

SLT Members:

Core SLT Positions	Teacher Representatives	Parent Representatives
Elana Elster, Principal	Richard Cappadona	Barbara Denham
*Jose Beauvais, UFT rep	Briana DeSantis (co-chairperson)	Alison Gardy
Chris Giordano, PTA Co-Pres	Randee Johnson	Stefanie Goldblatt (co-chairperson)
Jerome Kramer, PTA Co-Pres	Sara Lichtman (co-secretary)	Jeanne Goffi-Fynn
	Elizabeth McNulty	Hudson Roditi
*Peter Armstrong, DC37 rep		Patricia Saydah (co-secretary)
		Andy Weinstein

*Absent

Observers: Anne Pejovich (Parent Coordinator)

Meeting convened at 7:26am at Booker T. Washington

Minutes:

December 14, 2018 SLT Minutes were approved. The SLT secretaries will send to Joanne to be posted.

Discussions around Agenda:

CEP PROGRESS REPORT

GOAL 1. RIGOROUS INSTRUCTION

By June 2019, students in 12:1:1 classes will improve their reading skills as evident by an overall 2% increase on the New York State ELA exam.

GOAL 1. Progress Report

The lowest performers have been set up with a computerized program to practice math and ELA skills.

GOAL 2. SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

By June 2019, a school created survey will show that 65% of the students surveyed said that the buddy program supported them in their transition to middle school.

GOAL 2 Progress Report

The buddy program is on track to meet the goal of one meeting each month. The next buddy activity is scheduled for January 17th.

GOAL 3. COLLABORATIVE TEACHERS

By June 2019, every teacher team will review student work once a month and will prepare at least one common assessment each quarter as documented through the team's Google documents.

GOAL 3. Progress Report

Dr. Elster will be attending teacher team meetings the week of January 14-18 to monitor progress towards this goal.

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GOAL 5. STRONG FAMILY COMMUNITY TIES

By June 2019, 40% of the students with disabilities will participate in the after-school academic support program in order to help them improve their skills and complete their work.

GOAL 5. Progress Report

See discussion surrounding sixth grade academy

PLANNING FOR CHANGES IN 2019-20

The Applicants

The school will be testing over 1000 applicants over the course of three days - January 22nd, 23rd, and 24th. The test results will provide a better sense of the applicant pool. The multiple-choice portion will be scanned by a computer, allowing the school to analyze the data and the applicant pool.

Issues/Needs

The SLT suggested that a subcommittee of teachers should be formed to identify the challenges/funding requirements to support diverse needs of incoming students, then report back to SLT.

Programming Options

Pooling options will be considered for next year. The school will not implement differentiated programs (as in the past). But the school is considering pooling students by aptitude (as appropriate) in certain subjects, with differentiated curricula between honors and regular classes. The group discussed whether pooling and differentiated curricula were appropriate primarily in math and science (which are currently pooled to some degree), or also in subjects like Humanities, where some students might be better served by a more traditional curriculum focused on reinforcing ELA skills.

Other

- We want to create a culture that focuses on progress, and not perfection. The group discussed the concerns that (a) struggling students may not be well-served by being in a class of high-performing students with an accelerated curriculum, but (b) at the same time, struggling students should not feel stigmatized if assigned to a non-honors class.
- Teachers estimated that approximately 10% of students need significant extra support, 20% are performing well above grade level, and 70% are in the middle. For the 70%, work habits can differ and some students can be pushed forward more quickly.
- Mental Health support is important. Dr Elster has already talked to Columbia.

WELLNESS MINUTES

More than 20 teachers attended the School Wellness Council teacher lunch meetings held on November 16th. There is an overarching theme that students feel pressure to achieve certain grades to get into top high schools. It was discussed that both teachers and parents should:

- Focus more attention on effort and personal progress rather than grades
- Focus on the love of learning/excitement of learning

There should be a deeper dive into the findings of the council to determine how the emotional needs of students can best be supported. Ideas include:

- Presentation by a panel of students who did not get into their first-choice high school, yet are thriving.
- As part of 6th grade parent orientation, could we teach “growth mindset” to parents. i.e. how to frame things for kids, build resilience, back off on perfectionism.
- For 6th graders, make the 1st marking period pass/fail to allow students to “embrace the struggle.” Students would still receive grades on individual assignments, but grades would be pass/fail on the report card and there would be no honor roll for the first marking period.

SIXTH GRADE ACADEMY

The success of Sixth Grade Academy is contingent on finding enough mentors to work with the students. Ms Cohen wants to form a subcommittee which includes parents to help recruit volunteers. (Could this coincide with the 2019-2020 Planning Subcommittee?) It was suggested that we start to involve 8th graders to tutor. Questioned whether those who serve as 8th grade buddies are ready to be mentors for the 6th grade academy.

A later after-school start time was proposed so 9th graders can join after their school day ends.

The creation of a 7th grade academy for 2019-20 was proposed to allow for continuity.

HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE

A lawsuit that has been brought against the DOE by the Pacific Legal Foundation challenging the expansion of The Discovery Program. This may delay the release of the high school decision letters until the lawsuit is settled.

Under the revised Specialized HS admission plan, 200 District 3 high-achieving students will be adversely impacted with less seats available for them. We are supportive of diversity goals, but there needs to be more school choices for District 3 high-achieving students.

The PTA will solicit feedback about high schools and feedback from the parents of current 8th graders. We need to create lists of high schools that are available in District 3 and determine gaps to support strong students.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 am.

Meeting minutes submitted by SLT co-secretaries Sara Lichtman (teacher) and Patricia Saydah (parent).