

**Booker T. Washington Middle School 54**

103 West 107<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10025  
Phone: 212.678.2861

**SLT Minutes**

September 25, 2020  
7:30 AM

SLT Members

Core SLT Positions	Teacher Representatives	Parent Representatives
Elana Elster, Principal	Elizabeth McNulty (co-chair)*	Andy Weinstein (co-chair)
Jose Beauvais, UFT rep	Rachel Weisz	Laura Adams (co-secretary)
Laura Adams, PTA Co-Pres	Kirby Mason (co-secretary)	Brad Roberts*
Peter Armstrong, DC37 rep	Erica Williams	Hudson Roditi
	Sara Lichtman	George Schneiderman
		Jacqueline Shannon

\*Late

\*\*Absent

**Observers:** Anne Pejovich, Marni Aarlev, Randee Johnson, Larry Lee

**Minutes**

June minutes were approved and will be sent to the PTA Corresponding Secretary for posting.

**Agenda**

**Meeting dates/times for the year**

- Meeting schedule was approved

**Principal’s Update**

- Preparations:
  - The building is very quiet with few staff members and no kids, but it’s ready for in-person learning; classrooms are set and supplies have arrived.
  - The administration has been tweaking the schedule almost daily, which happens even in a regular year. The implementation of the schedule has been challenging as the teachers figure out how best to group their students and not everyone is able to see their students in person.

- Staffing changes:
  - New G6 math & science teachers who are able to teach in the building has helped with in-person scheduling.
  - Ms. Rosario is retiring in November.
  - DOE has lifted all hiring freezes, so PT support like Ms. Mansell and others are back.
  - Paras have been working for the past 10 days.
- Health:
  - DOE changed the health screening protocols; now every student will need to undergo and submit, when they arrive at school, a health screening questionnaire.
  - A student's grandmother has been hospitalized for COVID; the school is monitoring the situation.
- Enrollment/Budget:
  - The school has lost almost 100 students (to private schools, families moving, and to charter schools)
  - The DOE Enrollment office seems to be allowing students to switch from one middle school to another; MS54 does not intend to go to the waitlist to replace the 100 students who left, as there wouldn't be enough teachers to make it work.
  - The administration submitted a budget appeal seeking more money to make up for funding lost through student attrition but has not heard anything back since June.
  - The administration is squeezing every penny out of the budget -- fewer traditional supplies are needed, but more of other items offset the savings. But they have not yet needed to dip into the funds allocated by the PTA for staff.
- Tech:
  - The school has been giving out iPads from the tech lab, but, since some families don't have internet, they really need the DOE devices, which are cell-enabled.
  - The school is still waiting for the DOE guest internet account in the school.
- Teacher Feedback:
  - Generally speaking, students really want to come to school.
  - One teacher commented that the in-person days (which have been on Zoom so far) have been a little exhausting because the teachers get virtually no breaks, but overall things are going much more smoothly than in the spring. For example, in the spring, she had 130 kids in 4 sections at a time; this fall, there are 9 kids in a class, which was much more manageable.
  - Another teacher commented that teachers have been spending a lot of time getting to know the kids and building community. The students are desperate for social interaction; when the teachers put them in breakout rooms, the kids are actively engaging with one another and doing the assigned activities. Parents also need to encourage social activities.
  - Another teacher noted that students have come a long way with their tech skills. And for some kids, particularly those who are easily distracted, remote learning has given them an opportunity to focus on their work, and many are thriving for the first time.
- **Election of Teacher Officers**
  - Liz McNulty -- Co-Chair
  - Kirby Mason -- Co-Secretary
- **Enrollment - Current, Middle, High School**

- The HS Enrollment office sent a communication telling parents to use last year's books and that they have no new information.
- The DOE is saying that the SHSAT will be given, but without further details. Dr. Elster believes that the dates currently on the calendar (November 7-8) are place-holders, as there is no indication of any kind of commitment to those dates. She is hopeful that the SHSAT will be administered in each middle school, which would allow all 8th graders to take it.
- There has been no DOE update on the middle school admissions process.
- **Wellness Update**
  - There was a report on the five priorities the Wellness Committee has set for this year.
- **Equity Update**
  - The Equity Committee will be sending out a letter this week inviting parents to the first meeting.