

September 18, 2018
Waters Elementary School
Local School Council - Minutes

Quorum 4:04pm

Parent Reps: Kristin Bacon (KB), Chris Brannon (CB), Greg Foster-Rice (GFR), Jason Rieger (JR),
Eric Smith (ES), Lydia Schmidt (LS)
Community Reps: Zach Koutsky (ZK), Laurel Niedospial (LN)
Teacher Rep: Rielly Wall (RW)
Principal: Titia Kipp (TK)

Motion to approve agenda, LS, JR seconds, all approve.

Approval of minutes from July Meeting – accurate
Motion to amend the minutes, LS
Motion to approve, RW, second by KB

Announcements and Correspondence

TK: Parent Volunteer Process – if you are going to work with children you need to fill out
volunteer info online. If you are working with children less than 10 hrs then you just show ID
and have it recorded by the office. If you are going to be working with children more than 10
hrs you will need the additional step of fingerprinting. Is it annual or not.

ES: The general email received the following correspondence: 4th grad parents about change-up
of grade level teams (please follow up in Principal Report); We got a thank you about how the
CIWP is getting implemented; got a suggestion for fundraising for a social work position;
teacher aides for primary asking if we could have a more consistent implementation of that
year to year.

ES: the LSC is supposed to get official emails from downtown and a new reference guide for
2018-19.

Special Guests/Reports:

- a. Luis Garcia-Juarez (LGJ) – this is the most well-engaged LSC in the city. LSC reference
guides are being revised, will be done in January, the guide will be made available as a
PDF on webpage to save money. No significant updates at this time about the emails.
Our priority has been fingerprinting for LSC and parent volunteers.
 - a. JR: concern about all LSC members getting fingerprinted since they aren't
working with kids and fingerprinting discourages undocumented immigrants
from running for LSCs. LGJ: they are looking into it, but the fact is that the
fingerprinting is part of the same IL School Code and follows the minimal

requirements including Criminal Background Check etc... A consideration to make this change would probably require a change to State Legislature.

- b. LGJ: general recommendations to the LSC: the training is available online. In person training is more dynamic and particular to your school. Offers to come down and do training here for us. It is important since the LSC is the local governing group that the relationship be healthy and balanced. The Chief Executive (Principal) has a particular role to play. My reminder is that a healthy understanding of your particular roles working with the chief executive always produces the best results. Meetings are open bc you are a public body and the driver is public engagement. What we find is that social media becomes an immediate way to communicate issues in ways that undermine healthy deliberative decisions that are better made in direct encounters with one another and giving the council due time to make decisions. This is a distinctive process – no other district has this kind of local governance.
- b. ILT – TK: our CIWP is a very dynamic, living document. Spent time this summer figuring out how we will parcel out the strategic plan over two years. Teachers met at _____.
 - a. ABCDE – Colleen Herman (CH): Essentials rotation is ABCDE (Essentials are Digital Media, Art, Gym, Drama, Music). You won't notice until our first scheduled day off school with Columbus Day. The goal was to ensure kids got evenly distributed essentials classes. If there's a planned assembly on a Friday then it will also shift the schedule. This is not unusual – lots of schools do it. Snow Days will *not* change the schedule.
 - b. PLC – Amy Vecchioni (AV): Professional Learning Cycle – growth mindset/SEL, Math, STEAM, English Language Arts (ELA). We are working through each of these four areas weekly to create vertical and horizontal scaffolding. Our first PLC was focused on growth mindset/SEL with TK, Nilsa Alvarez (NA), Ms. Bricker (HB), CH, and AV. Growth mindset has been described by many people – sitting on the cusp, making mistakes, failing forward. We have embedded this into the CIWP. The A in STEAM stands for Art- arts ask children to take risks and step out of their comfort zone. Don't want testing to define us. Has a big red binder in which the teachers are documenting and capturing the PLC. Each classroom chooses its goal and determines its unique skill. Each week the PLC meets with each grad band. Next week they will be sharing out and looking at student work across the grades. There is built in assessment to ensure accountability. There are also moments of celebration – Cardboard Challenge on Oct 13; and another on Field Day with Adventure Tasks. Growth mindset teacher book club. (See PPT). Ask your child about growth mindset.

HB: I am the school counselor, 7th year, I handle the Social Emotional Needs. There are three standards (See PPT) I am here to share how we integrate these throughout class, beginning with morning meeting. See PPT We also bring in a vendor for 7-8th grade called Between Friends about building healthy relationship and how to recognize unhealthy relationships. Next steps: provide

teachers with resources (books), collaborate with RAS, continue exploring and sharing ideas.

c. Questions from the Council:

KB: love the growth mindset, has there been discussion about how adaptiveness might influence grading practices or a homework policy change. AV: that's an excellent next step plan. Our grading practices are pretty flexible, but I know we are trying to demonstrate that its ok to make a mistake and build forward.

ES: love the ABCDE. When is Between Friends. HB: Spring. ES: could be beneficial earlier in the year. Can that be vertically aligned down in 5-6th grade. HB: They are a CPS vendor and the K-5 curriculum is aligned with Between Friends. They do have a 5-6th program and we have discussed it.

c. Fundraising Proposals

- a. Middle School – Regina Cavey and Seth Raman (RG, SR): Trips in the spring in 7th grade are costly and we have some ideas. We have done all of these and some are in conjunction with businesses in neighborhood (restaurants etc). These efforts help to reinforce that we are a community and that we all help support one another. We are acutely aware of the cost of the trips and the goal is to ensure all students go on every trip.

proposals: chocolate, popcorn, snack food are all year round. Pizza sales at Pi Day. Collectivo in Winter. Dance tickets.

CB: destinations? SR: Springfield is 7th and St. Louis is 8th.

SR: Couldn't do WDC any more because one year we only had 50% of kids able to afford it. When we switched to St. Louis we had 90% attendance because more affordable and also a very valuable experience from curriculum perspective. We know some parents want their kids to go to WDC but we are mindful that we want to empower everyone to participate. We have thought long and hard

KB: how early do you decide? SR: BY January or earlier to book tours.

ES: IS there a motion to approve these fundraising proposals for the Middle School? Yes, ZK, LN seconded. All Approve.

- b. Waters Today – most money comes from Fall pledge drive and Big Night (March 9 – earlier than last years!). Many other events (restaurants, craft fair, etc). Raised \$270,000 last year. Asking permission to fundraise for the school.

- c. ES: Do we have a motion to approve WT fundraising? CB, ZK seconded. All approved except JR who recused himself since wife is on the board of WT (following

- d. Dress Code Regina Cavey (RC) – want to propose a dress code. Main priority is to keep them safe. Want to ensure their safety. Presenting this as a survey of all stakeholders so they can provide the best possible dress code for all the students and have a positive atmosphere. Proposed, nothing finalized. **See PPT**

SR: Next step is survey to parents since obviously you have the best interests at heart. Wanting to make this as gender neutral as possible and look forward to your input to helping to make it even more so, if necessary.

KB: What was impetus? SR: Heard from parent community about the desire to update the policy, wanted to listen. TK: The existing policy was recognizably outdated and needed to be updated.

CB: Timing? RC: We wanted to get it done today, but we want to get survey out as soon as possible. We would like to get results by next LSC.

LN: Do you have a washer/dryer at school for families that might need that? CH: We have the Circle of Help to offer assistance to families that need help with laundry etc.

Reports

- a. Principal Report – TK: Thanks to Amy Yoder for managing the Lost and Found. The Circle of Help has been supportive of families in need (Jaime Freedman). Tracy Conway putting together the Back To School line up day. Vanessa Summer for gathering the volunteer group for putting together the CPS form packets. Waters Today for all your support. I know there is concern about the fundraising for teacher aides in lower grades. I'm not trying to dismiss these issues but primary focus is on classroom teachers and ensuring we have people in every classroom. While I would love to have aides in every classroom I have to make difficult decisions. There was something about the changing of the 4th grade team this was about changing enrollment numbers in different grades, teacher certification, and creating the best curriculum. As much as people don't like to talk about test scores, we do need to be aware of the testing. So we had to make some difficult decisions about allocating teachers to different areas and matching up areas of certification. Mr Leatherwood has 29 years experience. *Ms. Murman has 19 years* and I am confident in them Creativity takes courage. We have to be creative in our district and funding – we have minimal resources. I ask that you give us your confidence and faith in our decisions. Regarding the dress code please know that we aren't out to get students. We don't even like the term "coding" and don't do it. We want to spend our energy on other things. Curriculum Night on Sept 26 (which is also picture day). High School night coming up in October. We have a school wide calendar that we are trying to plug everything into – it is being updated and will be grade-level specific. There will be a post with step by step directions on how to set that up. Colleen Herman and Janette Aguilar are taking charge of the calendar and website updates.
- b. Budget – ES: quick recap of the budget. We recognized we might be down a position and we have not been able to recoup that position which also helped necessitate the shift in 4th grade that laced Mr. Leatherwood into a classroom. We were projected for 627 and we currently have 642 students. TK: explains enrollment and budget process. We might get a little more money because of Student Based Budgeting.
 - o Ms Aguilar - Presented proposed spending of funds raised by WT - Align with CIWP
 - Additional staffing requests (already approved by WT) - Ecology staff/program supplies, ½ teaching position for Essentials, recess and lunch support staff \$43,500/year, Athletic stipends \$9000/year, Club stipends \$4500/yr,
 - Technology - 4 chromebook carts \$42,500, updated technology \$4750

- Program supports - Essential class supplies \$5000, STEAM materials \$5500, ILT GLTM PLC (sub coverage) \$4000, Wish List (non-tech) \$2750 (also funded by Scholastic book fair rewards)
- JR Question - What is the goal re chromebooks? CHerman - Goal is for every classroom to have its own cart ultimately. This was identified as high priority because original Chromebooks are becoming obsolete. There are more tech needs that she has identified. Additional DL teacher this year want their own Chromebooks. Goal is 2 years have enough carts, and then just replacing. Low cost means they don't last long. Central office will no longer update.
- ES - What tech is currently used by 1st/2nd? CH - None, essentially, due to change in number of classrooms
- LMS What tech is for DL/ELL? CH - Google Read and Write (free app) - came in and trained all staff members to use it. Low cost once kids have Chromebooks. Wants to get more into the elementary DL classrooms. Upper grades have chromebooks already. IEP conversations with parents will all include assistive tech. Those devices are separate from school budget.
- JR - STEAM kits - does that budget cover all the needs for the program? TK - CIWP was written thinking about Scientists of Tomorrow program at Columbia. Teachers met and recommended supplies for STEAM content area. Kit for engineering program would be for classroom, not individual. Grade-level rather than project-specific. AV - Tools from previous years' STEAM programs can be used with new materials. Rename toolsheds? Spare parts? Maker kits? This budget ask is for consumable materials that students will use. Incorporate cross-curriculum. ES - Can consumables be bought with student fee funds? TK - \$5500 is supplementing student fees or another resource. WT funds can get it right away. CB - Question: How are needs determined? CH - Based on CIWP. Also items that WT has historically funded. Partially fund several programs, not fully funding anything. Chromebooks not specifically for Digital Media, for school-wide. Proposed by ILT, shared with entire staff to weigh in.
- Kirstin - How is it determined which essentials position is funded by WT? TK - Given a half position by central office, so matching in order to provide preps for all teachers. Need minimum of 5 essentials programs for all students. Kirstin - Ecology program is specific, essentials seems arbitrary. TK - WT has been funding this way for several years. Kirstin - How would ecology become something that was always funded as opposed to essentials? CH - WT was started in order to fund ecology. Sarah Byerly - WT started to fund ecology and grew from there. Added "other strategic school initiatives", which goes above ecology. Now trying to hand over the allocation of funds to ILT and school. ES - Funding would go to least expensive essentials position. Was already approved in April.

- ES - Seems fair and equal to give every essentials program equal funding for materials, but visual art uses more consumables. TK - We could potentially add more from internal accounts/other resources. ES - We as a Council should have a conversation about essentials programs so teachers aren't funding out of pocket. Should fully fund programs we've identified as priorities. LSC needs to understand funding streams. Proposes the Budget Committee reconvenes after 20th day numbers and updated internal accounts reports from central office.
 - TK - Also will make a strong push for student fees. Every year about \$30,000, but a lot more could come in to sustain programs. ES - Haven't done an assessment of how many families haven't paid.
 - CB - Does not approving now hold things up? TK - Yes. ES - Approve now but come back to fill in gaps.
 - Move to approve expenditures laid out by ILT - Zack motioned, Chris seconded. Approved unanimously.
- c. Principal Evaluation
 - No update. Pencil in October closed session with Principal Evaluation Committee to check in with goals from last year. TK - Closed session at 6pm? ES - OK.
- d. BAC
 - NA - BAC Wednesday of next week (9/26) in the morning after drop-off. Brief org meeting to elect officers. Will go out in Green Notes and hard copy.
- e. PPLC
 - RW - No update.

Public Comment

- Re dress code and 'coding'. It is important for teachers to be trained how to talk to the students. Or assign that task to someone who is trained to talk about implications of dress code and the effect it has on the psyche of the student.
- Re dress code. Shame free, progressive - strike "clean, neat and fit" strike "baggy pants", strike "undergarments should not be shown"
- Re sports team stipends in budget - Some sports coached by teachers, some by parents. Do stipends go to non-teacher coaches? TK: Depending on sport and coach, teachers get paid stipend, some parents opt not to, but stipend is offered (5th-8th). If money isn't used, ILT would discuss how to allocate it and propose to LSC.
- Re Dress code - Second previous suggestions to strike certain language from dress code
- Re ½ Essential position/CTU requirement to cover preps, how to reconcile? Similar to aides in classes of 32 or more. ES: "unfunded mandate" TK: Other schools have larger class sizes. Parent: Relates to growth mindset - large class sizes don't lend to growth mindset. TK: Ideally we'd have more (teacher/student ratio). Parent: How to reconcile? ES: Experienced teachers cost more. CPS knows that schools will make up the funding gap (re ½ position). Parent: What if we don't fund it? We could demand it.

Approvals

Acknowledge outstanding checks over \$1000. Zack motions. Jason Second. All approve.

Zack - motion to adjourn, 6:10pm. All second and approved.

Final for public distribution