterfall

- "PIN" is a forum for independent schools to share information.
- Several meetings take place during the school year at different schools.
- All parents are invited to attend if interested.

IX. Next USPA Meeting: Tuesday, October 15th at 7pm

- Featuring Caroline Sabin and Rob McGuirk from English and History Departments

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 am