

MSPA Joint Meeting

November 1, 2017 (8:45 am - 10:08 am)

Welcome to M-SPA

Mary Pinkus, US Co-President, and Alli Deeter, MS Co-President

Mary and Alli performed a tongue-in-cheek skit about rebranding the MSPA to M-SPA. They reminded us about the Valpo Bowl at Foothill College this Friday against Sacred Heart. All proceeds benefit Peninsula Bridge.

Fall Updates

Than Healy, Head of School

Than commended the parents on adopting an “attitude of gratitude.” He said the teachers, coaches, and administration love getting the emails and notes that focus on the positive things happening in the school. This balances things out and makes it easier for them to hear constructive criticism.

Than recommended that we all watch the Itay Talgam TED talk on leadership. Than then segued into telling a story about attending Leo Kitijima’s class. Leo had a student lead the orchestra warmups in order to teach the kids how to listen and learn from each other, something that is harder for him to do than getting the kids to simply do what he tells them to. Than felt that was real leadership on Leo’s part. Than also told two stories about being on the 8th grade Washington D.C. trip. One reflected on the close relationship between the students and the teacher chaperones; the other reflected on how sophisticated and thoughtful the students are at Menlo.

Than asked the parents to give him suggestions for people to fill the Athletic Director’s position.

Than advocated that parents consider sending their kids on a Menlo Abroad trip. The MS trip is to the Native American reservation in Taos, N.M. The US trips are three-weeks-long and go to Guatemala, India, China and now Tanzania. These are home-stay, service trips where the conditions will not be perfect and the familiar will be stripped away. Only when everything is new are kids ready for a transformative experience. The deadline to sign up is November 27th; the application is online. If you search the Menlo Calendar, you can find information sessions on the trips.

La Vina Lowery, Middle School Director

La Vina spoke about the Homecoming game; the 7th grade won the pep rally. She also spoke about the fantastic costumes at Halloween.

She told the parents that report cards are going out this week and reminded them about the new skills rubric.

She reminded the 7th-grade parents to attend Parent Ed Night on November 14th. And, she reminded everyone that her coffee has been moved to January.

Upper School Panel

Panel of Upper School Students (Niko Bhatia, JoJo Bachechi-Clark, Kate Barrett, Alta Knuff, Quentin Chisholm) with John Schafer, Upper School Director, moderating

Here is advice the US Students gave about balancing school work with other activities and free time:

- Use time between obligations (free period, tutorial, time before practice) to get homework done
- Make "To Do" lists
- Don't have your phone with you while doing homework
- Set a time limit on your homework so that you get some free time

Here is the advice they would give their MS selves:

- Try lots of different things
- Have more fun in school
- Don't focus so much on grades; focus on the learning
- Work on your organizational skills
- Find your rhythm

In response to a question about making friends if you come from the MS or not:

- It might be an advantage to come from the MS, but after a couple of months, everyone is friends with everyone
- You won't make all of your closest friends freshman year so be patient
- You will find better-suited friends in the US because there are more kids to choose from and you will be sorted by the classes and activities you like

The kids went to bed between 10 and midnight.

In response to a question about missing classes for sports, the kids said:

- Tell your teachers early that you will miss class

- Set up meetings with teachers and friends to go over what you missed
- The teachers are required to be at school between 3 and 4 and are happy to talk with you

Auction Theme Reveal!

Kim Guthrie, Jill Layman, and Katherine Kelly, Auction Co-Chairs

The theme is London 1964; think British Invasion, Twiggy. The date is March 24, 2018. All money raised will go towards Menlo financial aid. The last two years the auction has raised more than a million dollars.

The Auction Committee was introduced. They encouraged others to become involved. Ways to participate include joining a team, donating an auction item, attending the auction, and buying an auction item.

Knightbook 101

Alex Perez, Director of Communications

Alex went through the features of the online Knightbook. They include:

- Sorting by grade and gender
- “Through the years” feature where you can see a photo of every kid from every year they have attended Menlo
- See a student’s parents and siblings
- Who has a birthday that day with the option to email those people birthday wishes directly from Knightbook
- See a student’s classes and advocacy
- Tips on how to use Knightbook are off to the side
- Can create lists for teams or casts

To reduce waste, Knightbook is being offered online. You can print the entire Knightbook or the portion that is useful to you, like your child’s grade. There will be a few copies for sale at the bookstore.

Vote on Co-Presidents Elect

Elizabeth Dumanian, Co-Vice President of Nominating

The vote was unanimous to elect Liz Weingart as US Co-President Elect and Jenn Miller as MS Co-President Elect. The Nominating Committee will now start working on the following year’s Co-President Elects.

Aladdin: Middle School Drama

David Mugglebee, Middle School Drama Teacher

Middle School Drama is in a new golden age. He thanked Steven Minning for his support.

David sees MS Drama working on three levels:

- Providing opportunities for leadership and collaboration
- Supporting the whole child
- Focusing on the journey of artistic discovery, more than the product

Aladdin is playing this weekend. Opening night is Friday at 6 so that people can also make it to Valpo Bowl. A portion of tickets sales or concessions will go to Peninsula Bridge.

Trent Conley and Amy Wyatt performed "Why Me" from Aladdin Jr.

The US play is *Heathers*. It will be performed the weekend before Thanksgiving.