

December SLT Minutes

Attendees: Elizabeth Garraway, Annie Giovino, MariaTeresa Bazzi, Victoria Morey, Meredith Hackett, Ronni Horowitz, Regina Rodgers, Chris Shott, Tara Hayward, Amanda Huttenlocher, Charlotta Koehler, Sivia Weintraub, and additional interested parents/teachers

- The meeting began with a review of the November SLT minutes, which were previously approved by email.

- Committee Reports:
 - PTA President Report – Chris Shott reported that the next PTA meeting will be on Wednesday, December 16 at 6:30pm. Key items of business include:
 - Presentation of and voting on next year’s budget, which will include a proposal to have paraprofessionals for grades K-2;
 - Revisiting ideas for 2021 social events; and
 - Report on the District 15 President’s Council at which there were discussions about equity initiatives for 2021, including a proposal for a technology “match and swap” based on an MS88 initiative that sourced ~200 donated laptops and other devices for students. There is a desire to expand this initiative more broadly in order to make connections between companies/organizations that may have extra devices and schools with needs.
 - Equity & Diversity Committee – There was no presentation from this committee, as there have been no meetings since the pandemic began.

- Unfinished Business:
 - Testing Consent Forms – Thanks to the herculean efforts of Teresa, the school has received at/near 100% of the required testing consent forms for in-person attendees.
 - 7th Street – During the recent period of remote instruction, the school was approved to close 7th Street during the school day through the end of December. While this is good news, there are several challenges, including:
 - It is very cold outside, but it is important for the school to make use of this space so that we don’t lose it;
 - The school is responsible for setting up and taking down very heavy blue sawhorse barricades on 4th and 5th Avenues each day; and

- These barricades must be manned throughout the day, but the Superintendent has given guidance that this may be done by either staff or parents, so long as the parents don't interact with the students. The school will circulate a sign-up sheet to solicit parent volunteers.
- New Business:
 - Sex Education for Parents & Other Parent Events:
 - Tara Hayward raised a request to have sex educator Rachel Lotus come and talk to the parents, as she did several years ago. Her rate is \$500 for a Zoom call with 60-minute talk and 30-minute Q&A, as well as a list of annotated resources. Per discussion among the group, this will need to be a PTA event because the school can only host not-for-profits. When this speaker came several years ago, the PTA sponsored this, but also included a suggested donation of \$5. Tara will raise this with the PTA.
 - There is interest in additional parent events coordinated through either the SLT or PTA. Notably, Kass Minor and Colleen Cruz are willing to provide events related to literacy and equity.
 - Update on Reopening:
 - The school reopened for in-person/ hybrid students on Monday, December 7, after an announcement on Sunday, November 29 (Thanksgiving weekend). The continued changes in schedules/models with limited notice present logistical and mental health challenges to the school and its staff.
 - Approx. 72 students have left the school this year due to moves and the impact of scheduling challenges, and as a result, the school will need to pay back approx. \$222k in funding for students that left before November 13, 2020.
 - The school is making an effort to get as many grades as possible back in person 5 days/week, though this will not be possible for all grades. At present, it appears that 5th grade will be able to attend 5 days/week, and 4th, 3rd, and K may also be able to attend 5 days/week. 1st and 2nd grade are at capacity and the school will not be able to accommodate these grades attending 5 days/week, but instruction will be added for these grades on Wednesdays. Note, Principal Garraway anticipates that the school will still need to have one Wednesday a month for professional development. All of these changes will take effect the week of January 4, 2021.
 - Temperature in the Classrooms:
 - Meredith Hackett raised a concern on behalf of several teachers that classrooms are extremely cold due to dropping temperatures and the need to keep windows open. Teachers and students are wearing coats, hats, scarfs, etc. all day.

- There was a request for space heaters, but concern that these will be of little use if windows remain open or that they may cause electrical problems.
- The Facilities Manager has provided guidance based on CO2 ratings that some windows may be closed and/or that bookshelves should be moved several inches from the radiators to allow for the heat to circulate better. There are also recommendations from the UFT based on classroom size. This topic will be discussed at the upcoming staff meeting.
- Other suggestions include use of hand and foot warmers and trying out space heaters in one classroom first before purchasing large numbers.
- Weekly Testing:
 - Teresa did an amazing job obtaining consent forms, and there will now be weekly testing in each school.
 - But, now it is important to ensure that testing is scheduled to capture both cohorts on a rotating basis (e.g., Cohort A was tested today, and Cohort B should be tested next week).
 - The administration has raised this with the relevant parties, but they may need the assistance of parents to amplify the message.
- Holidays are coming up and the school hopes everyone stays safe.