

## PS261 SLT Meeting Minutes 2/5/16

In attendance:

- Principal/AP: Sara Apfel
- Teachers: Jodie Park, Jamie Pandolf, Stephanie Scarborough, Susannah Weiss Ortiz
- Parent Coordinator: Heather Weston
- PTA Rep: Nora McCauley
- Parents: Kate Hazel-Busch, Amy Huggans, Curt Iiams, Wayne Isaak, Cindy Lobel, Kathleen Mulholland

1. Cindy Lobel called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.
2. Parent Workshops – those addressing homework tend to get the best parent turnout –

Sara Apfel discussed the three tier plan for dealing with parents concerns about the new math program

- a. Step one would be to have a larger assembly to discuss the math program overall and the philosophy behind it;
- b. Step two is to hold targeted parent workshops in the classrooms on a Parents as Learning Partners day – have the teachers show the parents the strategies that the children are being taught;
- c. Step three would then involve possible workshops to help resolve confusion – the way this would be set up would probably be based upon how steps one and two went. Perhaps the workshops would include one teacher per grade to help the parents.

3. Town Hall set for February 11, 2016

- Principal Mills primary focus of Town Hall will be on testing/opting out
- Heather reminded all that, while Principal Mills will discuss testing, she is there for a general Town Hall and the topics will not be limited
- Sara Apfel explained the issue with the School still being listed as a primary focus school. This is our fourth year as a primary focus school and she said that we *need* to get off that program.
- Although we need to get off program, she did layout the positives of the school and specifically noted that the school was just recently reviewed by the City and State; it did very well. In fact, but for the testing issue, we probably would have passed with flying colors.
- Last year we had a very large number of those opting out of tests – 5<sup>th</sup> graders in particular were a large number. According to the rating system, the school must have a 95% of its student body take the test

- Of our students that took the test, we did very well. It is likely that the school would have done very well overall. However, their success did not count because the total numbers taking the test were not enough
  - Issues of opting out still need to be considered. Our school played an important role in the changes in the way testing is used – it is no longer used as a basis for teacher evaluations and the tests are no longer timed. However, there are still issues that need to be considered. The school as a community needs to consider whether it still wants its voice heard by continuing to opt out as an objection to testing
4. Testing Forum to be held on March 10. This will be a parent meeting in the cafeteria. Child care will be available and pizza served.
  5. DOE Parent Surveys – we need to get parents to respond!
    - Night of pot luck – ipads will be made available for on line surveys
    - Stop people at parent/teacher conferences
    - Although the participation in survey no longer affects school's DOE grade, it is still important so that the school knows what people are thinking
    - Offer pizza party to every class that gets 100% participation
    - Is there to make responses mandatory?
  6. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 am.
  7. Action Items