

Booker T. Washington Middle School 54  
 103 West 107th Street  
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 Phone: 212.678.2861

### **SLT Minutes**

March 13, 2020

7:20 AM

### **Participants:**

<b>Required Members</b>	<b>Teacher/Staff Members</b>	<b>Parent Members</b>
Elana Elster, Principal	Sara Lichtman	Jacqueline Shannon
Jose Beauvais, UFT rep	Richard Cappadona	Jeanne Goffi-Fynn
Laura Adams, PTA Co-Pres.*	Elizabeth McNulty (co-chair)	George Schneiderman
	Randee Johnson	Hudson Roditi
	Peter Armstrong, DC37 rep**	Stefanie Goldblatt
		Brad Roberts
		Andy Weinstein (co-chair)

\* Participated by phone

\*\* Late

Absent: Rachel Weisz (on leave)

Observers: Jerome Kramer, Chris Giordano, Joanne Giordano, Anne Pejovich

### **Minutes:**

In order to address the increasing risk and potential implications presented by the coronavirus (COVID-19), and at the request of Dr. Elster, the SLT meeting originally scheduled for March 20, 2020 was moved to March 13, 2020.

Consideration of the minutes from the February SLT meeting was deferred until the April meeting.

### *School Attendance*

Dr. Elster reported that, while faculty/staff attendance had been stable, student attendance was down significantly from normal due to concerns around COVID-19. On Thursday, March 12, there were 70 student absences, compared to an average of 20-25. (After the meeting, Dr. Elster reported that 275 students were absent on March 13, though the fact that it was a half-day with no regular classes scheduled may have contributed.) The school is required to notify the superintendent's office if any students leave school early due to illness. As of March 13, the school had only reported two notable cases that week.

### *School Hygiene*

While the DOE has provided for two additional hours of facilities cleaning per week, the school has arranged for its custodians to provide four extra hours per week. Nonetheless, there is still concern regarding the risk of contagion in the school – for instance, there are 330 students in the cafeteria at any given time. Students’ staying home actually helped with social distancing within the school, though it was recognized that not all students had that option. The teachers indicated that, while each classroom received soap pumps and extra paper towels, they still need more disinfectant wipes.

### *Contingency Planning*

The Committee then discussed contingency planning in the event that school remained open but there were substantial student absences (Phase I) and in the event that school closed (Phase II). It was noted that the DOE had no comprehensive plan for remote learning and that, if it happened, it would need to be implemented school by school. The Committee discussed the need to clearly communicate and set expectations for parents regarding the possible scenarios.

From a technological perspective, MS54 is relatively well-positioned for remote learning. The vast majority of students have computers and WiFi access, and the school could lend iPads to those who do not have computers. The Committee discussed a variety of alternatives and considerations concerning remote learning. The sense of the Committee was that Google Classroom was a useful tool and that teachers who had not set up Google Classroom for their classes should do so. It was also noted that Microsoft Team and Google Hangouts/Meet are available for free. Hudson offered to conduct training for teachers on Google Hangouts/Meet and suggested that it might be worth soliciting other parents to assist in training.

The Committee discussed potential plans for Phase I and Phase II, including:

- Phase I
  - Having teachers circulate topics covered, materials, and homework to those staying home
  - Teachers could record their live classes with Zoom so absent students could watch them at a later time
- Phase 2
  - Implementing some kind of video instruction
  - Perhaps having one teacher per subject give a lecture – live and/or recorded
  - Communicating to parents how to optimize the home learning environment

The Committee also discussed whether to cancel/reschedule the second day of parent-teacher conferences, which were scheduled for the afternoon of March 13, to allow the administration and teachers time to further discuss contingency planning. After extensive discussion of various options, Dr. Elster decided that the parent-teacher conferences should proceed as scheduled.

Dr. Elster said she had not received any news about whether the state tests would be postponed.

The meeting ended at 8:40.