

SLT Meeting 1/18/2018

Minutes

Present:

Charlotte Arboleda
Cara Biggane
AJ Cermak
Sarah Courtemanche
Jill Gabin
David Kerievsky
Nate O'Reilly
Scott Parker
Beate Sissenich

Absent:

Karen Dahl

Call to order (Gabin): 4:05pm

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved with two changes:

- Typo “Chari” should be “Chair”.
- Response to emails: “Goal should be to respond substantively within 7 days—not mandatory, can be flexible, sometimes need deliberation in SLT meeting. In that case, the response consists of spelling out the next steps.” Change to: “The SLT agreed on the following protocol: Initial response: acknowledge receipt within 48 hours. The SLT Chair, along with Ms. Cermak, take ownership of responding. Substantive issues will be discussed at the next SLT meeting, then the SLT Chair will work with Ms. Cermak to issue an email response afterwards.”

PTA Report (Courtemanche):

- Next PTA meeting will be held 1/30 at 6:30 pm. Mr. Javidi will be presenting the RULER curriculum.
- Winter Carnival this Saturday, 1/20, unfortunately coincides with Women’s March, volunteers still needed.
- The Purple Power Run contract has been finalized.
- Final phases of participatory budgeting with Helen Rosenthal are in progress. If PS452 makes the finalist list, the PTA will need to discuss a voting strategy.
- The Resolution A process (led by Gale Brewer’s office) has opened; schools can apply for multiple projects (restrooms, auditorium), deadline for applications is 2/18. Ms

Courtemanche has been in contact with Gale Brewer's office about alternate sources of funding.

- One of the treasurers resigned; Dan Cohen is running with Caitlyn Sullivan as co-treasurers. The vote on their joint slate will be held at the Jan. 30 meeting.

Principal's Report (Parker)

- Report cards went out this week; another round of conferences to follow in ca. 7 weeks.
- Social Studies professional development for grades 3-5 is focused on integrating the Passport curriculum in teaching practice; third grade is doing a Communities Around the World study, fourth grade focuses on colonial history. NY Historical Society will be coming to PS452; there will also be a visit to African Burial Ground. Fifth graders study westward expansion.
- The school has a part-time intern working on lunch-and-learn activities for the new science curriculum for teachers. Mr. Parker is working with potential providers for math professional development.
- Family ties: *Inside Schools* just recommended PS452 as a top pick for pre-K.
- The kindergarten admissions deadline was extended; PS452 has no visibility into who is zoned, who is a PS452 sibling, and how PS452 is ranked on applications.
- Middle school application process: All fifth graders except one got invited to the next step in their middle school applications (e.g. exams, interviews).
- Social-emotional learning: Assistant Principal Javidi has multiple engagements presenting on RULER to a variety of audiences.
- Evaluation of principal's performance by Superintendent Altschul: Mr. Parker was rated "highly effective" on leadership, strategic organizational decisions, and high expectations for teachers. Opportunities for development include guiding teachers in using common assessments systematically as a data source that can inform feedback in the moment during lessons. The evaluation is based on the Quality Review Rubric and 6 classroom visits of 15 minutes conducted by the superintendent.

Teachers' Report (O'Reilly, Arboleda, Biggane)

- CEP goal 5B—Supportive Environment: The number of disciplinary incidents has gone down; at the February SLT meeting, we will have a checkpoint so we can assess progress on this goal.
- Collaborative Teachers: Special Education teachers are meeting their expectations for the year.
- STEM: Teachers are in the process of vetting the new "Next Generation" science standards; a part-time intern is conducting lunch-and-learn activities to familiarize the staff with the new standards. Rollout is gradual; the new standards are scheduled to be in full effect in 2020.

Subcommittee Reports

- **Community Building (Cermak):** Presently planning Mindfulness Room activities, working to tie mindfulness activities in with WITS labs. Once staff is well-versed in how

mindfulness room works, there will be some community event. The opening of the new library will be another community-building event. With regard to speakers' events Ms. Gabin asked the SLT whether an honorarium of \$5000 for 1-2 hours of speaking plus Q&A for parents seemed justifiable. The speaker in question is Prof. Chris Emdin from Teachers College, author of *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood... and the Rest of Y'all Too* (2016). One way of maximizing family turnout would be to open the event to other schools. For comparison: Ross Greene charges \$7500 plus travel cost for an evening with parents and a full day of professional development with teachers.

- **STEM (Kerievsky):** Kischenbaum won Makerspace Grant for library, attending training on 1/19. Mr. Kerievsky and Ms. Cermak conducted an inventory of existing computer equipment and put together a wishlist for the Reso A grant that includes equipment carts with laptops, a mobile smartboard, plus a wish list from Ms. Kirschenbaum for the library. Tablets are not an option in the Reso A grant, as there is no DOE tech support for ipads and other tablets. Ms Gabin raised the question of ongoing software support that needs to be covered by PTA; equipment from DOE is supported by DOE.

Old Business:

- **Email (Cermak):** No new emails except Karen Dahl's proposal from Tara Covais-Varsov, LCSW, for mental health consultation with staff (see below).
- **Safety (Parker):** February lockdown drill; on Feb. 14, there is an open meeting of the Safety Committee so families can ask questions. There are two more evacuation drills coming up. Mr. Parker reported that the staff is jointly working out challenges and needs related to winter in the new building, such as frozen locks (thus far not a risk to safety), clearing ice from the school yard.
- **Proposal from Tara Covais for staff support for challenging behaviors:** Mr. Parker noted that DOE (Manhattan Borough Field Support Office) has two resources plus one project manager for pedagogical support that are free to PS452 and can consult with specific teachers on specific situations. Their focus is not on teachers' mental health but on pedagogical solutions for the classroom. With regard to Ms. Covais's proposal, Ms Courtemanche emphasized that cost of consultation should not be an impediment if there is value in bringing her in. Ms Gabin asked Ms Biggane to survey her colleagues whether they would value an additional resource who focuses on mental health. If there is feedback that staff wants to engage Ms Covais, this expense could be slotted into the professional development line item of the PTA budget.
- **Meeting with Superintendent Altschul (Courtemanche):** Ms Courtemanche reported back on a PS452 parent representatives' meeting with Ilene Altschul. The group gave candid feedback to the Superintendent stating parents' investment in PS452 but also concern over disciplinary incidents and adequate support from the DOE. They also discussed school communication about classroom safety with families (how much or how little communication should there be, would it make sense for the superintendent to issue a communication to families. The group showed her the Q&A document drafted by several SLT members. The delegates also raised the issue of insufficient access to the school psychologist at the new building, as the psychologist only spends one day per week at the 61st Street location and her schedule is booked with IEP meetings,

assessments, etc. Superintendent Altschul fully acknowledged the issue of challenging behaviors and the need for resources. She complimented PS452 on its response to the challenging behaviors. She also said there would be no more new transfers into PS452. Mr Parker asked the teachers in attendance what additional resources would be useful: school aides for lunch and recess support (they would need to be hired for a certain minimum number of hours)? Professional development for paraprofessionals? Ms. Arboleda responded that it would be nice to have access to the school social worker for general classroom support, which has become rarer as Ms. Debucquoy has a larger number of mandated cases to handle. Mr. Parker pointed out that the primary mission of school social workers or guidance counselors is to see mandated cases, which cover \$30k, with the rest of the salary coming out of the school budget. The challenge with funding additional professionals out of the PTA budget is that the school needs to be able to make a long-term financial commitment to be able to recruit a professional to PS452.

Agenda setting:

- Next month's agenda (2/15): as usual, but need to add check-in on CEP goals.

Adjournment: 5:31 pm.