

Synergy/SAGE Parent Action Network

February 19, 2019

Treasurer Report:

Balance over \$2000 in September

Gained \$100 in membership dues

Spent \$100 for speaker Andrew Mahoney on February 25th in Minneapolis (MCGT contribution to speaker fee) – National Expert on Gifted Education, speaking on achievement and motivation

Starting Balance (as of September 2018)	\$2004.45
Income:	
Membership Dues	\$112.00
Expenses:	
Support for MCGT Mahoney event (speaker fee)	\$100.00
Current Balance	\$2016.45

Parent Panel:

Introductions (Apryl) – Parent panel for asking questions about experiences/advice

On the panel tonight:

1) Apryl Henry

- 2 kids (both attended SAGE)
- Currently Freshman at St. Olaf / Sophomore at PLHS
- Oldest son in music, NHS
- Daughter involved in soccer for PLHS, drama, choir, speech

2) Julie Mueller

- 3 daughters (youngest in SAGE)
- Oldest at UT studying mechanical engineering
- Youngest is Senior at PLHS

- Band, robotics

3) Heather Banas

- 2 kids, both attended SAGE
- Oldest in grade 9, youngest in grade 5

4) Stacey Sorenson

- 4 kids, 2nd oldest in SAGE
- Involved in sports and other activities

Questions:

- Daughter transitioning from Redtail Ridge to Middle School. Should she do all 4 advanced classes, 7th grade Science is the biggest concern.
- How is the homework load? Is it really 'what you make of it'?
- How many projects or Project Based Learning / too much?

Answer:

- Definitely advised to take all 4, she can handle it.
- Science in 7th / 8th grade has more homework
- Math is pretty normal until 9th grade Geometry, it's on an island of its own
- Use class time wisely, utilize Primetime for getting homework done, homework comes in spurts
- Projects are typically group projects, enriched in the Advanced classes

Questions:

- Did any of your children struggle with being grouped with older students (in math?)

Answers:

- Most 6th graders will still be clustered with other 6th grade students in math.

- All the students coming out of 6th grade math from the elementary do well being challenged by the older students

Questions:

- How is the difference of the time change from elementary to middle school?

Answers:

- Depends on the kid, morning person or not...
- Getting older and wanting to stay up later
- Having students work on homework sooner rather than later when they get home

Questions:

- How do you manage summer activities following 3rd grade SAGE and all of its challenges? Keeping them motivated with challenges in order to not see summer slide?
- Give them a break from academics, what is most useful or beneficial?

Answers:

- Not real concern about the slide, kids were just kept active for the summer, mostly based on interests
- Community Ed, the Works, SAGE moms created a book club 😊
- A little down time is good!!
- Keep up the reading, maybe a workbook, math facts?
- Let them do things they don't have time for during the year...
- Workshop for summer stuff (lots of out of town opportunities?) Look for scholarship opportunities. (Minneapolis chapter chat night a few weeks ago.)

Question:

- Son is in 6th grade, trying to decide about testing for UMTYMP (math program through the U of MN)

- How do scheduled extra activities help or hinder the student?

Answer:

- Will depend on the child, are they interested, or overscheduled?
- UMTYMP is 1 day a week commitment, sometimes conflicts with other activities
- Outside activities based on interest should only enhance their learning and bring joy
- Activities provide opportunity for growth and teamwork
- Just know there are some times you will miss an activity or need some free time...
- Schedule things in the summer they can't do during the school year

Question:

- For high school, is there a strategy for prepping for AP / College in the Schools, etc?
- PSEO (Post- Secondary Recommendation Option) as an option for earning Associate's degree coming out of high school?

Answers:

- No PSEO classes for one family, AP classes as they are available
- PSEO applicants are top third of Junior class, top half of Senior year
- Have to be full time at U of MN for PSEO, can do part-time at schools like Normandale
- Just check credits for transfer to university of choice where you want to go post-PSEO
- Some schools will take the credit for taking the next class, but you only get up to so many credits that they will count toward their requirements
- Normandale and community colleges have their courses designed to transfer to the major universities in Minnesota

Question:

- How do the different options in high school transfer out to the colleges?

Answers:

- Depends on where you go and what class it is. (PSEO/concurrent enrollment)

- AP should be recognized across the board for post-secondary (assuming students scores high enough on the AP test)

Question:

- Grade point average versus class rank for college admission? Being challenged and doing lots of activities versus grades?

Answers:

- Based on tours and going to schools, (more at private schools), they didn't look at rank
- College admissions want to see students taking most challenging classes (or most of them without failing)
- Be involved, well rounded, participate in leadership, 21st century skills activities, college common application requested top 10 activities that made an impact on you.

Question:

- Did you use a college advisor service? They charge a fee?

Answers:

- Did not use an advisor service
- If your child has a direction look for schools with that focus
- Maybe depends on the school(s) you are looking into?
- National Merit Scholar students might be 'recruited'
- PSAT/ ACT testers may get college targeted information

Question:

- Is there an in-between where you can fill some gaps with online courses versus being in a physical building? Have any of your kids done online?

Answers:

- Yes, English online (Minnesota Virtual High School?)
- Online Phy Ed!
- Work with the counselor

- PLHS website, Guidance counselor page, list of approved online schools
- Health and PE--Online instead of zero-hour (over the summer); helpful for students who are in music, language, and want to take AP Human Geography in 9th-grade as their social studies option
- Spanish online
- Use for schedule conflicts

Question:

- What about NUMATS?

Answers:

- No NUMATS class experience (expense)
- Testing for SAT/ACT through NUMATS (taken in 7th/8th, retook in Junior year)
- Could use ACT/SAT scores as part of evidence for acceleration request

Question:

- Is there an option to request the CogAT test (full battery to be given) through the district, is there another option?

Answers:

- If not qualified through the district via screener or full battery, outside IQ testing is an option for parents.
- MCGT brochure (mcgt.net→Resources) has resources and testing location recommendations

Regarding PSAT/SAT/ACT testing:

- Sophomores or Freshman can take PSAT or ACT for test experience to see what it is like
- Not everyone has to take the PSAT (junior year – helps for scholarships)
- All Juniors take the ACT
- 10th graders take MCA on two days during the school year
- 11th graders take the ACT on one of those days as well, MCA on other day

Question:

- How many colleges did you tour? Did your child's interests focus the school tours?

Answers:

- Good time to visit colleges is between sophomore and junior years, before they get too busy in the junior year of school, if you want ideas/check things out
- Sign up 'admission session' and tour through the college
- Depends on the child
- Visit the campus during the school year versus just the summer!!
- Another parent, child didn't tour until April of Senior year and went to schools with acceptances...