



**Ricci Middle School**  
**School Improvement Team**

**Date: November 19, 2020**

**Start Time: 6:02 p.m.**

**Staff Representatives:**

- X Thomas Mellen, Principal (Chair)
- X Carol Catone (SS Content Leader, Team Leader)  
Connor Fagan (7/8 SS)
- X Deb Norato (7/8 Resource)  
Kim Hardman (7/8 Science)  
Brittany Smith (Math Content Leader, 7/8 Math)
- X Marilyn McLaughlin (7/8 ELA)  
Kim DiTusa (Science Content Leader, 7/8 Science)  
Jill Harraka (6 ELA)
- X Miriam Badger (Foreign Language)
- X Lori Drolet (ELL)
- X Tracy Graham (6 Math)
- X Tarra Bilyj (7/8 Resource)
- X Tara Carlson (6 Resource)  
Melissa Paliotta (6 SS)  
Nicole Pospisil (Student Council Co-Chair 6 Math/Science)
- X Julia McCormick (7/8 Math)
- X Terri Connors (Team Leader, 7/8 SS)
- X Kim Walsh (ELA Content Leader, Team Leader, 7/8 ELA)
- X Danielle Tiernan (6/8 Resource)
- X Lauren Monti (7/8 ELA)  
Steve Muccino (Student Council Co-Chair, 6 SS/ELA)

**Parent Representatives:**

- Megan Burns
- X Margarita Robledo Guedes  
Michele Patnaude Overton  
Stephanie Morrison  
Michelle Ficocelli
- X Melissa Caffrey
- X Kayla Chancey  
Courtney Fuller  
Joanna Cedeno  
Jennifer Gladding  
Sara Goodger
- X Jessica Iozzi
- X Kristine Pontarelli  
Andrea Martel  
Marilyn Santomaro
- X Tara Blais  
Shara Fillmore

Kristine Munroe  
Jessica Azarian  
Merann Gervais  
Jessica Giusti  
Delmy Rodas  
Jessie Donnelly

**Student Representatives:**

X Kyla Angel- 8  
X Arthur Tseytlin- 8  
Roman Laurito- 7  
X Lilly Watson-7  
X Zoe Harrington-7  
Maggie Martin-7  
Surrayah Wilson-7  
Zach Webley -6  
Molly Reis-6  
Alexa Ragano-6  
Quentin Forkpa-6  
Angelina Martinez-6  
Quiyanna Sylvia-6

**Agenda:**

- COVID Update and Its Impact on RICCI
- Welcome parents
- Recognize student achievements
- Contests - IXL and Achieve 3000
- Thinking Maps - Communicating to Elementary Schools
- Gratitude Fridays - Building Mental Fitness
- Relaxation and Team building for teachers
- Forming Sub Committees

**Minutes:**

Mr. Mellen took the time to thank all of the participants

**Covid Update and Its Impact on RICCI**

- Currently the Red Team and the Blue Team are all on distance learning. Mr. Mellen asked if anyone has any questions regarding this decision.
- Question was asked why the whole team was put on distant learning. Mr. Mellen stated that a staff member on the red team tested positive and was in the building last week. Mr. Mellen received a call today 11-19-20 regarding contact tracing today. Mr. Mellen went through the process and did not have guidance from the state. At this point, the Red Team will be back Monday after Thanksgiving.
- Blue team was a student and contacted the virus from his family and Mr. Mellen still has not been contacted by DOH as of yet regarding this situation.
- In regards to placing teams on distance learning the main issue is staffing. At this point, we have not seen any student to student transmission or teacher to staff at this point. We are seeing students or staff members from a family member and then come into school.
- Question from Margarita Robledo Guedes - she asked if a child should be tested if they are on the red team? Mr. Mellen's response is that the staff member

would have been with the child for more than 15 minutes and less than 6 feet apart. Highly unlikely that your child would need to quarantine.

- Positive note - Mr. Mellen would like to note the outstanding job that the teachers have done since the beginning of the school year. Ricci teachers are blowing away what is happening in other districts. Teachers are dealing with technology issues and teaching with windows open with the classroom at 50 -52 degrees.
- Ari Tseytlin asked a question about the closing down teams. Will this be the norm when there is a positive case? Mr. Mellen explained that in this instance that the staff member went to multiple classrooms so that is what presented this issue. Typically this shouldn't happen and we will take each case as it comes.
- Mrs. Norato spoke on a positive note, stating that she sees a huge difference than in the Spring in regards to distance learning. We have had about 95% percent attendance and if they are not there it is due to technology.
- Mr. Mellen stated that our attendance is better this year.
- Technology is an issue at this point. The update is that on Monday new chromebooks will be distributed.

### **Moral**

- Mr. Mellen asked if there are things that we can do for morale. The social piece has fallen off dramatically. We are still going to try to have our Minute To Win It before Christmas break.
- Margarita Robledo Guedes mentioned Gather Town which is an app that allows people to interact virtually by playing games etc.
- Ms. Gates - Having a school culture committee that can post things to social media to document everything that is going on in the school. Amazing things are happening and should be out there to see.
- Lilly Watson - Presented an idea that the students and faculty take pictures like last year during distance learning and post them on social media. Some of the pictures could be funny Christmas picture events, pet day, what's for lunch day, theme days.
- Parent asked to revisit the snow day - Parent read a news article about how a snow day should be a snow day. School days should still be snow days. She understands that they need to be made up but let's look at the other side and keep some normalcy for students. States it would be difficult for students to focus and concentrate when they could be out in the snow playing. This would boost the student moral.

### **Sub Committees**

- Ms. Gates - Having a school culture committee that can post things to social media to document everything that is going on in the school. Amazing things are happening and should be out there to see. A vote was taken to create a positive school culture committee and passed unanimously. Mr. Mellen asked Ms. Gates if she would like to chair the committee and she accepted.
- Margarita Robledo Guedes -asked if there is a sub committee on student involvement? Mr. Mellen spoke about Christmas Carolling that the Red Team does and Planting Trees that Blue Team will be doing. The mom spoke about Veterans who can't get out to do things such as raking leaves and shoveling. This could be a volunteer committee. Ricci Outreach Committee
- Ari Tseytlin spoke about a committee making sure that all of the technology is working and there is a smooth transition between distant learners and in person learners. Having a student voice along with Mrs. DaSilva would be great and Mr. Mellen asked Ari if he would take this on. This sub committee would be Technology Committee
- Mr. Mellen would love to get parents and students to be on committees.

- Mrs. Catone will create a google doc with the following three committees: Technology, Ricci Outreach and School Culture Committee. Parents, students and teachers will be able to sign up.

### **Student Recognition**

- Lor Drolet - Asked if we could acknowledge some of our distant learners that are showing up everyday and doing a good job.
- Mr. Mellen talked about acknowledging student success and rewarding students for Achieve 3000 and IXL we need to hold back since we did not have computers. This can happen soon and maybe we can have a sub committee of student achievement.

### **Gratitude Friday**

- Mrs. Monti and Zoe Harrington mentioned SEL circling and she did this in the 5th grade - this is similar to the Gratitude Program. At this point Connor and Danielle are being trained in the Gratitude Program. This program gives the students the opportunity to open up and share and bond with other students.
- Gratitude Fridays and Building Mental Fitness - keep this on for next time along with Thinking Maps.

### **General Discussion**

- Kristine Pontarelli wants to discuss schedule rotation - Wonders if students like a change in schedule daily or do they like the set schedule. Consistency was the reason for what was done. Last year, students had many issues with "I didn't know what the schedule was" So now we are rotating every quarter. This does not mean that this can't be revisited.
- Parent asked if we are keeping the chromebook - Mr. Mellen said students would not be sharing them but the technology department would advise. Students will keep them and will be able to bring them back and forth to school.
- Zoe Harrington asked if we could do a reading contest. Mr. Mellen told Mrs. Walsh to put that in the notes for her next content meeting.
- Ari states that he is noticing that in a majority of the classes that the online people are not really there. Wants to address the students at home aren't really paying attention and this is taking away from his learning and the in person learning. Mr. Mellen explained that some are home alone and with no supervision it is very easy for them to play on their phone, video games and television. The teachers spend a great deal of time reaching out to families. Mr. Mellen has done some home visits. The impact will be on their report card and the gaps within in person and distance learning. Mr. Mellen said there are many distant learners that are very engaged and we will work on engaging the others as a staff and district.
- Zoe Harrington spoke on what Ari said about distance learning and maybe we can get the students more involved. Mr. Mellen asked Zoe what she thinks will work. Zoe states maybe get the distance learning involved more by calling on them more. Maybe this will get them more involved in learning.
- Mrs. Badger is happy that the students can see what is going on virtually and in person.
- Project Back the Blue - Kyla asked if there were any questions and at this point regarding this project. At this point there are none.
- Mr. Mellen states that it is great to have 27 participants at the SIT meeting. He asked the group if 6:00 is a good time for parents? He told parents that if it is not a good time to email him.

**End Time: 7:03pm**

