

Manhattan School for Children

School Leadership Team (SLT)

April 23, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Claire Lowenstein	Principal
Wendy Smith	Faculty
Erin Moughon	Faculty
Andree Sanders	Co-PA President
Alison Holden	Co-PA President
Alyssa Cheng	Member/Parent Representative (K-3)
Brigit Beyea	Member/Parent (all grades)
Suzanne Shelley	Member/Parent (6-8)

Meeting began at 3:45pm in the Science Room.

I. Updates on Previous Items

A. School Surveys (DOE): Results won't be available until summer, but Claire reported a substantial increase in teacher response rates to a record rate of ~70%. Parent response levels were also higher than prior years, but still were low at about 40%. Academy did parent surveys during Parent-Teacher Conferences, which may have helped with getting more parent responses. Claire shared ideas that other principals have used, and the team discussed other ideas for next year:

- Hand surveys out during Parent-Teacher conferences (all)
- Remind parents that they do have their ARIS number if they lose their hard copy
- Ask parents who don't fill it out (perhaps at upcoming "Chat with Claire")
- Share publicly how the results will be/are being used (eg, Communication was biggest issue last year, which led to changes this year)

B. Workshop/Speaker Series Planning: A strong majority of parents responded to SLT Survey with interest in many of the workshops proposed. Our goal was to hold Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation workshop for parents in May. Given the time, this will need to be moved to June 10th (during PTA morning meeting). Objectives are to let parents know how MSC handles conflict, share what happens during the curriculum and how this can help and be reinforced at home. Mary Ann (storytelling/Town Halls) and Michelle (guidance counselor) were suggested to lead this.

For next year, it was suggested that SLT plan on hosting speaker/panel every other month. Start with Partnerships, and "Who works in the school" where all staff in building – teachers, administrators, staff – can come speak and help parents get to know all the individuals who make the school run and support the children. One could be focused on lower school, and one

for the 5th graders rising up into the upper house. This model was used extremely successfully at the Upper School Open House.

II. Revamping the MSC Handbook

The team reviewed the 2011-12 MSC Handbook and is seeking to combine with the Academy Handbook. Over the summer, these two documents will be combined into one whole school handbook. Claire identified changes already in the works:

1. Change to Lower (K-3) and Upper (4-8) Houses, in lieu of the three levels (including the Academy) structure.
2. Use new content from website to update older language (going live May 5th!)

Other changes suggested:

- Policies – like DOE’s new lice policy, Nurse protocols
- Alignment to Common Core
- Safety/Security, including names/numbers of safety staff and Emergency Drill info
- MSC unique elements: Town Hall, Book Room, Greenhouse, Wellness in Schools/Cafeteria, ½ day Fridays
- Update partnerships & affiliates
- Update and expand information on in-school Afterschool, including Sports, Music, Roads to Success.
- Add chart of which grades participate in which activities (eg, Dance, Delacroze)
- Add chart of “Who do you go to when” (using examples from other schools)
 - o From the basic “Who do I go to when... I lose my metrocard? Get a new lunch form? As well as ...if I have a question about my child’s IEP?

III. **Other:** Annie’s last day will be May 2nd (after testing). In accord with DOE policies, Parent Coordinator position will be posted no earlier than 1 week before her last day and will be posted on DOE website. A Committee will be formed at Chat with Claire to select 4 parents, 4 teachers and administrators. Team discussed that a bi-lingual person would be a valuable addition.

IV. **Next Meeting Time: Monday, May 12, 2014 at 3:45.** Topics: Discuss with Mary Ann a workshop on Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation/Responsive Classroom.

V. Other May/June events:

- Family Forum (Diversity Committee), May 14
- Science Fair, May 29
- Musical, June 9-10
- County Fair, June 7
- TedX
- Extra two ½ days and no school days in June