

Waters Elementary School
LSC minutes for May 14, 2020

JR called to order 6:32pm

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 amended agenda, JR, RW Seconded. All in favor. No abstentions or nays.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve minutes from the April Meeting with expected addition of Ms. Kipp's introduction and construction update, JR motion, ES second. All in favor. No abstentions or nays.

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).

Jill Gershune – technology question (get from email)

TK – with the STEAM concept it doesn't just fall under the technology area. It falls under a funding issue with the current budget that we have. We don't have funding to support such a staff member.

Another question about apple pencils and boards.

TK – We looked at this but was not available for us in the Apple marketplace of approved vendors in CPS.

Andrea Goldstein – how will the plan (CIWP) help high achieving students. What are the action steps for teachers and students for a more challenging curriculum.

TK – this relates to the MTSS portion of the CIWP which is something that we are addressing.

Hope Nichols – children miss their gym teachers. Would love to see the teachers in a google meet. But teachers have said they cannot do it.

TK – This is something we are working on with our essential teachers. We understand it's been tough for everyone and we are working on setting up google meets with the essential teachers.

CB – why has this taken so long?

TK – You're right, and everybody's doing everything a little differently.

ES – the goal posts keep changing.

Stuart Lange – Thanks for holding the meeting. I know its been challenging for everyone.

[Reads from email, which is pasted here]: At the recent meeting of the budget committee, the

LSC outlined the plan to spend down the school's six-figure budget surplus for the 2019-20 academic year. While these purchases will undoubtedly benefit the school, I am disappointed that this surplus was not identified sooner and put to better use. The surplus could have been recognized at the beginning of the school year, when student-based-budget revenue and payroll costs were finalized. Had it been, perhaps the school could have retained the much-loved digital media program, hired a dedicated ELL instructor, restored the arts integration specialist position, or identified some other priority that would have enhanced instruction this year. While technology is important, it is more important to hire as many high quality teachers as possible. As a parent, a taxpayer, and a donor, I am disappointed by the poor stewardship of the school's resources we have seen for the last two years. After being told that the school faces budget constraints, it was upsetting to arrive at the end of the school year and learn not only that the school had not allocated the resources already at its disposal, but that the amount of money left un-allocated was not known. I ask the LSC to implement more oversight of the school budget so that the resources we have are identified sooner and put to uses that will better serve our students. Thank you.

ES – I appreciate your comment Stuart. We could have done a better job of oversight this year. My mistake is in referring to our money as a surplus in recent meetings. What we did have was a shift in funds that we didn't quite catch. Because of teachers moving from our SBB budget to our special education budget, we did get a bump in the fall and we could've caught it and done something with it sooner. It's hard to invest that money in personnel because then you have to fund that person from year to year. Would've been great to have hired a specialist in digital media or literacy specialist but also comes with challenges.

TK – thanks you Erica – as a follow up. We did incur a work stoppage in October. Coming back in November made this confusing. I also know that we didn't get much of the information until January when the benefit lines started to shake out. This is a frustration that we all experience in the district. The budget was balanced for the start of the school year. There was no surplus at the start of the school year when we could have taken advantage of this.

Carolyn – there is a community rep vacancy since Laurel has moved out of the city.

JR - So we can vote to address that at the next meeting. We don't know what's happening with the...

JR - can we get an update on Jenn Davidson's comment from last meeting. Can we get an update on number of classrooms in the annex?

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New Business:

Video – Ms. Aguilar

<https://youtu.be/LhQWrHQwYTk>

Amy Vechionni – There's a lot of questions about arts integration and design thinking. Design thinking isn't arts integration or STEAM but it is a process. This is a process that we've been working on for years and years. So in this years CIWP, we felt that design thinking can get us from here to there. We know all the things that can help move us forward and move us into the future. So when we go into questions about design thinking in the CIWP so we can all have a framework. This was a document that was very collaborative among the teachers.

Approval of CIWP

JR – We saw the CIWP on Tuesday and it was an excellent presentation. That is coming up against the other situation where the LSC did not get the CIWP we are meant to approve until last night at 11pm which leaves us as group being asked to vote on something we haven't had a chance to fully engage with. I'm concerned about calling a vote and having a majority of people abstain and send the CIWP forward without the support of the LSC. There's a couple of things to do here – we can hear more about the LSC and answer some more questions.

CB – we really want to be adding value where we can and the only way we can support the teachers would be to take some more time with it.

Mr. Williams – I agree – go over questions and concerns today then have another meeting on Monday.

LS – we are supposed to be basing our budget on the CIWP but I would be hesitant to approve budget without CIWP.

JR – I don't want this to be seen as frustrating on the part of the teachers. I think this is a more respectful way for us to be a value add and to serve a purpose for which we were elected.

CIWP presentation:

TK – MTSS Strategy #1 – one of the first questions is about where funds will come for paying after school participation from teachers? That money comes from our accounts from rentals etc. We also pay our staff for the early birds program in support of children. That's a fee based program for early drop off.

TK – Another question – how many students by percent have MTSS.

Brikcer - No more than 10% of a classroom should be receiving Tier 2 or 3 supports.

KB – what do Tier 2 supports look like in the classroom?

Bricker – If a kindergartner doesn't recognize the alphabet letters by April then they will receive Tier 2 or 3 supports to address that skill. This is not individual instruction but focus.

KB – this is a teacher intervention? In the classroom? A teacher support.

Ballasch – some things could look different in different ways.

KB – so my question is then, if this is what is happening now, what is the action step that will change moving forward.

Bricker – as the MTSS coordinator, I think we need to offer more support on what those Tier 2 and 3 interventions look like. IXL which is another action step is huge.

KB – I wonder if that's another online tool rather than a teacher. I would advocate more for quality time with teachers in the classroom than an online tool.

Ms. Aguilar – it doesn't mean we're just going to have the kids go on IXL, but it will supplement. Since we did pioneer IXL and it is aligned with our curriculum, it helps me identify skills that they need to continue working on.

Soto – IXL is aligned with Reading Street Curriculum. Targets skills. We get reports. It helps us capture that information. It really helps as a tool that it helps us isolate students who might be in Tier 2 and then help you get the students back to Tier 1.

LS – how will design thinking be used to respond to

A.Vechionni – Budgets for Design Thinking. Revisit how we did Professional Development with ILT. I'm answering methods questions. Our Five Essentials data on Innovation is 28% so a 10% increase would only take us to 38%, which is still weak. How can ...I'm not very good at remote learning...I'm learning...We will be using the diagnostic tool of CPS Standards for Success to help us determine our alignment to these standards. I invite everyone to participate because it should be a lot of fun. How would design thinking be embedded? I wanted to share that there's a fun model going on...I think we have children doing the design challenges during remote learning.

Ms. Ballasch – here's an example of design thinking across the curriculum. In 7th grade the students work together and identify needs in their community. They work on community awareness.

Ms. Rivadenieira – ...[sorry, I wasn't able to type this all down]

TK – It is a two year plan. We already do MTSS, and we know we want to do it better.

KB – I would like to see more specific action items to differentiate how we will do it better, what will those specific things look like?

KB – when you say there was a CIWP team involved, there was really only a portion of the CIWP team that was involved. I want to be clear it was really only the teachers and admin.

TK – yes, absolutely, when I was talking about the work I was talking about the teacher team.

Approval of Budget

Approval of FY20 Budget Spend Down

JR/TK – Spend down for FY20 is final on Friday the 22nd. We have to turn in our purchase orders before Friday the 22nd.

Ballasch – the things in the CIWP came from teachers, in a whole staff team. As for how to manage the PD, we had subcommittees that had learning cycles to focus on different tasks during part of the school day as part of prep time [get confirmation from Ballasch]

GFR: Can I hear more about how the paper consumables, digital subscriptions, promethean boards, and technology will benefit us if we go into a potential continuation of remote learning or a hybrid learning situation? It would seem prudent to wait until we get more feedback from parents and students about what is working well and what isn't in remote learning. Maybe we will discover that we need more document cameras? I'm just hesitant to spend this much money right now with so much uncertainty. I'm not asking for an answer now, but for some further justification to go along with the spend down.

AVechionni – promethean boards need to be custom installed into the rooms

GFR – That makes sense, thanks for the explanation, which helps us understand this budget item.

LS – I know you're trying to get the other half of the case manager funded by CPS. Are we going to get that? Nurses?

TK – yes that is centrally funded. We do have a full time nurse who is not part of our school budget bc we have a student who needs that service. Our social worker and nurse outside of that nurse are designated by the numbers of IEP students.

LS – my other question is about the second clerk position. Why do we have two clerks, one funded through SBB. And why we need that if it doesn't align with the CIWP?

TK – there is a tremendous responsibility falling on one person with the internal accounts, doing attendance, etc. We've asked the second clerk be here and be present in the office because it is necessary. We were able to bring someone one in early March until end of year. We have given this person training.

KB – is it normal for a school our size to have two clerks?

TK – yes

LS – someone has already been hired right? Instead of having two clerks could we have two people, one as clerk and one as something else? Miscellaneous office duty.

Soto – there are a lot of responsibility that are qualified under what a clerk does that are covered under the CTU contract. Handling of money, school records, etc...

Reports

- a. Principal Report (10 min)
- b. Facilities and Grounds (5 min)
- c. Principal Evaluation (10 min)
- d. BAC
- e. PPLC

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Carolyn Byerly Dean – are teachers getting training on the google suite.

TK – we have teachers on staff working to train one another. Helping those who may be unfamiliar with the google suite. Some had more, some had less. They have been really supportive.

Stuart Lange – wanted to follow up on my comment earlier. Follow up question, I understand you don't want to commit to hiring a staff person without knowing if the money is there. How much is enough for you to know you could hire someone?

TK – I want to go back to when we had the funding available to us. It usually costs \$100,000 for salary and benefits.

Stuart Lange – you had that amount of money this year, why didn't you use it?

TK – because we didn't know we had it.

Soto – some of that money got put back into the budget as part of the CTU negotiations. By the time the money got put there... it

Stuart Lange – if we were able to identify \$150,000 surplus in September, would we be able to hire someone?

TK – if we knew in Sept that we were looking at that then by all means.

Kevin Bacon – who is checking student engagement? There's a report that comes out, and wanted to know how it is going at Waters.

TK - It is going rather well but we are hitting some roadblocks in terms of student completion of work.

Kevin Bacon – prior to having the dashboard being revealed, do you have an internal tracker?

Ballash – CPS has where we would normally take attendance, we have a way to track if we've connected with a child at least once in the week. The idea is that CPS wants to make sure we connect with each student somehow. In the middle school we see almost 140 students. Any of us who hasn't seen someone then we connect with other Middle School team members and reach out – it might be there homeroom teacher or social studies teacher. It's not quite attendance but it's tracking. We only have 1 student out of 140 who we cannot reach due to reasons that are unclear to us. There's been a huge effort to make sure our students are being engaged. Ms. Bricker is dropping off chromebooks at kids' homes. But the students are definitely feeling the drain – we are seeing more "sick days" where the kids take a mental health day. We spend most of our day answering emails.

Ms. Rivadeineira – we only have one student in 5th grade who is not as responsive. 3, 4 and 5th were almost 100% in terms of engagement. Same with assignments.

Ms. Ramos – I can jump in for k-2, kindergarten has 100% engagement. Almost all our students are engaged. Very pleased with the work of those students. Very happy to see us.

Nilsa Alvarez – our contact has been very high as a school. We have 6 students that we are struggling with. And 8 students on non computer learning plans.

Soto – admin has been good about reaching out to us about any students whose contact has dropped off. The admin then follows up. We are using google meets, phone calls, to make sure the students get some contacts.

Motion to adjourn. JR, KB seconds.