



The 30th Avenue School (Q300)

Elementary Campus

28-37 29th Street, 4th Floor, Astoria, NY 11102

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Middle School Campus

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www.Q300.org

Vasilios Biniaris, Principal

**School Leadership Team Meeting
December 18, 2017
Meeting Minutes**

Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Vasilios Biniaris, Principal

Elijah Cho, Teacher

Sarah Duer, Teacher

Ali Lisberger, UFT Rep

Alex Lunz, Teacher

Jennifer Choi, Parent,

Mara Cusker Gonzalez, Parent

Maria Hantzopoulos, PTA Co President

Monica Mohan, Parent

Review and approval of November 20, 2017 minutes.

PTA/Parent Report (Maria)

- The ongoing Direct Appeal has raised \$120,000 so far this year.
- Other recent fundraising events included the Thanksgiving pie sale (125 sold) and a movie fundraiser that raised \$300 for backpacks and school supplies for a school in Puerto Rico impacted by the hurricane.
- One School Committee's efforts: A contingent of Q300 parents attended last week's Community District Education Counsel (CEC) meeting to express support for the one school initiative. Representatives of the DOE's Office of Space Planning were also there, and it appears that the Q300 initiative is on the borough's radar. There is a need to find a lot with a 15,000 square foot footprint.
- Upcoming events: holiday breakfast for teachers on December 22; annual Winterfest International Potluck on January 26; spring auction and gala (committee is forming).



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- A group of parents is hard at work vetting potential enrichment programs, including technology and Spanish for the elementary school and art and music programs for the middle school. Planned PTA-funded enrichment programs also include a video production (digital yearbook) class for 8th graders.
- PTA is also funding Responsive Classroom training for teachers, including summer options.

Principal's Report (Bill)

- Update on middle school ICT teacher vacancy: Bill is continuing to evaluate applicants and work to fill the vacancy. He offered the position to a candidate but the candidate's current school did not release him. While the hope was to have any transition take place before January 15, Bill will consider continuing to look for applicants beyond that date.
- Spanish in the elementary school: Bill is considering bringing in an outside 20-week program. The PTA voted to contribute \$15,000 and the school would contribute \$21,000. Will need to figure out staffing and schedule.
- Sarah, Anna, and Bill recently attended a District 30 program on the Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) developed by Joseph Renzulli.
 - Sarah explained that the SEM program and philosophy focuses on giving students opportunities to investigate their own interests through self-directed learning with teacher guides. Sarah implemented something similar in 2nd grade last year with an "interest clubs" project. The approach fosters independent and motivated learners.
 - There is interest integrating SEM with Q300's model. Service learning projects and the middle school interest clubs and advisory program offer other opportunities to explore personal enrichment. Elijah explained that in advisory, for example, students are identifying an interest and goal, taking a baseline assessment, researching how to reach the goal, making and implementing a plan, and presenting the results.



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- Bill and teachers are evaluating how to improve the parent-teacher conference scheduling/reservation system. There were difficulties using the youcanbook.me online reservation system for middle school appointments because of the large number of students for each teacher. Bill is looking for ideas.
- There was discussion of how middle school teachers are adapting to having a substitute rather than an ICT teacher in the classroom. There is value to the teacher and students of having continuity with the substitute, but collaboration is difficult.
- There was a discussion about the value of differentiation and a suggestion for additional professional development and training on differentiation. One challenge is fitting planning and professional development into the schedule but there are also opportunities to use in-house knowledge and turnkeying.

Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) and Goals Review and Subgroups

- The group discussed the need to incorporate Q300's core values into the ongoing review and revision of the CEP goals and action plans. In the past, the SLT has done this by breaking into Core Value Groups (Inquiry, Inclusion, Responsibility).
- The group agreed to try a different approach and broke into groups based on the five areas of CEP goals: Supportive Environment, Rigorous Instruction, Collaborative Teachers, Effective School Leadership, and Strong Family-Community Ties.
- Each subgroup reviewed the current CEP goals and action plans for its area and identified potential revisions and potential new goals for the next CEP.
- The full group reconvened and several subgroups reported on their discussions.
 - **Rigorous Instruction:** The current 2017-18 goal relates to teachers employing differentiated tasks and multiple entry points in their instruction. The subgroup identified a need for more research and professional development on differentiation, including through teachers teaching one another. Bill described a classroom intervisitation program that is underway and is focused on evaluating alignment of student work with the instructional objective.



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- o **Rigorous Instruction (cont'd):** Bill explained that the classroom intervisitation program is not intended to be an evaluation process but a way to collect information and identify needs.
- o **Supportive Environment:** The current goal is to have 100% of teachers participate in social and emotional learning (SEL) professional development (Responsive Classroom and/or Sanford Harmony). Alex conducted a survey of teachers on professional development and identified opportunities for teacher-led professional development, with a tentative schedule in the works for the second half of the school year. The group also discussed opportunities to educate parents about SEL, such as by bringing Sanford Harmony in to do a workshop before a PTA meeting and having Erica Ball present to parents on SEL at the May engagement night. Student surveys are another SEL tool that should provide information about school culture. The subgroup will work on preparing student surveys to send out as early as February.
- o **Collaborative Teachers:** The current goal is to have 100% of teachers receive at least one period of scheduled collaboration/common planning time each week. The subgroup identified one potential addition or modification, involving vertical planning based on subject, e.g., 3rd and 4th grade math teachers collaborating (instead of 3d grade math and 3d grade ELA teacher). An online tool like a Google forum may be helpful to identify what common planning is already happening and where there are gaps and to help with scheduling. Peer visitation is also helpful and should happen at least once a year.

UFT Report: No report.

Remuneration logs completed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.