

Waters Elementary School
LSC minutes for Dec 10, 2019

JR called to order 6:35

Quorum:

Parent Reps: Kirstin Bacon (KB), Chris Brannan (CB), Greg Foster-Rice (GFR), Jason Rieger (JR), Erica Smith (ES), Lydia Schmidt (LS)

Community Reps: Zach Koutsky (ZK),-Lauren Niedespol (LN)

Teacher Rep: Rielly Wall (RW), Ms. Ballasch (MB)

Non-Teacher Rep: Mr. Williams (MW)

Principal: Titia Kipp (TK)

Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve the agenda, KB, LS Seconded. All in favor

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve minutes from the Nov Meeting as amended by Greg (corrected name spellings and corrected the pending BOE approval of Ms. Ballasch's official appointment to LSC), CB motion, ZK second.

Public Comment

Please note: This period is dedicated for questions/comments that directly pertain to the 3 functions of the LSC: Budget, CIWP, and Principal Evaluation. Other questions/comments will be directed to administration (general school operations), teachers (specific classroom/grade level questions), or WatersToday (fundraising and volunteering).

Mary Gallery: MTSS is mentioned in the CIWP. How is it implemented?

RW: MTSS is Mutli-Tiered Systems of Support. A way of helping kids who might be Kids who are continuing to struggle over time are given on-grade level support. During the week, I might meet with them 3 times.

TK – Tier 2 and Tier 3, with 3 being more intensive.

Karen Soto (Union Delegate) – one of the questions I've heard that might be troubling. Want to make sure we are adhering to the contract. We have heard of LSC observations of teachers which would be outside the purview of the union contract. I've also heard about concerns or negativity between LSC and the teachers. Doing observations of teachers is grievable. I am not trying to be adversarial but this is my job to monitor and we don't want to set a precedent for other schools.

LS – there has been no discussion about observing teacher or evaluating teachers. I wanted to put this discussion on the agenda (see agenda below) as part of the principal evaluation precisely because we were worried that people were concerned about this topic. So we wanted to have the discussion about evaluating and observing the principal (not teachers) on the agenda for a transparent discussion. I had a lengthy conversation with the OLSCR Liaison and am prepared to share that info in our discussion later today.

KB – I was the one who used the word observation/evaluation and didn't mean for it to be interpreted as teacher evaluation. All we are asking is for Ms. Kipp to have control over what we could see, but we wanted to open up the possibility of what Ms. Kipp would allow us to see as a formal mechanism within the Principal Evaluation Process.

LS – Ms Kipp would also be in charge of ensuring we wouldn't be coming into a classroom environment that was sensitive, but could invite us into a situation to showcase a component of the CIWP, for example.

JR – It is an opportunity for Ms. Kipp to show us evidence for what she is doing, firsthand.

LS – It would also include things open to the parents, but also anything else she would want to invite us to visit.

Hope Nichols – working with Elvia H. on fundraising for the 8th Grade Trip. We would like permission that we are fundraising for the 8th grade trip in conjunction with Waters Today so they can take on the role of the 501c3 in order to receive matching grants.

JR – we will add that to the January LSC Agenda.

HN – great, that would work.

Old Business

None

New Business

a. Checks to approve:

None

b. Approval of reallocation of WT funds to pay for additional RAS coach

JR – we do have a contract for a 5th coach, and need to amend our allocation...need a motion to approve

LS – can you explain what happened

JR/CB – we did the budget at the end of summer and allocated budget for four coaches for recess with a reserve for a fifth coach in the contingency fund. But we signed a contract with RAS for five coaches and that has been working great. We need to square the contingency (which was general, but potentially earmarked for a 5th coach) with the budget. It is in the amount of \$11,793.

RW – we would still have a small surplus of \$3,000 in remaining contingency for whatever we see fit.

JR – which would roll over.

CB – I move to approve the reallocation of \$11,793 from unallocated to RAS. KB seconds. Approved by everyone.

c. Approval of transfer of Oracle funds

TK – this is money from SBB etc (CPS funds, not internal accounts).

CB – Just a point of clarification for the audience – every year we allocate the budget based on hypothetical amounts from CPS, and periodically we need to reallocate these funds to match our current needs.

TK – Over summer I was advocating for full-time case manager, but in late August they said no. So I transferred unallocated money from a supply account to a position pointer line to have downtown open a position for the beginning of the school year. The other line item was for a special education conference I attended in July.

JR – is this the full or half amount for the case manager?

CB – it is a start.

TK – once the dust settles between CPS and the State then we hope to get those funds brought back to us.

JR – if that doesn't happen then we will need to reallocate more money again later in the year.

LS – Why did the LSC not hear about the initial reallocation at the start of the school year?

JR -I think we've been running a little behind and are just catching up on some of this stuff.

CB – We had a budget meeting last week to offset the time lost by the work stoppage. We are trying to get a greater level of clarity.

LS – Moving forward it will be easier then? Do we have a new clerk?

TK – not yet

RW – Motion to approve the transfer of \$27,500 for halftime case manager. LS second. All in favor.

ZK – motion to approve the transfer of \$400 for Special Ed Conference. CB second. All in favor.

JR – motion to approve the transfer of funds to purchase of the curriculum, printers, science supplies for \$5,500? RW motion, LS seconds, all approve

JR - Motion to approve the transfer of funds to approve the purchase of travel reimbursement, Brain Pop, reading materials, for a total of \$4,4457. CB motion, RW, All approve.

- d. Add option to request school visits for the purpose of principal evaluation

RW – if Ms. Kipp is in charge of what the LSC could review, what would she be allowed to invite people to visit

KB – LSC is not allowed in any environment where there is sensitive student information (such as IEP, etc), but anything that is related to the CIWP or Principal Competencies might be available for us to view, at the principal's purview. We knew that following last year's Principal Evaluation we all wanted better firsthand information, as was requested by Ms. Kipp.

Maybe there is a school wide goal that she wants us to see in action. This approval if it gets voted on today does not mean that we are necessarily going to see anything. It means that Ms. Kipp would still get to decide whether or not we could visit. Just because it gets voted on doesn't mean it is happening, it just means it opens another line for Ms. Kipp to choose from as evidence.

RW – what have other schools done?

LS – I got several responses from the LSC google group and got a few responses. Several schools said they do it. Others said that they rely upon volunteerism in the school to observe. When I talked to Luis Garcia Juarez (OLSCR) and asked him he suggested that I ask Ms. Kipp and the teachers to make sure they wouldn't feel it would be disruptive and wouldn't take time away from the school day.

RW – I get the principle, but don't know what it would look like.

KB – For example, with the new health badge, perhaps the principal could invite LSC members to witness quickly how Calm Classroom is implemented in several classrooms. I said "observation" last time, but it's not about observing teachers – it's about observing actions that are listed in the CIWP etc.

LS – Luis pointed out that the PPLC is a public meeting that we could attend so that too is a potential opportunity.

TK – I just want to add that I do monthly reports and provide lots of data. We also have opportunities for parents to visit events like the Science Fair. Further, there is some discrepancy in terms of what CPS and CTU are saying about the PPLC and I want to be sensitive with my staff about opening up those meetings because CTU seems to be in disagreement with CPS about visiting those meetings. I do report out but at no time have I said that visits are not permissible. I would want to limit it to a limited number of LSC members at any given time and it would have to be voluntarily agreed upon by the teachers. We also have a BAC meeting that LSC members can attend and hear from teachers and see the work going on at the school. I am the principal and I am overseeing all these activities and want to clarify that there are many different things, such as coming to a basketball game, that would be opportunities to see work done under my leadership. So there are plenty of opportunities already and want to acknowledge that the word "observation" did cause concern. So I just want to be clear to welcome people but want to make sure that any visits would be scheduled in advance and would be at the discretion of teachers in consultation with principal. The visits are available and we can organize events that can be visited.

Ms. Ballasch – can we put this on hold and talk to staff about it.

JR – can the PE Committee put together a formal document explaining what it would involve and send it to Ms. Kipp and teachers.

TK – How about Mr. Wall and Ms. Ballasch talk to the teachers then we can have a conversation

KB - I know last year was a tough year, and I know that transparency might feel uncomfortable, but I think that transparency and a more open culture between

parents and teachers might be beneficial to helping this school to move beyond that difficult year and to address the concerns raised by Ms. Soto about tension between teachers and parents.

Mr. Williams- I'm trying to figure out why we need to go into the school beyond the already available mechanisms.

KB – this stemmed from Ms. Kipp saying that she felt that the evaluation last year was too limited in its collection of information and we felt that this was a mechanism for improving upon that.

TK – just to clarify that the PE last year was based on the Community Survey and end of year summative information. And we have done a good job this year of creating a better set of mechanisms to collect data throughout the year, including forms that I complete every month.

LS – Yes, that is true, but if I'm not mistaken we have also failed to be able to schedule an executive session about last year's summative evaluation. It seems like we have been having trouble scheduling lots of meetings.

JR – we will push this to the next meeting and get it to a good place before it comes to a vote.

Reports

a. Principal Report (10 min)

See report.

GFR - thank you for sending the Principal Report. This was only the second time that the report was presented in this format, so with the recently approved minutes form November that first Principal Report in the new format will be available to the public.

LS – will there be a presentation on the SQRP data at the January meeting?

TK – Yes, we can do that

GFR – That would be great. It's essential. To the public, SQRP is School Quality Report and it is how the school is assessed by CPS

JR – We retained out Level 1+ status.

TK - working on a new date for the Fine Arts meeting. We are hoping that Ms. Ballasch will be approved by the BOE tomorrow so she will fully join the LSC as a voting member in January, and Mr. Williams by the next BOE meeting so he will be approved for voting in January.

b. BAC (5 min)

Alicia Mayorca - Still getting back on our feet after the work stoppage. Want to know how we can better serve our community so will be sending out the survey again.

c. Budget (10 min)

CB – abbreviated key points: reduction in computer technology. **See attached Budget Report**

KB – what is the process for an Essentials teacher requesting funds.

TK – some items the teachers need fast can be ordered by non CPS vendors and they can reach out to WT Treasurer to see if WT can place the order for STEAM materials to get it more efficiently and economically. Each of the five Essentials gets \$2,000 for a total of \$10,000.

KB – Why would an art teacher receive the same amount to cover consumables as another Essential that has less consumable material. I mention because Ms. Vecchionni was requesting approval for fundraising at the

CB – It is in theory only that each Essential gets \$2,000. If they don't spend up to that amount, the remainder for each Essential goes into the pool for the other Essentials.

LS – could we budget the Essentials based on previous years expenditures?

CB – we doubled the total amount from \$5,000 to \$10,000 for this budget year and decided it was best to

d. Facilities and Grounds (5 min)

JR – no report. We are still working on getting a meeting with construction through the Alderman.

GFR – Once we have more information about the annex we will schedule a public meeting for the community to see the latest plans.

E. CIWP

RW – we added information to the action steps in the CIWP Tool and added evidence for what has been happening.

F. Principal Evaluation

KB – We've already talked a lot today, which can serve as our report unless anyone has additional questions?

g. PPLC

RW- Came up with a consistent calendar for the group.

Ms. Soto – there is a public portion of the PPLC meeting, but there's a private portion as well in order to protect student information.

RW – Ms Collins came up with a good idea to have someone who speaks Spanish at LSC meetings.

TK – That is something that is always available through Ms. Alvarez, who happens to be absent tonight due to illness

h. Fine Arts

LS – I reached out to Office of Arts Education and they shared our Fine and Performing Arts standards for success (a rubric for assessing arts programs), which would be utilized to help us assess the Fine Arts programs in an objective way. There's also a self-

evaluation tool for a wide group of stakeholders. I assume you've heard of this, Ms Kipp?

TK – I have not, can you send it to me?

LS – Yes.

KB – If we are a Fine and Performing Arts school, why do we have to fundraise for our Arts Essentials?

TK – The budget for FPA has been cut over the years. Even worse, they took away one of our full-time arts positions after we were initially allocated two of them when we initially applied for Fine and Performing Arts status.

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Mary Gallery - can we post documents for meetings 48 hrs in advance?

JR – We will look into it.

Erica Battin - want to clarify what WT is funding and what is being funded by things like the Walkathon? I'm a big believer in WT and want people to understand better what funds what. Is there any way to get a more specific list of what is being purchased and used by each of the Essentials?

JR – I'm willing to work on that.

TK – I did want to say that when WT promotes their fundraising for the school year, but we can always communicate out better

Mary Gallery/ Carolyn Dean – WT is working on what we could promote at Big Night as a big purchase to spur donations.

TK – to your point the teachers had similar questions about the Nature Playspace and why we were spending \$20,000 on that.

Ms. Soto – teachers are frugal and hard wired to ask for only little bits. So maybe we need to have a conversation about how to engage with this process.

KB –

Ms. Aguilar – want to circle back to the Principal Evaluation. I come to the LSC meetings regularly and the behavior I see in the meetings doesn't make me want to invite LSC members into my classroom.

Hope Nichols – I dedicate 40 hrs a week to fundraising. I'll be stepping down next year. One of the challenges we have is getting volunteers. As a great example, we were short parent volunteers for Book Fair this year, but we were able to work with teachers to get volunteers for which we were grateful.

Ms. Rivadeinera – I work with kids to remind them of the needs that we are grateful

JR – As members of the LSC we are not aware of this tension between the teachers and LSC. Talk with me, I won't be offended. Then I'll talk to the rest of the LSC. Start with me and we can work around the issue. I think it is the result of poor communication. I view the LSC's role as representing parents, staff, community, and teachers. We cannot have a disconnect between the LSC and teachers. So we should talk.

Ms. Mermuys-Rivadeniera – I shared in June this sentiment that Ms. Aguilar shared. There was a heated exchange and last year was a hard year. We see that tension on the LSC as well. We

do have to communicate better and I wanted to share in that letter in June about the positive things happening at school.

JR – I'm confident we wouldn't volunteer for this if we didn't want the best for the school.

Ms. Ballasch – we as teachers are truly blessed by what WT is able to provide. We are very appreciative. In the past we took photos of DonorsChoose unboxing and we could do that for WT since they are the primary donor that has alleviated our needs.

Discussion about doing a slideshow at Big Night.

Motion to invite Ms. Ballasch to Executive Session for Principal Evaluation discussion of Final Summative Score by KB, RW seconds. All approve.

Motion to invite Ms.

Executive Session: Motion to go into executive session for Principal Evaluation discussion of Final Summative Score, KB, CB second. All approve.

Adjournment:

List of action Items before next meeting (chief agent for instigating action is underlined):

Old Action Items:

- Facilities & Grounds will set up meeting with PBC/CPS Construction (Evan Smith) to get more information about exterior treatment of the building and other details to share with community. Will also share at LSC meetings. *This task was addressed by F&G via the public meeting that took place on Jan 7, 2020.*
- Facilities & Grounds will try to get a weekly meeting with Construction Crew to provide updated information to the community. *Zack Koutsky is following up with Alderman on this issue.*
- Principal Evaluation Committee will establish schedule for more regular meetings to spread the tasks over the course of the school year.
- PPLC will meet and provide update at next meeting
- TK and Fine Arts Committee will determine schedule of meetings and review CPS self-evaluation tool mentioned in the Fine Arts Committee report.

New Action Items:

- TK – ensure Ms. Ballasch’s and Mr. Williams’ appointments to LSC have been approved so they can be full voting members
- TK and CIWP members on LSC – analyze the school performance data (Spring 2019 NWEA MAP scores etc) and present a synopsis to the LSC.

Action Items for future meetings

- TK and CIWP Committee – CIWP report for January Meeting (perhaps a good place to include analysis of SQR data).