



**Waters Elementary School
Local School Council**

Meeting Minutes - APPROVED

Date	Tuesday, April 20 2021
Meeting Type	Regular Meeting
Time Start/End	6:34pm/9:03pm
Location	Google Meet
Chairperson	Greg Foster-Rice
Minutes Prepared By	Lydia Milman Schmidt
Attendees	Present: Peggy Ballasch, Liz Chandran, Ron Dean, Greg Foster-Rice, Ari Frede, Titia Kipp, Stuart Lange,, Lydia Milman Schmidt, Alison MacDonald-Ryan, Karen Soto, Mark Williams Arrived After Roll Call: Raha Dempsey
Minutes Approved Date	May 18, 2021

Actions

Approve Agenda	GFR: Amending agenda to add Wellness Committee as Item K. Motion: KS Second: TK Approval: Unanimous
Approve Minutes from March meeting	Motion: AMR Second: KS Approval: Unanimous

Public Comment

Andrea Goldstein	<p>Can you please address ways in which restrictions during recess can be adjusted? Our children need to play and move during their 20 minute recess. This is important for so many reasons including their mental and physical health. There must be ways to use outside equipment and manipulatives that do not interfere with COVID protocols at school. Suggestions include soccer balls, jump ropes, sidewalk chalk, wall ball, kickball, walking/jogging groups, obstacle courses, etc. We must improve the quality of time that our children get outside and during academic break.</p> <p>AF: The Wellness Committee has noted this comment.</p>
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New Business

2020-21 Spend-Down Budget Approvals: we have approximately \$97,500 to spend down before May 21	<p>Slides attached.</p> <p>AMR: We'd like to give a snapshot of where we are budget-wise. This is the first update since February. We are still waiting for the final April numbers. As soon as Ms Kipp has them, I can update the slides.</p> <p>TK: No updated numbers.</p> <p>AMR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The money that has to be spent down by May 21 is what is in SBB. There is approximately \$105k. \$6k is restricted for teacher supply lines. About \$99k is available. The reason we have more available now is because of the comparability funds we received. Those transfers were made in February. ● There is also money in internal accounts and the Waters Today LSC allocation (approximately \$80k). ● Waters Today president updated that they are raising about 1/3 of what we raise in a typical year. ● Process. There are few limitations other than spending on capital expenditures. Bathroom repairs, etc. We've had a substantial amount of money left over two years in a row. It is partly due to comparability, but we also struggle with budget
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allocations. Next year's budget should be out any day now. We want to look through historical underspending/overspending to make sure we can be more accurate next year so we aren't left with a spend down.

KS: If we had not received comparability funds, where would we be?

LC: A lot of the things that we used comparability funds for were not things that were in the original budget - ½ arts teacher from 124 and extra homeroom teacher, funded by 124.

AMR: We can provide a hard number. The CPS deadline is May 21. After last year, we set a goal as a committee for May 7 for final approval.

- Regarding process, one piece I'd like to add today is about stakeholders. I'd like to bring up things that parents have brought up in recent years. Students should also be identified as stakeholders. Budgeting is cyclical. We should review this year's budget by planning for next year. We do monthly monitoring as a budget committee. Part of that process is forecasting, which Ms Kipp has been doing in terms of enrollment. Part of the budgeting mindset may be because of a lack of money in the past.
- Input from stakeholders - parents are interested in enriching the student experience. Pre-paying for 2021-22 consumables is important to the admin, as well as hiring a 6th essential teacher. For teachers, being ready for in-person and remote learning may be key.
- Waters vision/CIWP: The current mission statement may want to be updated, but is on the website. The CIWP priorities should dictate how we spend money.
- Principal Kipp has some requests from teachers about subscriptions, whiteboards, two smart boards and Wilson Foundations curriculum. Teacher PD has also been mentioned. That all adds up to about \$50k.
- Additional potential spend down priorities that have come up in LSC meetings, WT survey and budget committee meetings include library supplies, musical instruments, new band program (with vendor), new outdoor sign, take-home art kits for 4th quarter, extending nature playspace/basketball hoops.
- Personally, I'd love to see us spend for next year's consumables out of next year's budget so we can budget appropriately. It will make it easier to plan going forward. Instead of doing incremental approvals as they come through, I'd love to see us think through this process and come up with

the whole plan to approve at once that would hopefully meet all the stakeholder needs.

LC: In February when we had the comparability but hadn't moved it. We had \$111k. We moved \$30 to copier/RAS. We'd still be at around \$80k without the comparability funds.

LMS: I want to underline something that Alison said about approving things as a whole rather than piecemeal. We also need to keep in mind that our budget decisions need to be aligned with CIWP priorities and the mission of the school.

TK: This is the first time I'm seeing these slides. We are looking at some PD opportunities. We've been doing a lot of PD with arts staff this year. Looking at ways to further develop the drama classroom is another possibility. The K-8 music program and what a band program would look like at Waters. The arts kits were a suggestion. I will share in my principal's report about what has taken place and how easy it would be to put these things together. Working on getting final numbers and feedback from CPS on any negatives that may still be outstanding.

Re PD, staff have been working on DOK (Depths of Knowledge) and the level of rigor in the classrooms, providing some support - possibly year-long (5 days throughout the year) where staff can further develop DOK. We are doing it at some levels, but not at the level we'd like to see.

LMS: What is the cost of the PD?

TK: Still finalizing details. It would be \$20k - \$25k.

KS: The thing that people aren't addressing is that the budget process with CPS can be maddening. You can end up making a plan, and then they change the formula in the middle of things. It's really hard to plan for that, and that is not captured. It's not anyone's fault. It's the process in CPS. Regarding transparency, teachers need to be stakeholders as well and see where needs intersect. Regarding spending incrementally, that's the nature of the beast. We should celebrate the flexibility we had to hire staff and adapt to remote learning.

AMR: The idea isn't to be more rigid, it's to use historical data to plan better.

KS: If we purchase instruments, I have questions regarding making sure instruments stay at school and aren't being used for other things. We would need to protect our investment.

AF: One point of clarification - you mentioned there would be a process of spending this down. Are you requesting that?

AMR: I'm requesting we create a process of reviewing the CIWP, stakeholder needs. None of the needs on the agenda are urgent. Let's review everything and come up with one main proposal.

AF: I echo what Lydia said before about aligning budget with CIWP. I'm concerned about the first two CIWP priorities, and I want to make sure our budget reflects on that.

SL: I'd like to respond to some of Ms Soto's points. CPS budgeting is difficult. I have knowledge of some other schools in the neighborhood that seem to not have as big a problem with a spend down as we do. It's disappointing to be in this position again. Regarding the flexibility to spend money on the pandemic, I disagree. The previous LSC allocated money for remote learning supplies, most of which was not spent. I don't think we did a good job of being flexible. Art kits are a wonderful idea, and would have been a wonderful idea in September.

KS: CPS gave us money for technology, so we didn't end up using it.

SL: We're focusing on the \$100k of SBB that's remaining, and that's appropriate because it has to be spent in a short timeframe. There is also a lot of money in 124 and WT. We kept money there intentionally. The WT money was raised last year with the intention of spending it this year.

GFR: We have about \$99.5k to spend now. I have two questions for Ms Kipp. Alison mentioned things that should be in next year's budget. If we spend money on these items now, what does that allow us to do in next year's budget?

TK: I'm a little confused by that question.

GFR: Some items like subscriptions would normally be in next year's budget. Since you asked for these things, what will that allow us to do with next year's budget? The second question is if we approve this, we still have roughly \$50k to spend. We can't vote on anything tonight. What is the process by which you are going to determine what to spend that \$50k on?

TK: We don't know what next year's budget is going to be. Many schools have money at the end of the year for replenishing for the next year. If we purchase these items now, we won't have to put them in the FY22 budget. This is something we've been doing. Maybe we have to change that process. We have a short timeframe. One thing we spoke about in the budget meeting is creating a blackbox theatre space in the drama classroom. Purchasing a portable stage, lighting and other materials - I'm talking to the fine arts dept. We've already ordered keyboards for the music program. We could potentially purchase guitars. We have some, but could replenish/update. We could have ukuleles, etc to expand the music program in the upper grades.

IXL is used for MTSS tier 1 and tier 2. White boards and Promethean boards are classroom enhancements. Ms Booczko is trained in Wilson Foundations and wants to pilot in all K-2 grade levels. There could be a professional development for teachers who want to pilot.

LC: Something that could be a rush is art kits. Professional development for next year isn't something we should be spending money on now. Art kits we could get to kids in time. Instruments take a bit more research and thought. Art kits could be approved tonight.

GFR: Do we know what the art kits are tonight?

TK: There is not. There were some parent suggestions.

Ron: I think the Wilson curriculum is great and something to spend money on. The budget is related to the CIWP. I don't see much leadership from you, Ms Kipp on how to spend this money. We have talked about coming up with a vision for the new spaces. We need to hear your vision.

TK: One of the things I just mentioned with the PD is something I would love to see happen with our staff. The fact that we have this money available, we would kick it off with the last day of school that the teachers have in the building. This would give the teachers the summer to think about the year ahead. There would be additional PD in August. The outcome would be more rigorous student experiences in the classroom.

KS: Teacher PD is closely tied to anything we want to do for the next school year. It makes sense to allocate some money even if we don't have a hard number. Personally, Ms Kipp, you're a better person than I am. I would have been hurt if I'd heard what Ron said. What I hear is that you want to have things for the theatre program. It's insulting to

say there is a lack of leadership. There is nothing we've wanted this year that we haven't gotten.

SL: Regarding the theatre space and PD, those aren't in the official ask. Why not? This money has to be spent within a month. Our goal is to spend it within the next two weeks. Why don't we have that plan here? Those are both very reasonable things to do. Regarding the PD, who is the provider and what is the specific focus?

TK: Lead 180 is the company. I was in contact with the consultant yesterday. I can have them present to the council on the work that would be taking place. The theatre space came from conversations with the arts department.

GFR: Of the items on the list, would the white boards or Promethean boards be available to be used this school year?

TK: Yes. That is the goal.

AMR: I added the blackbox theatre room to the spend opportunities. I put \$20k as a ballpark. One thing I didn't mention in the presentation is that I'm concerned about our parent community not engaging with the school like they used to. When we talk about these requests from parents, I feel like as an LSC we need to do something meaningful to try to get our parent community back with us. White boards are great. If they're really needed, they can come out of next year's budget. The art kits are the only things that would impact students this year.

TK: Basketball hoops were spoken about - we bought those in last year's spend down. We have portable basketball hoops at school.

GFR: Do we want to vote on the items that are on the agenda? Total? Line item? Or push this, along with a discussion with other potential items to a future meeting? This year's spend down seems interconnected with next year's budget. What is the process by which we prioritize the list and present to the LSC?

TK: Something I was going to bring up in my principal report, we are anticipating budgets tomorrow. That may change the direction of this.

AF: Since so many members have expressed concern, can Ms Kipp and some LSC members come up with a table that connects this list with CIWP priorities and maybe a traffic light priority. That will allow us to see very quickly.

GFR: Knowing that we may get the budget tomorrow, we shouldn't make any decisions tonight. It would be great to hear from experts

about how these will fit into our curriculum. I'd ask you, Ms Kipp, and members of the budget committee to work on this as quickly as possible.

TK: The benefit to approving white boards and Promethean boards is that the sooner we have the approval, the sooner we can put the orders in. This is replacing chalkboards and space in classrooms that has not been taken care of over the years.

Ron: I move to put the white boards, Promethean boards and Wilson curriculum on the table for a vote.

White boards): ~\$16k

Promethean Boards (x3): ~\$4,400

Wilson Foundations Curriculum Programming: \$3101.20

KS: Second

Discussion:

LC: Are white boards useful this year with hybrid learning?

TK: Yes.

AMR: We only started hearing about white boards last month. I don't see it as urgent.

TK: The white boards are not computerized - they're regular white boards.

LMS: You mentioned in the budget meeting that the need for promethean boards was in order to make middle school rooms equitable. But you also mentioned that all of the rooms in the new annex have Promethean boards. Is there a way to move homerooms to the rooms that already have Promethean boards rather than have third grade classrooms with Promethean boards?

TK: It's a strategic workflow to have 7th and 8th grade on the third floor. There are two sixth grade classrooms without Promethean boards.

MB: The Promethean panels are really helpful for hybrid teaching. Can project material to in-person and remote students at the same time. I think we should spend the money for two of them to fill up the middle school.

GFR: Can either teacher speak to the need for white boards?

KS: If white boards are cracked, it makes it difficult for students at home to see. White boards can be written on and projected on.

SL: I didn't completely follow the response about classrooms that have Promethean boards. Is the current classroom configuration going to remain?

TK: The goal is not to have the middle school all in the main building. We try to have older students on the top floor. There is not a plan to realign the classrooms.

SL: Would the wilson curriculum be used this year?

	<p>TK: The teacher has requested them because she has completed the training. We could utilize the material as soon as it's ordered.</p> <p>MW: In Pod A and B, we have over 270 students per pod. The number of students in each room who need to view the board is there. We had a huge influx of students in Q4.</p> <p>TK: 74% of students are back at Waters in Q4. 160 students are still fully remote.</p> <p>GFR: The level of information we've received in the last 30 minutes about the need for these items, the utility, as well as the fact that the budget is coming out tomorrow - if we'd had all of this information in advance of the meeting, this would have been much smoother.</p> <p>Vote: LC: Yes GFR: Yes Ron: Yes SL: Yes LMS: Yes AMR: Abstain Raha: Yes AF: Yes MW: Yes MB: Yes KS: Yes TK: Yes</p> <p>Motion passed.</p> <p>GFR: Let's find a way to quickly gather that information. Ms Kipp, please let us know as soon as possible if the FY22 budget comes in tomorrow.</p>
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Reports

Principal Report	<p>I'd like to share something that happened between a student and a teacher that demonstrates the importance of in-person learning. Showed a student art project. We wanted to make sure "most marginalized" students are able to come four days a week. Teachers also identified students who have been struggling with grades or SEL to be in school four days per week.</p> <p>The capital project is underway for the PreK classroom. PreK registration opens tomorrow. It happens centrally, not at the school. Info will be posted on the website. Kindergarten registration begins Monday, 4/26.</p>
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There is a BAC presentation Monday night.

We've been working with the Fine Arts department. Our Fine Arts staff have been attending PD throughout the year. Thank you to Waters Today to continue to support our requests that come in. With movement of staff in our middle school, based on requests from teachers for carts to wheel their belongings from classroom to classroom have been helpful.

Our last flex day was spent working on the CIWP progress monitoring report that we are preparing for the 30-week presentation in June. Ms Ballasch and Ms Aguilar helped to teacher-lead that entire experience.

We will have a staff meeting to discuss the use of 316, and then we will have a community meeting to gather input on that space. We will also send out the return to Waters survey. There is concern about families leaving Waters and leaving CPS.

Earlier in the spring we had Ms Smallwood who came in as a teacher cadre. She is working in 6th grade. She replaced Ms Carney, who changed from going to law school to becoming a teacher. She is student teaching at Waters now. I sent letters to all the families who were affected. Ms Paparodopolous, who is working remotely, has moved into teaching 5th grade. She has worked with the current 5th graders when they were in 3rd grade. This info was sent to parents who were directly impacted.

AMR: Is kindergarten registration the same as previous years?
Parents go to the office?

TK: Yes. We have the packets ready.

SL: I am glad you mentioned publicly that you were identifying kids who needed four days in-person. You mentioned a possible community meeting for 316. Is there a tentative date?

TK: Given the budget, I want to make sure our LSC members are able to attend.

SL: That issue is bound up with the budget. It's critically important that we have that conversation. Has a dedicated ELPT teacher been hired?

TK: We have selected somebody. We are moving forward on hiring very shortly.

	<p>SL: Is tutoring program in progress?</p> <p>TK: Yes. We are recruiting staff to do the tutoring.</p> <p>SL: Has any tutoring taken place?</p> <p>TK: Not yet.</p> <p>SL: What's the breakdown of teachers who are currently remote vs in person?</p> <p>TK: I believe there are four teachers and two assistant teachers who are remote. The rest of the staff is back in person.</p> <p>LMS: Did the CIWP meeting that happened on last week's flex day include LSC members?</p> <p>MB: We are gathering evidence to bring to the CIWP Committee, and then present to the LSC. The work we did with teachers was more evidence-based.</p> <p>LMS: Is there a CIWP committee meeting scheduled?</p> <p>MB: Yes.</p> <p>GFR: I think it's a missed opportunity for us to be talking after the fact about allowing certain students to come back four days a week. I think it's important for the entire community to understand the process. We received emails from parents supporting the decision but questioning the lack of transparency.</p> <p>AMR: I found out from one of my kids about some kids being able to go four days a week. I agree, but I was surprised. One of my children has fallen behind and no one reached out to me. It surprised me.</p> <p>KS: CPS changed the goal posts for the students we were allowed to bring in four days per week. We had to prioritize certain students. I wanted to commend the community coming together and helping support all of our students. I think it's a really good thing.</p>
PPLC Report	<p>MB: We determined that this is not a high priority for this year. We will plan to get it up and running the first week back in the fall.</p>
Facilities and Grounds Committee	<p>No update.</p>

<p>CIWP Committee</p>	<p>GFR: We heard earlier there is a committee meeting planned. There is a 30-week update planned for June.</p>
<p>Facilities and Grounds</p>	<p>AMR: The playspace is finished. Punch list items are the next thing. I need to follow up on him with that. Some parents had an idea to have a grand opening ceremony in the fall? It could be a fundraiser as well.</p> <p>TK: Perhaps we could combine it with a ribbon cutting for the new building. We're not able to do it right now due to covid restrictions.</p> <p>AMR: Are there still CPS restrictions on playground use?</p> <p>TK: I have seen children in the nature play space and using chalk. It's not to the level of what we've had in the past.</p> <p>AMR: Regarding Ms Goldstein's comment earlier, there's nothing we can do?</p> <p>TK: Until CPS lifts those mandates, we have to comply with what we've been directed to do.</p> <p>LMS: Are we fully staffed with Right at School?</p> <p>TK: We are up to four. There is still one more.</p>
<p>Principal Evaluation Committee</p>	<p>SL: The survey is open until Friday. Teachers and staff received their version of the survey from Ms Soto and Ms Ballasch. The committee met on April 6 to discuss the survey, evidence gathering, and the process. I sent an email to the LSC regarding that process. I asked committee chairs to submit documentation or a statement that you'd like added to the evidence. We'd like to conclude evidence gathering by a week from today. We will summarize for the full council. The full LSC will get a Google Form survey that asks you to do the numeric ratings and provide commentary per the rubric. Those results will form the basis of the full LSC's meeting to create the principal evaluation There will be a special meeting for that. We need to discuss the date for that meeting. I'd like to set the date if we can.</p> <p>Meeting date Thursday, May 13 5:30pm.</p> <p>The goal would be to have a public vote at the regular meeting on Tuesday, May 18.</p> <p>AMR: How many responses have you had for the survey?</p>

	<p>SL: We currently have 143 responses to the parent survey and 18 responses to the teacher survey. There will be a reminder in Green Notes and I posted to Facebook this week. Classroom teachers should remind parents at conferences tomorrow.</p>
<p>Fine and Performing Arts Committee Update</p>	<p>LMS: The Fine and Performing Arts Committee met on April 8. We welcomed Julia deBettencourt and Christine Rudy-Reed from the CPS Office of Arts Education to go over their new initiatives based around the Standards for Success. It was a great meeting and we covered a lot, including the Arts Leadership Team, the survey that Waters conducted in the fall of all the arts programs, arts integration, arts spaces at Waters and arts partnerships. We are looking forward to working with Ms Vecchioni (as the Magnet Cluster Lead Teacher) and the rest of the Fine and Performing Arts team to work on the first step recommended in the meeting, which is to craft a mission and vision for the Fine and Performing Arts at Waters.</p> <p>GFR: Given the commentary earlier about the importance of trying to figure out room 316, would it make sense in terms of scheduling a survey for community members in order to get feedback quickly so we can have it before we have to make budgetary decisions?</p> <p>Ron: I support this idea. We just need direction on what questions need to be asked.</p> <p>LMS: This has been a bit of a moving target. The Fine and Performing Arts Committee was interested in this issue of space (316 and 108), but Ms Kipp moved it to the Facilities and Grounds Committee. That committee hasn't met. So it's a bit of a moving target.</p> <p>GFR: Can Lydia and Ron come up with ideas for survey questions and communicate them to Ms Kipp?</p>
<p>Bylaws Committee</p>	<p>I sent Bylaws off to LSCR. I got an update that the legal dept has them but is swamped. So we are waiting for them.</p>
<p>Wellness Committee</p>	<p>The Wellness Committee will meet April 26. The agenda will be posted soon.</p>

Public Comment

<p>Carolyn Dean</p>	<p>Thank you to the whole LSC for helping to solidify the budget & spend down. Appreciate the consideration of the stakeholders past suggestions to complement & enhance the Waters experience. It's good to see a plan for how to spend both district and</p>
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	community-raised money, with hopefully more detail at the next meeting.
Ms Aguilar	Regarding the budget conversation, as a stakeholder from the teacher perspective, it's frustrating to see the discussion going back and forth with things that will make my teaching better. These are things I'm using. Even with the professional development. It's frustrating that this will help me, whether it comes from this year's or next year's budget. It will help me prepare for instruction. I don't think it's fair to say we're not listening to stakeholders. For example, the nature playspace was a parent generated project.
Ms Booczko	<p>I was very excited to see so many kids back at school yesterday. While I don't question your personal motives or thoughts, from this meeting tonight, my heart is aching. I am concerned.</p> <p>SL: I want to engage with those last two comments. I understand the frustration. Please understand that I feel the same way. I don't want to be in a position where we are in a crisis trying to spend six figures at the end of the year. I want that money spent in your classrooms in September, not May. We want the school to have what it needs. We have the same goal here.</p>
Ms Kipp	I want to reiterate that we didn't have this money going into the school year. This money came to us in January or February. I, along with my staff, my AP, have been working very, very hard. We have focused on the reopening. We have focused on trying to make the best possible environment for the children that we serve.
Ms Alvarez	I want to follow up with Ms Kipp's comment. This has not been an ideal year. We could not have ordered these things in September. We were not in a position to make art kits.
Mr Williams	Teachers were not even in the building until March. To know what we could spend in September when the building was still being built, we need to remember it's been very challenging.
Ms Aguilar	I wanted to note at the end of last year and the beginning of this year, our focus was what do we need for remote learning? I'm in March, I still don't know exactly what I need. I'm trying to figure out day by day.
GFR	I want to acknowledge the concerns of the LSC members. We have not always had an easy budgeting process. I also appreciate the perspective of teachers. It was useful to have that perspective about

	the white boards. It would have been useful to have had that in advance of the meeting.
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Actions

Adjourn Meeting	Motion: AF Second: GFR Unanimous Approval
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Action Items

Action Item	Owner	Date
Hold staff meeting re Room 316	TK	

Next Meeting Date & Time	Regular Meeting Tuesday, May 18 6:30pm
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