

MSC School Leadership Team (SLT)

Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2015

Attendees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representation</u>
Claire Lowenstein	Principal
Mary Ann Schmidt	UFT Rep
Stephanie Douglas	Teacher
Erin Moughon-Smith	Teacher
Patricia Kelly	Teacher
Meredith McAssey	Teacher
Suzanne Blank	Teacher
Lisa Giella-Putignano	Parent/Co-PA President
Susan Gargiulo	Parent Rep (4-6)
Kavita Singh Gilchrist	Parent Rep (K-3)
Manuela Zamora	Parent Rep (7-8)
Marisol Morales-Roman	Parent Rep (All Grades)
Maxine Witherspoon	Parent Coordinator/ Observer
Leslie Powell	Parent Observer

The October SLT Meeting began at 3:20pm in Room 519.

1. Welcome - Chair
 - Reviewed that the SLT Bylaws were shared with full committee, along with Chancellor's Regulation A-655.
 - Reminder about time keeping that all members need to do. Also need this record in order to get SLT stipend from DOE at end of the year. Kavita will keep the physical timesheets for those who want to log each month OR members can keep their own and submit at end of year.
 - SLT Members are required to do 30 total hours of service. 15 of these hours are fulfilled by our SLT meetings so that means that each person needs to put an additional 15 hours of service in between meetings.
 - Reminder about filling out the 2016 Biennial Survey, that all Members should have received by email. It is due 12/15/15. (Claire said it took her 5 minutes and likely will take us 15-20min.
2. Principal's Report - Claire
 - Because we are no longer able to do half-days once/month, we will now be doing professional development every Monday from 3 to 4:15pm.

- The shift puts us back to our default school-based contract. Mondays is 80min. of PD and 70min. on Tuesday.
- State says we have to have 28 hours of instruction every week and there were things we weren't aware of in the 7th and 8th grade that weren't meeting this requirement.
- Discussion continued on different options we could work on toward getting it back for next year.

- How can we help prepare for this next year? There is a mtg. on Dec. 8th from 4p to 8p -- on becoming a PROSE schools – progressive redesign of schools of excellence. **Lisa says she will work with MaryAnn to identify a few parents that could attend.**

- Claire acknowledges that families are happy that the half-day has been removed. Our Teachers prefer the monthly Friday, half-day option.

- There are other schools that have half-day options. One is a PROSE school, but there are non-PROSE schools that have them. **MaryAnn will find out from Ana which other schools have the half-day option so we can talk to them.**

- Claire explains that :

-- PROSE has to accept the school. She felt that from the state, that the main issue was the right number of hours of instruction in a week. Jalisa from Albany gave us ideas: Have a working lunch where kids are reading during lunch (for more instructional time.) But then the kids would lose recess. We would also have to do a calendar change. We want 10 half-days for PD, but with DOE guidelines, I think we could only do 3 in the fall and 3 in the spring. Parent-Teacher conferences are counted toward the half days.

- Reminder: Only 7th & 8th is missing the minutes, not the elementary grades.

Committee agrees to discuss this again in the APRIL SLT agenda.

3. Parent's Report - Lisa

- PTA is doing 4 events in December:
- RSF on 12/4, Book fair week of 12/7, Coat drive

Question: Can we open up the book fair at 8:15am ? (now that school is opening later)

Claire: YES, if we can staff it and keep parents downstairs only.

- PTA trying to work with IDC to do a day of service on MLK day in January. Aiming to do 1 thing every month to give back.
- Received questions about the D3 spelling bee and why we don't participate in it. Response: We participate in the Arts festival. And, the spelling bee structure doesn't currently allow for ALL students to participate, a central tenet of our school.

- Discussion around Spirit week themes. Twins day is on there and can sometimes promote exclusion. Advised Claire to ask the student government to pick a different theme for Twins day.

4. Unfinished Business

- Common Language Guidelines – Erin. All adults in the school are adults. If an adult asks a student to do something, you should listen to the adult. *Example: Students have responded to adults, “You’re not my teacher or you’re x person’s helper.”*
- How can we help our parents and students use appropriate language?

Ideas discussed:

- Add sentences to the elevator photos.

- Send some language out to everyone, with message from Claire on respecting ALL students and ALL adults. Possibly follow up with backpacked letter.

- Some adults here also don’t use appropriate language.

- Suggested language for a letter/messaging: *We are a community that progresses together, all trying to set you up for success... staff, parents, students... ALL of us.*

- Need to give everyone avenues to address language/responses that are inappropriate.

- Can we do a bulletin board with photos? Digital photos on the slideshow?

- Can we reiterate in the newsletters home, the names of everyone working in the class?

- Need to do something at Town Hall for the students. For example, *here is everyone that works here.*

ACTION: Letter from Claire about being respectful (tone, language) to students and adults.

Susan will take lead on drafting a letter from SLT with language.

5. SLT Events Update

- Workshop with Shelly McDonald – We had around 40 folks attending with a decent amount of new faces. Everyone really enjoyed her talk and there was a great amount of participation.
- Reading Workshop – Book Culture Event status. Susan said weekends are booked there this month. Stephanie said that we were thinking about a weeknight or afternoon there and wants to talk to the team about the current work on Dystopian fiction, using advisory periods and letting it blend into the event; Parents can then meet their kids at Book Culture. We will reconsider it in the New Year.
- Curriculum Night 2 or “Progressive Potluck” – Planning

Want to have active workshops. Brought up list of ideas from last meeting:

- Keynote from Claire: How our progressive school in the Common Core era

- DELTA math with Jeff
- I-learn tutorial
- Responsive classroom
- Reading levels for K-3

- Jan. 12 after the PTA meeting may be too soon. We also have Broadway loves MSC on Jan. 31 and the ARTS festival: February 4 & 5th

- Discussed and decided to do a survey to parents to see what response we get (interest) and gather ideas on which workshops to offer. If we get a good response, we'll work to do this on Jan. 12th, otherwise, may wait.

ACTION: Kavita will work with lead sub-team (Patty, Erin, Stephanie) to put together survey for parents, asking them to rank and suggest ideas for this event.

Justine can do survey monkey. Stephanie will check in w/ the teachers.

6. New Business

- Foreign Language Committee – Susan received responses from 5 parents that were interested in researching this. Forming a committee of this group (like the music committee) to come up with options to present to the SLT.
- Writopia – Proposal from parent that runs this. Susan shared a hardcopy outline of Writopia's philosophy and we had a discussion on how/when we could use this offering.

MSC Staff: We are currently doing TC readers and writers; we have a lot and staff feel overwhelmed right now. You could do it as a club, but you need a licensed teacher to manage it.

As a teacher, an extra body/resource in the classroom is helpful, but it can also take extra time to manage.

Could it be an option for kids who don't want to do recess?

Can it be an afterschool option? (Probably not for free as that is when she makes her money from other schools.)

Should we share it with the Teachers or grade teams?

Decision: PAUSE and think about it in January. Susan to circle back with Writopia and gauge their interest in an after-school program.

Meeting Adjourned. Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, January 6th.