



**MSC SLT Minutes
February 4, 2015**

Attendees:

Claire Lowenstein	Principal
Wendy Smith	Teacher
Patti Kelly	Teacher,
Stephanie Douglas	ELA Teacher
Danielle Monaghan	Paraprofessional
Alison Holden	Parent/Co--PA President
Alyssa Cheng	Parent Representative (K--3)
Brigit Beyea	Parent Rep(all grades)
Manuela Zamora	Parent Rep (4-6)
Leslie Powell	Parent Rep(7-8)
Tatiana Hoover	Business Manager

Blast Summary: The SLT February meeting minutes are available online. The team discussed the process to provide input on cell phone/technology policy. Claire is collecting parent input via the SLT, as well as working with teachers and the 8th grade students are preparing an in-depth study of pro's/con's for consideration. The team also proposed amending its bylaws to balance out members of parents and staff on the SLT, and allow for staggered term elections of parents for 2015-16. Topics also included the upcoming DOE School Quality Review, discussion of lateness/attendance protocols, and a review of SLT processes, by-laws and terms. The team heard an update on the Inclusiveness and Diversity Committee (IDC)'s recent "Meet & Greet" for Head Start and UPK directors as part of stronger outreach to underrepresented communities. Next meeting: Wed, March 4th at 3:15pm in room 519. Agenda: mid-year budget review, review of State Assessment Protocols and vote to amend SLT by-laws.

February Meeting began at 3:15pm in Science Room. Due to conflicts, two teacher SLT members were represented by other teachers.

- I. **Principal's Report.** Claire reported that the Discipline Policy had been shared via Blast. Several teachers noted that it was helpful to them, and several parents stated that they had heard positive feedback about it. Tatiana alerted the team to the leak in the lobby entrance, which will be fixed this weekend. The school has an interim custodian, and is still waiting for assignment of its new custodian. Next meeting we will cover the school's budget.

- II. **Parents' Report.** Alison reported that Broadway Loves MSC was a great success. Event was sold out and raised over \$12,000. PA hosted Lice Workshop, which was well received. Next year, PA will likely offer it in October.

III. **Old Business Updates**

- a. **Understanding MSC's Inclusion model.** Claire recommended that Parent Kim Madden can provide information to SLT and help lead parent education workshop. This could provide renewed opportunity to discuss impact of elevator issues. SLT to consider event with focus on "who we are" as school, either to celebrate end of year or as start new year.
- b. **Inclusiveness & Diversity Committee (IDC) Update.** Brigit reported on the IDC's Meet & Greet for Preschool directors from District 3 Head Start and UPK sites. The event was hosted on January 23rd. Four centers attended, and over 10 requested information in writing. The team discussed the value of hosting meetings like this. Tatiana recommended hosting it again in the fall, in advance of family tours. Manuela stated that MSC had hosted similar events in prior years and that it was important to have them continue. The IDC will work with Maxine Witherspoon to plan out future activities.
- c. **Student attendance.** The team discussed progress on recent school-wide communication on attendance/lateness. Tatiana has been putting more information in Blasts about attendance (eg, which are excused vs. unexcused absences, handling inclement weather, what to do when student will be late/out). Teachers indicated that the communication has helped them, as they often have to remind parents and students. The team discussed that parents may not understand that when a student is late, they are marked *Absent* if they do not get a late pass. Alison reported that her survey of other schools hadn't turned up any alternate ideas. The team discussed whether teachers could have their own "Late Book", which they could submit to the office. This would allow students to enter classes faster, and ensure that they/their parents sign in their reason for lateness at that time. Tatiana will work to implement this in all classrooms.
- d. **Parent Alerts when Grades fall below 85.** Leslie noted that Claire had responded to concerns. Parents are now alerted when a student's grades fall below an 85 (instead of 80). This seems to be working.
- e. **iLearn:** The team briefly discussed whether iLearn has current contact information for teachers. Claire will look into..

IV. **New Business**

- a. **Cellular Phone & Technology Policy.** Claire reviewed that the Chancellor recently lifted the DOE's ban on cell phones and will allow schools to create their own policies on cell phones and technology. While the team discussed

some of the benefits of allowing technology (eg, blind assessments, reading apps, pictures of charts or homework, tape recording lessons), it is a complex issue and requires considerable thought and input. Claire recommended that MSC keep its current policy unchanged through the end of this school year, and consider revising it for the upcoming year (if needed)

The team agreed to use the rest of this year to get valuable feedback from parents, teachers and students. Specifically, the 8th graders are debating the pro's and con's of allowing technology in school. Stephanie said that the students would like to present their final recommendations to the SLT in spring. The SLT is collecting parent input via email (sent in the Blast) and Claire will also seek input from teachers. Teachers suggested considering piloting any changes, either by grade or with classes to test out any changes. The team agreed with the approach to maintain the current policy while collecting input on possible changes for the future.

- b. **Quality Review 2015:** Claire described the upcoming DOE Quality Review, a one-day visit by the DOE, to assess MSC on multiple dimensions of quality. The visit is scheduled for March 31, 2015. The visit includes a required meeting with 10 parents. Claire requested participation by a few members of the SLT and said she would also open up the opportunity to parents who would like to participate. The team discussed trying to have representation from the PA, SLT, lower grades, upper grades, and diversity in terms of who we are: special needs, racial and socio-economic representation, volunteer opportunities/interests, etc, that can bring their perspective to the conversation while sharing the unique aspects and values of our school. Claire requested a final list of interested parents by March 15th. She has requested the parent portion occur at 8:45am on the 31st.
- c. **Review of SLT Bylaws and Processes:** Alyssa requested the team review the SLT structures to ensure smooth operations and transitions.

Membership: Claire noted that the team specifically needs to look at the balance of teachers and parents, to be sure its balanced. Wendy stated that it had been difficult in the past to recruit classroom teachers to serve, but Stephanie indicated there might be more interest now and that she could help promote it for the next elections. The team also suggested defining the SLT goals in terms that are more exciting than "review CEP."

Alyssa also raised the concern that 4 of 5 parents are in their second of two terms. Alison stated that DJ Sheppard had pointed her to regulations that state that term lengths in the by-laws can be changed if it is for the sake of staggering terms. Alyssa asked parent members to consider whether this would help avoid a big turn-over next year.

Subcommittees: The team also discussed that SLTs in other schools generally have SubCommittees. Alyssa recommended setting up an Event

SubCommittee to help the SLT be more efficient by having a sub-group to work on agendas, logistics and outreach. Stephanie, Alison and Alyssa will start this process.

Meeting Processes. SLTs generally have observer policies. If observers request time in advance on the agenda, they can be recognized by the chair. Depending on the topic, they may be asked to provide a summary so the team can review in advance. The chair will decide whether the topic needs further discussion. It was recommended to provide observers with a brief description of meeting process. The team will also look into rotating the role of the chair, alternating teacher/parents as meeting facilitators.

Agenda-setting: Agendas are generally set at the end of each meeting. For requests for new business that may require preparation, the chair may decide that it be covered in a subsequent meeting. In suggesting topics, the team will identify the purpose of each topic – for example, to provide or get input, or help disseminate information. Non-members wishing to bring new topics should first raise them with their specific grade representative.

The team agreed to revise the by-laws to incorporate these changes – particularly for the staggered terms of parents. A vote will be taken at the next meeting.

V. SLT Events

- a. Responsive Classroom followup event: Plan for Parent Workshop (a.m.) and Teacher Professional Development (p.m.) on **“How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk .”** Manuela will schedule with Claire.
- b. Other possible future topics: Handling peer/gender conflicts for middle school. (Parent Greg Shamie may have resources through his organization).

VI. March Agenda Topics

The team agreed on March’s New Business agenda:

- Mid-Year Budget/Expenditure Review (Tatiana)
- State Assessment Protocols (Darlene)
- Vote to change by-laws

Topics	Date	Person Responsible
Parent survey on cell phone	Brigit to circulate results after Feb 13	Claire to communicate decision by March 2, 2015
Parents to participate in Quality Review	By March 15, 2015	Alison/Claire to followup
Write-up of SLT goals and meeting processes		Volunteer needed
Modify By-Laws to enable staggered terms for parent	Schedule vote for next meeting	Volunteer needed

members, ensure balance of teachers/parents		
Future Meeting topics		
Parent Education on Inclusion model	Invite Kim Madden (parent) for April mtg	Claire
Debrief of Quality Review and MSC Snapshot	May meeting (after 3/31 visit)	Claire
Eighth grade Presentation on Cell Phone/Technology	June meeting	Stephanie/Claire
How to encourage more "events" like Nancy's Math Workshop	TBD	

Future SLT Meeting dates: First Wednesday of every month at 3:15pm (except May*) in room 519:

- March 4
- April 1
- May 20
- June 3