

AMENDMENT TO NOVEMBER 12th, 2019 MEETING MINUTES – SECTION “Events – Go For Green”

*Due to an absence from the November 12th meeting and as the long-time Go For Green organizer, Becky Galer sent the following via email, November 23rd 2019 to members of Millgrove Student Council in response to issues discussed and suggestions for improvements moving forward.
Request from Becky Galer for these notes to be included in amendment of minutes.*

Please see my response in blue.

Go For Green:

- Held Friday October 25th , 2019
- Sarah Robinson spoke to the success of the event.
- Expenses are minimal for the fall Go For Green but higher for the Spring event.
- Currently the team is working on ideas for the Spring event
- The kinder bird-feeder centre went well and the feeders lasted well.
- The murals for the school have been approved for the Spring event.
- Amy Spencer addressed concern over her mother (a grandparent volunteer for the event) had not been welcomed, was not included, was not given specific tasks, did not have her police check validated or her name checked/recorded upon arrival.
- Amy also mentioned her mom felt like an outsider that was not included and that many other grandparents have mentioned feeling this way as well and therefore not wanting to volunteer for Go For Green.

In response to these comments:

1. Not being welcomed-in fact she was welcomed by myself outside and I directed her to Sarah and Nikki to help first in the FDK area where her grandchild would be out first. I then mentioned that volunteers could head back to the Travers garden to help other classes there.

2. Not included-She worked then for several periods with the majority of other volunteers in the Travers garden or in that area. It was only 2 Dads and 1 Grandfather that worked out front with an older class.

3. Not given specific tasks-For anyone who has attended GFG it is a day in which you are there to pitch in and help wherever needed, I am more concerned with the kids being given a task than a volunteer. In the past volunteers tend to just lend a hand wherever they see is needed.

4. Not having Police check validated-This would fall under an office responsibility, I am instructed to make it very clear to all volunteers that they need to have a police check and show it, it is not the GFG committee's responsibility to check it. I would have hoped this could have been addressed directly with Ms Minardi. That being said another grandparent volunteering that day did come out at the start and apologize for being a bit later than they hoped. Of course that was no issue but her reason was that she needed to submit her updated police check and had to wait until Mrs. MacDonald had a few minutes to do that. In all fairness to our office staff, they are very busy - especially at the start of the day dealing with much more pressing issues. It is just my opinion but at all events we do need to take some responsibility for submitting our forms etc and not expect the office staff to chase us down for them. We are not a huge school with multiple secretaries sitting there-so cut them some slack.

5. Feeling like an outsider and not being included-There is no other way to comment on this other than to say that I am very sorry she felt this way but I am not sure what more could have been done. I know she had several teachers talk to her as well as have lunch with her. At first break I let her as well as other volunteers know to go in for lunch, I asked her if she knew where the library was mentioned where the washroom was, she walked inside with a group of volunteers. Anthony Hunter and myself were the last to come in each lunch break and I know for a fact all our volunteers were sitting with other parents and or teachers. If anyone had have been sitting alone I would have sat with them. Our teachers go out of their way on GFG and any day at the school to make new volunteers feel welcome. I am offended for our teachers that this comment would be made. The last time block of classes out was her granddaughter's class and it was a smaller group of volunteers in that area as well as a quieter teacher so that may have been a less social time but I was there for 3/4 of the period as well as 2 other grandparents. Other parents were trying to finish up other jobs. I know Sarah went and planted bulbs with her and a group of kids towards the end of that time as well.

6. Other grandparents not wanting to volunteer at GFG-Could I have the names of those grandparents please or some more specifics?-There were 3 other grandparents in attendance that day. Two were my parents and the other a long standing Grandfather who has been at 8 or more GFG events. I had no

comments from them other than what a great time they had with the kids and they were looking forward to the spring.

In conclusion to my interactions with Amy's Mother when she was leaving to get in her car at the end I left what I was cleaning up and had a lovely talk with her in the parking lot. I asked how she had enjoyed the day, she then told me she had a great day. I asked her "since this was your first time out at GFG do you have any suggestions for us?" She said no there is nothing I can think of, she said she had a great time and it was so well organized she couldn't think of anything else that could be done better. For anyone who wonders why I would remember it in so much detail the short answer is because I care a lot about this event. Further to that, when my husband asked that night how it went I then told him one of the highlights of the event was Amy's Mom kind comments at the end of the day and seeing how much she enjoyed the day. Needless to say after reading these minutes of what was spoken I was in complete shock.

- Suggestions for improving this included:

- A phone call to Amy's mother from Sarah Robinson or Laura Zonta with an apology

I have no problem apologizing to anyone where there is just cause, but as you will see from my perspective on the day I am completely blindsided by all of this.

- A greeter or greeting table on Go For Green Day where parents check-in and are given a schedule and tasks

I have no problem with this but unless you have been to GFG you don't realize that the day is very fluid and tasks don't always take the exact amount of time you allot. I require 6 team members to be there from 9-2 just to run the event this would than take more. If a council member who is not already a gfg volunteer is willing to take this on would be great.

- A team or set of partners that work together so no one is left on own

Again if we get enough parents willing to take a vacation day so they can all be there and buddy up by all means no problem.

- A list from each classroom ahead of time with volunteers coming so that a schedule and team list can be made

The reality is that in an ideal world this would be great. I often start with a long list of volunteers and as the day approaches many variables of life come into play and people back out. Also some just show up if their schedule allows and have always been welcomed in, this would then limit that. I have tried in my time running this to keep it low pressure and accept whatever amount of time people

can give. That has been something I have had to learn, high pressure doesn't make people want to commit.

A volunteer "huddle" at start to welcome everyone, introduce selves and explain day

Much like the above response, if we get a large commitment of volunteers start to come out and be on time and can stay the entire day this would work well- totally agree.

Name tags for volunteers that say name and relationship to child in school

This was done for a time when I first started. Volunteers complained they were in the way and were a pain to wear well trying to work. By all means new group coming in go ahead and try again maybe it will be a hit.

- Sign at front of school instructing volunteers to check in at back of school with leaders

(maybe wear green???)

This is usually instructed in an email to those that are coming ahead to just head to the back of the school once you have checked in at the office. Again in a perfect world where we know exactly who is coming and who is not it is easy to be communicated.