

PS261 SLT Meeting Minutes 5/4/18

In attendance:

- Principal Allen; AP Messer
- Teachers: Khadija Algamoos, Jamie Gifkins, Stephanie Scarborough,
- PTA Representative: Nora McCauly
- Parent Coordinator: Heather Weston
- Parents: Maud Abeel, Tanya Friedman, Wayne Isaak, Scott Jackson, Kathleen Mulholland

1. Meeting called to order at 7:35 – prior minutes approved
2. OFI Visit –
 - Involved in many organizations related to poverty and refugee children in war torn areas
 - Qatar Foundation – the goals are to create cultural awareness regarding Islam art and culture
 - The visit was part of the UN week. Some kids were invited to go to the NY Public Library to model with Naomi Campbell. The method by which kids were chosen was fairly ad hoc and made by Rita. Principal Allen was only given 2 days notice so there was no time to get too involved in selection of children.
 - Our involvement started with Global Language Project, which focused on the importance of learning a second language. We received a grant for Arabic Studies which is why we now focus on this language.
 - Money is again an issue. Principal Allen has no intention of dismantling the program but the funding has been cut over time and it is now presently half of what it once was – there are new forms of grants available and we are currently working on them. Jess Hamlin is currently helping with grant writing.
3. Math work – presented by AP Messer
 - We are focusing on math at present because it is what has changed; our writing and reading has largely been consistent over the years. Additionally, this is an area where parents express the most anxiety.
 - It is being addressed both vertically and horizontally
 - Trying to determine areas of strength and areas that need work – primary areas of focus: consistency of language and fluency
 - The more comfortable the parents are the more helpful they can be
 - Math leaders in every grade
 - Currently working on pacing calendars for a more cohesive program
 - We want to look at how we handle kids who are struggling and also to challenge others

- We are now 3 years into the new program and the teachers are feeling more comfortable
4. Learning Partners Program – 3 schools that work together
 - We hosted the most recent meeting
 - Problem of Practice: agency, discourse, engagement
 - Change Idea: More independence around writing
 - They visited classrooms, K-5, and group impressed
 - 5th graders are constantly writing
 - Culture training has to go with the work – social issues must have a relationship to the work
 5. CREATES – Social Studies – cultural responsibility - “guiding questions” to be used by the teachers to put a different lens on what kids are learning and what they are teaching
 6. Homework Survey
 - Samples were gotten from AP Apfel’s child’s school along with prior survey conducted by 261
 - Maud, Cindy and Tanya will try to mold a survey of no more than 10 questions, likely done through Survey Monkey
 - Teacher survey will be prepared as well
 - It is important that survey go out in June because everyone will have more clear thoughts about the past year and the homework issues that may have come up; will also allow the Administration to consider it over the summer.
 7. Third Street Music School
 - Principal Allen said that the school is great on its own but she still needs to research the residency aspect of it
 - Principal Allen wants to visit the school and Wayne agreed to go with her
 - Principal Allen would really like to get all kids involved in the simple aspect of music like recorders and/or guitars
 8. Science Projects – Science Fair
 - This year the information did not go out as quickly as in the past causing some confusion
 - Parents felt that the boards related more to research rather than experiments, likely due to the lack of advance timing
 - Many parents do not know their child’s science teacher
 - New science teachers this year – communication and planning will likely be improved next year
 - To be addressed more at the next meeting

9. Meeting adjourned at 8:25

Action items for next meeting:

- Homework survey
- Election
- Science project/science fair for next school year