

MS54 – SLT MEETING MINUTES for April 12, 2019

**SLT Members:**

<b>Core SLT Positions</b>	<b>Teacher Representatives</b>	<b>Parent Representatives</b>
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:** Susan Trout (Teacher), Anne Pejovich (Parent Coordinator), Joshua Kane (6<sup>th</sup> grade parent), George Schneiderman (6<sup>th</sup> grade parent)

*Meeting convened at 7:25am at Booker T. Washington*

**Minutes:**

March 8, 2019 SLT Minutes were approved with no edits. The SLT secretaries will send to Joanne to be posted.

**Discussions around Agenda:**

**CEP Goals**

No Updates

**Review of Mission Statement**

The Mission Statement posted on [www.MS54.org](http://www.MS54.org) states:

*“Booker T. Washington MS54 strives to develop and nurture a community of intelligent, mature and motivated learners with strong academic and critical thinking skills and a love for learning.”*

At the March 8<sup>th</sup> SLT meeting, it was decided that a formal statement be made stating how Booker T will continue to meet the needs of every student in a combination of heterogeneous and homogeneous settings. Dr. Elster presented a draft of a statement of academic philosophy to this effect to supplement the Booker T Mission Statement. The below statement reflects the revisions proposed by the SLT. Dr. Elster will write a final draft.

*“At Booker T. Washington Middle School, academic excellence is the foundation of our school culture. We are committed to providing rigorous academic opportunities to every student. We believe that both acceleration and remediation are vital to nurturing the potential of each student. We provide diverse opportunities to address the academic needs of our students, including a curriculum offering different levels of coursework.”*

**Planning for 2019-2020**

For the 2019-20 school year, just over 300 students were given offers to Booker T. There will be 9 full size 6<sup>th</sup> grade classes, with 3 of these classes being ICT classrooms supporting approximately 36 students

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with IEPs. There will be 2 sections of 12-1-1 classes, supporting 24 students. Twenty-five percent of the offers are to students with averages of 1's or 2's on the State Exams, with most of these students included in the ICT and 12-1-1 classrooms.

Booker T is committed to having a summer orientation program for these new students and plans to host a parent orientation, such as an evening meeting for parents to gather and meet, as well. Other suggestions for making new families feel welcome included: creating buddy families; a phone-a-thon welcoming people; and wearing nametags in the building.

The teacher planning committee proposed that in 2019-20 academic year the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students be grouped heterogeneously in all subjects, except math, and the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students be grouped heterogeneously in humanities, but homogeneously in math and science. The next teacher planning committee meeting is on Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **High School Admissions**

All Booker T 8<sup>th</sup> grade students received at least one offer. Sixty one percent of students received offers to Specialized High Schools and 63 students were accepted to LaGuardia. Seventeen students were placed in schools that they did not rank. (It is worth noting that these 17 students include approximately 10 of whom have already committed to private school, so that really leaves only 7 students placed in schools they did not match.) The non-specialized schools which accepted the highest number of students were Beacon, Clinton, Manhattan Center, Museum School and NEST+M.

Overall, there seems to be less scrambling for high school seats than in past years. There was a push by Ms. Mansell to encourage families to be open to more schools and rank appropriately (for example, not ranking a District 2 priority school, if you did not possess a District 2 address). Furthermore, there was a cohort of parents that was gathering information about the high school process, in real time, and feeding it to Ms. Mansell to disseminate to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents. It seems that education, knowledge, and appropriate ranking of schools were 3 key components in mitigating the stress and scramble when the matches were released. Feedback will be solicited from 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents and a plan will be devised to establish a method of gathering and disseminating real time information in future years.

### **Teacher – Student Behavior Perception Gap**

The 2017-18 school survey showed a gap between teachers and students perception of classroom behavior on all questions (the largest gap being a 43% difference in the percent of students vs teachers that think students behave well in class even when the teacher isn't watching (Q20i) and the smallest gap being 13% difference in the percent of students vs teachers that think most students listen carefully when the teacher gives directions (Q6a.)). There is most likely a difference between what a teacher believes is bad behavior and a student's view of bad behavior. A suggestion was made to ramp up anti-bullying curriculum and to invite Justine Fonte (health educator) to Booker T to speak to students and put students into breakout groups to discuss presentation.

### **Wellness Update**

The Wellness Fair that took place on Tuesday, March 26<sup>th</sup> was well received. The speakers covered a range of topics from physical to social to sexual health. The LGBTQ group that presented was impressed with the students' knowledge and sensitivity, as well. Suggestion for next year included: Make the Wellness Fair a ½ day event next year to coincide with Parent/Teacher Conferences and have 1 hour (vs 45 minute) presentations. The next Wellness Committee meeting is on Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>.

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### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy**

The DOE has confirmed that there are no additional resources to provide extra support to the 25% of students below grade level. Alison has called many organizations to find volunteer help for both the Summer and the Fall. We need to find an enthusiastic and committed liason to the Wellness Committee for next year, since Alison will be leaving Booker T. She's done an amazing job.

### **SLT Elections in June**

Parents:

- 3 parents are completing their terms on the SLT (Barbara Denham, Alison Gardy, Patricia Saydah)
- Nominations to fill these slots should be sent to [nominations@ms54pta.org](mailto:nominations@ms54pta.org)

Teachers:

- 2 teachers are completing their terms on the SLT (Briana DeSantis, Sara Lichtman)
- The election committee will solicit nominations and hold an election according to the UFT guidelines.

### **New Business**

The next Equity Team Meeting is Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm. The topic is “Bridging the Gaps” and will include guest speaker Matt Gonzalez, New York Appleseed’s School Diversity Project Director.

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*The meeting adjourned at 8:40 am.*

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