

School Leadership Team PS 144Q
Minutes for May 27, 2011

Present: Barbara Martin, Martha Mayorga, Michelle Montaquiza, Elizabeth Schneider, Amy Weiss, Lois Olshan, Reva Schneider, Liz Morrow, Tricia Kampton, Jeanne Kwok, Lisa Brody, Stefanie Ameres, Kathryn Thome Not Present: Eric Bergerson

Agenda: “Bomb Bags” and other inappropriate toys in the yard and lunchroom, Departmentalization update for next year, Common Core Standards and the CEP, Recap of music, Class size, Clusters, Minutes, Timesheets.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 am

“Bomb Bags” – Ms. Schneider will make an announcement at the fire drill today telling the students Bomb Bags and similar toys are banned from the playground. They are making a mess on the playground and on the packages it says they are for children 14 and older. The 5th graders presented a petition to Ms. Schneider asking for trading cards and iPods to be allowed in school. While they expressed themselves very well, the request was denied.

Departmentalization update – Ms. Schneider is considering not having classes switch teachers for next year. It is still unclear what the configuration for classes is for next year. Some discussion about departmentalization occurred. Some members expressed interest in “buddy teachers” and some were opposed. Ms. Schneider will make the decision about this issue.

Chancellor Walcott is meeting with PA presidents and parent coordinators next Monday and principals in June.

Common Core Standards and CEP – The Common Core Standards will allow parents to know specifically what is covered in each grade. There are pre-K standards now as well. There are many new books in the building that will align with the new Common Core Standards. The support network PS 144 is part of will provide 30-40 days of substitutes so teachers can receive training in the new standards. Many excellent trainers will be coming to the school to provide professional development to the teachers. All study units will be aligned with the Common Core Standards and the training will aid teachers to go deeper into the areas of study. There has been work done about the informational continuum, describing levels of proficiency in students’ work, what to look for and how to help students move forward. Clusters and training from Teachers College will also align with the Common Core Standards. PS 144 has already made progress this year in working on the Common Core Standards in classrooms, with learning going deeper into a subject, rather than covering lots of different areas more superficially. The Common Core Standards will be reflected in the Comprehensive Education Plan for the school when it is updated in the fall. Statewide testing and the test scores will relate to the Common Core Standards.

The following was distributed by Ms. Schneider prior to the SLT meeting:

Selected Common Core Standards

To focus our efforts on critical college and career ready skills, we have strategically selected standards at every grade level. The authors of the Common Core helped guide our selection. To view the full Common Core Learning standards, visit: http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/common_core_standards/.

Selected Common Core Standards in Literacy

Grade Band Literacy Focus:

Pre-K-2

Written response to informational texts through group activities and with prompting and support (Reading Informational Text Standards 1 and 10; Writing Standard 2)

3-8

Written analysis of informational texts (Reading Informational Text Standards 1 and 10) OR Written opinion or argument based on an analysis of informational texts (Reading Informational Text Standards 1 and 10; Writing Standard 1)

Rationale:

The authors of the Common Core standards have pointed to the issues of text complexity in informational text and making an argument based on those texts as the key challenges in the Common Core. We need to begin exposing our students to this type of task, and supporting them accordingly, in a staircase fashion moving up through the grade levels.

Selected Common Core Standards in Mathematics

Grade Band Standard of Practice Domain of Focus:

Pre-K

Model with Mathematics AND Operations and Algebraic Thinking

K-2

Number and Operations in Base Ten

3-5

Number and Operations-Fractions

Rationale:

Research on math learning and analysis of the practices of high-performing countries show that focusing on certain key concepts and developing fluency related to problem-solving provides a foundation for mastering algebra and becoming college and career ready. Modeling is what real mathematicians do: using mathematics to represent and solve authentic problems in our society and the world.

Music Department – Ms. Weiss, Ms. Kampton and Ms. Kwok reviewed the arts core curriculum and made the following recommendation – There is a need to have the music department better integrated with the curriculum. Some suggestions for doing this would be to have the music department meet with the different grade teachers to learn what topics were being covered and doing music instruction based on the areas of study. For example, music from colonial America could be the focus of the music curriculum when that area is being studied. Also, there are percussion instruments in the building and they could be better utilized within the music curriculum.

Ms. Olshan shared that PS 144 is being considered for a grant for music education for grades 3-5. Educators will help develop the program.

Class Size – According to DOE and UFT guidelines, kindergarten class size can go as high as 28. It generally does not go above 25 due to a previous agreement with the UFT. From first grade on, class size can be up to 32 students. In an “emergency”, as determined by DOE, class sizes can be even higher. Once a class size is over the limit, the UFT files a grievance and, hopefully, the class size is reduced. The budget is what dictates class size. If there is the money in the budget, Ms. Schneider wants to create a new incoming 4th grade class.

Clusters – No final decisions have been made regarding what clusters will be in place for next year. It is possible that there will be a lower grade computer cluster or a science cluster. The number of classes in the school is what determines how many clusters are needed. Each teacher is entitled to one prep period a day plus lunch period. The clusters are what provide coverage for the prep periods.

Minutes – Lisa Brody apologized for not being timely with the minutes. She will email the outstanding minutes to SLT members.

Timesheets for SLT – Must be completed and handed into Ms. Weiss as soon as possible.

Next meeting – June 17th at 7:00 am in the Library.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 am.

Addendum – At Ms. Schneider’s request, the June 17th meeting was moved to June 10th at 7:00 am in the library.