



**MSC SLT Minutes
May 20, 2015**

Attendees:

Claire Lowenstein	Principal
Wendy Smith	Teacher
Erin Moughon-Smith	Teacher
Danielle Monaghan	Paraprofessional
Andree Sanders	Parent/Co--PA President
Alyssa Cheng	Parent Representative (K-3)
Brigit Beyea	Parent Rep(all grades)
Maxine Witherspoon	Parent Coordinator
Ginger Rolbert	Parent (observer)

May Meeting began at 3:15pm in Room 516.

- I. **Principal's Report.** Facilities update that building has new custodian and WITS is working with him to and PTA to install new water fountains with purified water. These will be a real benefit to teachers and classes, and hope to be done by start of new year. DOE's Quality Review was conducted on March 30th but report is not yet published.

- II. **Parents' Report.** PA/SLT elections were held in May and excited by the new members! There is lots of interest from teachers as well who may wish to serve on SLT. Maryann will hold election on June 5th for paraprofessional and teachers who wish to serve.

Inclusiveness & Diversity Committee (IDC) has continued to work on Outreach and has been pleased by increased responsiveness by Head Start centers over the past year. Final meeting of year is being planned, and will start to schedule Fall plans.

III. Old Business Updates

- a. **District 3 Arts Showcase** was held on May 14-15th at PS163 and was great.
- b. **Statement of Commitment** – Karin and Jacki are still working on draft using model from several years ago when families and children signed letters at the start of the year.
- c. **Science Fair** is on May 28th. Everything is set for in-school and evening event (including food). Volunteers still needed.

IV. New Business

- a. **Foreign Language** Several parents had contacted the SLT about including foreign language as a core component of curriculum and to increase it as a focus of the school. (See attached summary). Claire stated that the school's budget covers the current staff and cannot allow for a foreign language teacher at this time. Currently, the 7th and 8th graders use PowerSpeak, a computer program, for their foreign language classes. However, she asked the team to think creatively about how to consider this as "enrichment" and develop a partnership to bring in new curricular resources. Similar to other partnerships, the PTA can fund it and it can be held regularly within the school day. It could start as an elective for 5th-8th graders, which could be held twice weekly in up to four cycles. This would be about 80 minutes a week (compared to existing mandates of 375 for English, 280 for social studies, 100 for arts and 100 for gym). There could be flexibility (eg, one cycle could be required; others could be choices for students who wish to continue). For comparison, private schools often offer foreign language two to three times per week. The team discussed the challenge of meeting the diverse needs and interests of students (eg, how many languages, at what level do the options vary each year/cycle/grade). At this time, the team discussed that these could potentially be met through a partnership, which could be funded outside of the school's DOE funds/staffing.

Claire proposed a Foreign Language Committee could be formed, similar to the Music Committee. The Language Committee could research potential partnerships, survey kids on interest in languages/levels, and also research additional afterschool options to supplement (like a club). Claire expressed that she's interested in learning from the partnership model to see what works to help inform longer term options in the future.

- b. **Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP)** – Claire shared copies of the draft 2015-2016 and requested input from the team. Specifically, the team reviewed the Parent section, and discussed ways to increase responsiveness to the Parent Survey. This year, it was down to 56% response from parents. The team discussed the approach used this year – handing them out in the hallways during Parent-Teacher conferences. The benefit was that it did not put any burden on teachers, but the downside was that it wasn't uniformly implemented, and couldn't be staffed for the full range of days/times that teachers offer for conferences. Other ideas were shared, such as making phone calls, having teachers hand them out, and having a separate room for filling them out while parents wait for conferences. It was suggested that a Survey team of parents and teachers be formed in February in order to plan and communicate to parents about this.

- c. **Class Size** – The team briefly discussed when the school knows about Class size and composition. Administration is waiting for parents to check off list in front of each classroom indicating if they are returning or not. This will help configure classes over the summer. Claire indicated that the Mixed Age group of 2nd/3rd grade was a great success this year, but there are no set plans for whether it will be continued or expanded. That decision is based particularly on teacher interest. To give teachers more support in considering this as an option, MSC brought in an expert from Bank Street to offer professional development. However, finding the right teacher(s) to do mixed age classes can be hard, as not everyone wants to tackle the challenges that come along with it. Claire and the staff continue to explore ways to build a team of teachers who might be interested. Overall, Claire said she was very excited about the idea and would continue to support teachers to do this

V. SLT Events

- a. **Navigating Social Media** workshop was held on May 1st and was very well received by the 6-8th graders who attended, as well as the parents. Students reported valuing the video, the honest answers and that they learned new information. Very positive feedback on having professionals on the panel, and some thought it could benefit from also having high school student(s) as well, perhaps as moderator. It was recommended to run this event again, but next time at the beginning of the year. It was also discussed to have a Cyber Bill of Rights in the handbook.
- b. **June Arts Showcase** (June 16-18th) is looking great. Schedule is being finalized. The event for Parents will be held on Wednesday, June 17th, in addition to all the other great activities held during the days. Andre will help get parent to design fliers.

VI. June Agenda Topics

The team agreed on June's New Business agenda:

- Welcome of the new SLT/PTA members
- Reflections, Advice and Wishes

All members are asked to bring ideas to share with new SLT.

The final meeting will be held on Wed, June 3rd from 3:15-4:00pm in Room 519.