

MSC School Leadership Team (SLT) Minutes

March 9, 2016

Attendees:

Name	Representation
Claire Lowenstein	Principal
Mary Ann Schmidt	UFT Rep
Stephanie Douglas	Teacher
Erin Moughon-Smith	Teacher
Patricia Kelly	Teacher
Meredith McAssey	Teacher
Suzanne Blank	Teacher
Brad Rothschild	Parent/Co-PA President
Susan Gargiulo	Parent Rep (4-6)
Marisol Morales Roman	Parent Rep – All Grade
Kavita Singh Gilchrist	Parent Rep (K-3)
Manuela Zamora	Parent Rep (7-8)
Maxine Witherspoon	Parent Coordinator
Tatiana Hoover	Observer

The October SLT Meeting began at 3:25 pm in Room 519.

- 1. Welcome – Chair**
- 2. Old Business: Group Discussion**

Review of workshop: MSC Progressive Approach to Education

Congrats to Kavita and SuSan on a fantastic event!

What worked: wonderful offer of workshops and teacher participation, great one pager that went out by email and on SLT page. Very good work promoting the event; presence in the school lobby making contact with parents was noted as especially important.

The SLT is very happy with the turn out, an approximate of 85 parents with workshops of 15 to 25 people per room. The amount of time for the night was perceived as right and everyone agreed that getting the night started with an expert was a powerful choice.

Stephanie's workshop had a small group but a powerful experience since she had parents of children that needed support or parents from 5th grade students who wanted to learn about middle school.

Erin, also had a small group but used it to guide her parents to an “aha moment” since they were present because they particularly disliked ILearn. Based on this experience the SLT will add an ILearn seminar for all 5th grade parents or early in the year for 6th grade families. Teachers want parents to understand ILearn at the beginning of the school year so families can use it as a tool to follow student work as well as needs and accomplishments.

Stephanie added that the event was more work for teachers but it felt to be work that will benefit them and were all pleased with the results.

In that vein, a “Welcome to Middle school night/ orientation for the parents” will be planned with the aim to translate what is MSC middle school is and what are the expectations. The goal is to emphasize ILearn: this is how we communicate with you as parents.

It was agreed that the pending Science workshop (not available at the event) will be planned in next school year. Orientation ilearn and middle school will be scheduled in early fall.

3. Principal’s Report: Claire

The **Student Led Conferences** were a big success and had strong family support.

The **Physical Movement Committee**, an initiative to have more movement during school time school, is composed by 5 parents and have organized a yoga training for teachers on 3/23 at the dance studio. The goal is to incorporate fitness breaks during school time, focus K,1,2 grades since they don’t have PE in their scheduled. This is an additional tool to manage students in the classroom and this first experience will be used to build a plan to later move up the program to all other grades.

MSC has had great results in this year’s high school applications. All excellent placements and only a handful of students will be placed in the second round. Claire will share the results with the community at large when all kids get their placements. It was an exceptional year, it is important to inform the community of all acceptances and celebrate!

4. New Business: 5th Grade transitions

Roughness of 5th grade families in terms of leaving the school has been discussed. This is something that creates rivalries and makes it very difficult for the kids who are staying for middle school. The SLT plans to start talking about this earlier in the year and hoping to create a positive environment for kids who decide to stay or to go. For this we need a subset of group to address this issue. The goal would be to promote kid to kid conversations to show middle school “awesomeness” with MSC

alumni visiting and talking to students about their experience after the MSC middle school. The SLT will work to form a committee to plan an event with in 4th & 5th grades, and invite alumni for students.

Kindergarten acceptances are out. MSC received 957 applications for 100 spots from which 31 are taken by siblings, therefore only 69 spots where available for those applicants. Since the new families don't necessarily know about progressive education, or what IS the MSC community and what makes us different, an orientation session will be given in MAY so families can have the time to chose another school if they decide this is not a good fit for their children. Setting up the expectations for the kids but also for the parents--what is expected as family involvement—as early as possible will only be a positive start.

The Kindergarten “Welcome Packet” should also include a letter of commitment to progressive education and to a K-8th grade community. Consider we are in a competitive environment and 4th grade and 5th grade timeline.

7. PROSE application has been put on hold; a core of teachers was interested and now a larger focus and time to prepare the application is needed. The interest is present and people/teachers want more information. Will be scheduled in 2016-2017 school calendar year.

8. Parent survey is out. Susan and a committee of parents had a meeting with Maxine last week; they will have the class parents involved, they will have the envelopes for each class. Upper grades will have the computers set up in the lobby and a room set aside so they can have the surveys filled out too. Maxine will give it to the parents before PT conference.

9. During the meeting the SLT accomplished the mid year review of the CEP (sections XXXX).

Teachers commented we are on target for section 5A and 5B, pleasantly surprised by how many students remember the themes of responsive classroom and highlighted in the Town Halls. Every section was read out loud and all members could verify the actual implementation of each section.

Next SLT meeting is scheduled for 4/6/16 room 519 – 3:15 to 4:45 pm