



**MSC SLT Minutes
April 1, 2015**

Attendees:

Claire Lowenstein	Principal
Wendy Smith	Teacher
Erin Moughon-Smith	Teacher
Amy Watkins Barnard	Teacher, UFT Rep
Andree Sanders	Parent/Co--PA President
Alison Holden	Parent/Co--PA President
Alyssa Cheng	Parent Representative (K-3)
Brigit Beyea	Parent Rep(all grades)
Maxine Witherspoon	Parent Coordinator
Jacklyn Akin Barney	Parent (observer)

April Meeting began at 3:15pm in Science Room.

- I. Principal's Report.** DOE's Quality Review was conducted on March 30th. It was a great success. The reviewer was impressed by the hands-on educational strategies. Claire thanked all who made the visit so successful, especially the teachers, staff and 10 parents who participated in a meeting with the reviewer. Final report will be published on the DOE's website and Claire will circulate it when it is released.

There was a robbery during off-campus lunch time of an 8th grade student reported to school and the police. An Officer who's worked with school before came to the classes to provide safety tips and parents were notified.

The school building is open during this summer. No construction expected.

Auditorium Safety is an issue with kids running around after school: a counterweight electrical beam that fell could have injured someone. Andree to email parents/PA to limit children from running around the auditorium after school.

- II. Parents' Report.** Celebrate MSC was great! About 400 parents, staff, teachers joined for a great evening. Final numbers to follow, but looks like goals were met, including for Music Fund-a-Cause. On-line auction open until April 13th. PA/SLT elections will be held in May. An election committee has been formed, with a nomination meeting to be held 4/14

Inclusiveness & Diversity Committee (IDC) recent meeting focused on school-wide culture of inclusiveness, and how to support the “all means all” and “we travel together” values of MSC within the parent body, similar to how it’s done with the children. Ideas included bake sale, orientation/parent education, small committee and raising awareness of “Person First” language. The IDC also provides support to parents to raise difficult issues, either by going to Maxine, helping to frame issues or provide language, and/or accompanying individual to the appropriate person in the administration. Suggestions to increase parent awareness and supportive language included utilizing the K ICT model of having parents meet as a group to learn about each other, and the team mentioned many of the teachers at all grades and disciplines (like Ana in Dance) have models/language that can be used to support this. New ideas included bringing back MSC’s old “Contract with Families” that parents and children used to sign to acknowledge and dedicate themselves toward the school’s mission; using worksheets used by Mia & Lisa, and having IDC events during the evening so that teachers can participate. The team also recommended that the IDC reach the Outreach Committee, which is preparing to welcome the incoming class.

III. Old Business Updates

- a. **Followup on State Proposal on teacher evaluations** etc. Teachers continue to advocate in Albany. Many parents supported the teachers in the “Circle Our School” event. Claire indicated that some parents raised concerns about the message of this event, which only presented one side of the issue. Parents are welcome to host an educational event to share alternate perspectives, and help educate the community (contact Claire or Andree if interested).
- b. **District 3 Arts Showcase** is being held on May 14-15th at PS163. Each school can have one group perform a live performance from each school. The team decided to offer the opportunity to Maryanne to bring a Storytelling Troupe. .

IV. New Business

- a. **SLT By-Laws.** Proposed by-law changes were discussed. New items include participation standards (including being recognized by the Chair, closure of topics by Chair and how to add agenda items). Team also modified the description of numbers of parents/teachers to be clear it was balanced between teachers and parents. Alison will confirm with DJ Sheppard whether the Principal counts toward the balance, and whether the new description meets the DOE standard. The by-laws will state that the minimum makeup of the SLT are 5 faculty (Principal, UFT rep and 3 elected teachers) and 5 parents (1 PA co-president and representatives from K-3, 4-6, 7-8 and all grades).l (Note: DJ confirmed after meeting that principal counts toward balance).

Team members voted and by-law changes were approved.

V. SLT Events

- a. Responsive Classroom followup event: It was standing room only for Shelly MacDonald's workshop for parents on "**How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk**." Claire noted that she had heard lots of positive feedback on this workshop and encouraged the team to seek out more opportunities like this – including considering multi-day events (eg, the seven week course). Shelly is conducting the Teacher Professional Development workshop on 4/21 at 3:30.
- b. **Navigating Social Media** workshop will be moved to May 1st at 8:45am (half-day) so that 6-8th grades can participate. Suzanne Shelly has agreed to help facilitate, but team is still seeking panelists/experts to join students to speak on their experience. The goal is to serve as a springboard for conversations between parents and children, and focus on "How to Be Safe and Smart On-Line," and to ensure positive usage of social media. Cyber-bullying is also a topic that is a big concern; Greg Shamie has done workshops on this and could be a resource. Erin will rent audio equipment (for play) early so the auditorium can be used. Other topics, such as how to write an email, will be covered individually by teachers through expectation setting and reinforcement of appropriate communication in the school environment. Claire shared her experience as an Urban Advantage panelist as a potential model, which was made interactive with index cards, both individual and group Q&A and having a recorder to share out the Q&A afterwards.
- c. **June Arts Showcase** (June 16-18th) will be a festival of the arts!! It will kickoff with the Kindergarten Hootenany, include 2nd and 3rd grade dance, performances from the musical. Many will be structured as opportunities for the kids to be the teachers to the parents, and so much more. The Arts Team is coordinating and will followup with more details soon.
- d. **Parent Education for Fall 2016** The team began looking ahead to starting next year with ideas for Fall events, including:
 - i. **Curriculum Night** – what kinds of culture messages can be included in this? While parents often want to go straight to meet the teachers (esp the older grades!), some may want to get an overview of the school (in auditorium?) to start the night.
 - ii. **Partnership Mixer** – it was such a success this year, and great way to welcome families to school.
 - iii. **Open House** – perhaps hosting a 1-2 hour Open House to give families a full tour and share the history/culture
 - iv. **Poster Campaign** – prepare the walls and entry way with positive message of what MSC is in advance of first day. Could be information-based – such as "Who to go to with question!?",

elements of MSC, elevator etiquette, etc. Justine can use the Lobby Monitor to post messages as well.

- v. **Class**-events – using models of responsive classroom and ICT, have parents meet at classes to get to know each other and kids

VI. May Agenda Topics

The team agreed on May’s New Business agenda:

- Fall Planning & SLT Events
- Science Fair
- 8th Grade Presentation of Pros/Cons of Cell Phones/Technology (for consideration of 2015-16 policy change)
- Opportunities for Foreign Language for middle school

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

- May 20
- June 3

Next Steps	Date	Person Responsible
Confirm SLT membership numbers	Prior to May elections	Alison/Alyssa
D3 Arts Showcase- Storytelling Troupe	Deadline was March, but Claire can request extension	Maryanne/Claire
Eighth grade Presentation on Cell Phone/Technology	May meeting	Stephanie/Claire
Review MSC Family Contract	n/a	Alyssa/Jaclyn Okin Barney
IDC coordinate with Welcoming Committee	Spring	Brigit/Carolyn Mackler
Foreign Language at MSC	If requested by parents	Alison

Other future topic (options):

- Class structure – Once families have identified whether they will return in fall or not, Claire and team will begin to assess class structure. This happens in May.
- Budget – DOE sends budget in late June, so likely for Sept SLT meeting