

SSMS PTA MEETING

April 29th, 2019

1. Welcome – Sue Quilty welcomed all to the joint HS/MS meeting. Principals, PTA co-presidents, Board of Education members, and Superintendents were introduced.
 - a. Proposed 2019-2020 school budget was presented by school board members, Kelly Barry and John O'Shea. The proposed budget is \$120,135,899. This represents increase of 2.36% and comes in just under the tax cap. The goal of the board is to maintain high academic standards and providing enriching opportunities for all students. Much of the budget will go towards capital improvements. The infrastructure of the schools needs to be maintained and invested in. Principals compile a list of needs. The most pressing issues are addressed first. In addition, the New York State Mental Health Mandate has mandated that all students in grades K-12 have access to a guidance counselor. The state has provided funds to the district to meet this requirement. The district will use the funds to hire a guidance counselor at the elementary level. This will give elementary children access to an adult in the school community that they can reach out to if needed.
 - b. Questions-
 1. If the funding from the state goes away next year will the guidance counselor go away, too? No, the position will remain in place.
 2. Why will the money be spent on a counselor rather than a social emotional curriculum? All schools already have curriculums in place to deal with the social/emotional needs of the students.
 - c. MS unit vote- Irma Altman made a motion to accept the budget as presented. All in favor -18 votes counted.

2. Noninacting Committee Elections-

South Side Middle School PTA

Slate of Officers for 2019-2020 School Year

Co-Presidents: Christine Kufra and Christine Ferazani

VP SEP: Denise Woodbury

VP Communications: Eileen Sweeney

VP Fundraising: Larry Maier and Surri Weisenburger

VP Membership: Sonia Agnant Forbes

Recording Secretary: Jennifer Meagher

Corresponding Secretary: Lizabeth Bustamante-McAteer

Treasurer: Lauren Baum

Council Delegate: Patricia McCabe and Patricia Ganley

Alternate Delegate: Jill Guizzo

Motion to accept the slate for the 2019-2020 school year made by Sue Quilty. All in favor.

3.Principal's Report- Shelagh McGinn- All encouraged to come see the Adam's Family production at the Middle School on Friday, 5/3, and Saturday, 5/4.

4.Laura Campbell, Director of Education, Long Island Crisis Center-

Ms. Campbell spoke about how to handle the topic of teenage suicide. She encouraged anyone to reach out to the Crisis Center with any questions, concerns, needs. She made the following key points:

- a. She explained that a crisis situation exists for an individual when they no longer have the ability to deal with the situation. When we are in crisis, we want to up our coping strategies.
- b. Many kids are stressed and will show signs of anxiety or sadness. These feelings should be addressed and taken seriously but become more serious when they get in the way of being able to function and carry out normal routines and activities. We want to make sure that kids understand that they are a part of a community and that there are people there to help them when they are having these feelings.
- c. Students need our empathy more than our sympathy. Showing empathy fuels connections. It means that we are able to recognize emotions in others and we are being non-judgmental. When we are empathetic, we put ourselves in a vulnerable place. Empathy often makes people feel more heard. When people feel heard they often feel more comfortable opening up and sharing.
- d. Without mental health there is not health. Some mental health facts are-
 1. Mental health problems are common
 2. These problems often develop during adolescence.
 3. Early intervention increases positive outcomes.
 4. Youth may not be well informed on the issue of mental health.
 5. Mental health issues in youth present differently than mental health issues in adults.
 6. There is often misunderstanding and stigma that surrounds mental health issues.
- e. There are things that we can do –
 1. Teach kids about stigma, judgement and empathy that surround mental health issues.
 2. Model positive emotional intelligence and positive mental health strategies
 3. Encourage students to have one trusted adult that they can turn to when they need help.