

WESS SLT Meeting Minutes

Date: February 3, 2016, 3:30 – 5:30 PM

Attendees: Jessica Jenkins (JJ), Mary Kane (MK), Debra Belena (DB), Stephanie Fields (SF), Christina DiPasquale (CD), Alison Morpurgo-Cotter (AM), Ellyn Peschitz (EP), John Curullo (JC), Michele Balsam (MB)

Regrets: Eric Shuffler, Jennifer Carter-Campbell

Guests: D3 Superintendent Ilene Altschul

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY AND NOVEMBER MEETINGS

- The group approved minutes from meetings of November 30, 2015 and January 13, 2016

ADDITIONAL MEETING

- The group decided to hold the additional SLT meeting on February 10, 2016 from 4 pm to 5 pm.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (JJ)

- JJ described the rigorous hiring process for WESS teachers that includes, among other components, a demonstration lesson and consultation with respective department teachers. JJ noted that department teachers have a better understanding of what's needed as they are subject matter experts.
- JJ noted that parents are not part of the hiring process and have lodged no complaints to date regarding teacher communications.
- Hiring will not start until WESS has its budget, and it is unknown when budget will be available.
- JJ notes that the Superintendent is enforcing the 90 seat limit currently which will impact the school's hiring ability.
- DOE Enrollment indicated that we would not get as many first choice candidates as we did ultimately so had expected to take second choice.
- WESS will likely hire +/- 4-5 teachers including language (not final because pending budget)
- For hiring, JJ focuses on content experts.

Upcoming PA Meeting Topics

- JJ provided an update on state testing

- JJ shared that teacher task force worked with state to provide feedback
- Resulted in more time for all students based on research that time does not correlate with measure of learning
- JJ shared that Pearson is no longer service provider based on past performance
- JJ noted purchase of typing program – JJ noted that work will likely take place at home (at next meeting group will discuss hours involved)
- JJ noted verbal agreement on lease.

PA UPDATE (CD)

- CD noted that we will have a well-staffed Welcome Committee for transitioning new parents (13-14 parents interested)
- CD noted that a top priority for writing grant requests is to refit the Black Box so that a place exists for children to come together in an auditorium setting.
 - A pitch was made to the Manhattan Borough President Gail Brewer
 - An additional request will be made to City Counsel
- Several attendees noted that crew parents have different understandings of what is acceptable activity, particularly with regard to travel outside of school premises.
- CD noted that we will have one coat rack per class.
- The group discussed issues to relay to our elementary schools. In particular, the group agreed that note-taking and organizational skills are key to middle school preparation.

The SLT paused its own agenda to meet with the Superintendent regarding formal election of Jessica as Principal.

Following the Superintendent visit, the group discussed the agenda for its next meeting on February 10, 2016 as follows:

- 1) Approve Minutes
- 2) Principal's Report
- 3) PA Report
- 4) Parent Report (DB)

Other Comments

- SF asked about acknowledging Black History Month and embracing multi-culturalism
 - EP proposed an international festival if enough others would contribute to running it.
- SF suggested that we look to enhance community engagement, such as encouraging attendance at the La Guardia gospel concert
- As a result of this discussion, MB committed to ensuring thoughtful Crew lessons are planned sensitive to this issue.

The meeting adjourned.