

Q300

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K-8 Citywide Gifted and Talented School

Principal, I.A. | Sonita Ramkishun
Assistant Principal | Anna Milonakis

School Leadership Team Meeting
January 13, 2020
Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order at 5:17 pm

Members Present

Ali Lisberger
Sonita Ramkishun
Maria Panagiotakis
Kiera Sullivan
Chidi Amasiani
LaShawna Harris
Sara Clough
Laura Marks
Raj Jimenez-Jailall
Milko Milkov

Observers: Jenny Lando, Anna Milonakis, David Wang, Lynn Kennedy

Review and Approval of Minutes from December 16, 2019

Motion to Approve with changes for November

Maria Panagiotakis
Second Laura Marks

Principal's Report

Sonita met with Bill for about 5 to 6 full days to help with the transition. Some discussions included: connecting her to the DOE support staff at central, getting access to DOE systems, discussing past, current, and foreseeable school-wide issues and foreseeable parent concerns, safety protocols, permits, PTA communications, principals flow of the day, etc.

Sonita went over her updated administration responsibilities which include curriculum, supervision and community relations. She will also be responsible for third grade, math

and science (grades 4-8), K-8 gifted and talented instruction and professional development, arts and enrichment, safety and foreign language.

Anna will be responsible for early childhood (grades K-2), ELA and social studies (grades 4-8), K-8 special education and professional development, language acquisition, wellness and assessment.

As per district space planning, we will only have two 6th grade classes in the 2020-2021 school year. Sonita is currently awaiting the adjusted projections. She will be in contact with Matthew Broggini who manages MS student enrollment.

Sonita will contact Daniel Hildreth from the Office of student enrollment to request guidelines for the diversity proposal. She will share a draft copy of the proposal with the SLT at the February meeting for review. At that time, members will vote on whether or not they agree with the proposal. Sonita's draft proposal will reflect conversations had at the October 29, 2019 SLT meeting where group members concurred that it makes sense to focus on outreach to the NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA) in District 30 and housing shelters as well as in districts 4 and 5. The Committee also agreed that it would like to aim to prioritize 40% of its incoming K seats for underserved students. All but one member is in agreement with this percentage of seats. They feel 40% is too high and could jeopardize the ranking of the school. A conversation ensued about doing what's in the best interest of the community which includes increasing diversity within our school. Members also discussed ways to share the diversity plan with the entire Q300 community so there is transparency about what we're doing and thinking.

The diversity proposal must be submitted by March 1st but we should aim to submit it earlier.

Upcoming events include:

- January 17: Enrichment Showcase @ Lower Division
- January 17: 2nd marking period ends (K-8)
- January 20: Martin Luther King Jr. Day- No School
- January 28: Report cards will be sent home (K-8)

Parent Report

A resolution to form a principal outreach committee was passed at last PTA meeting and the PTA has worked with District Superintendent, Dr. Composto, to work within DOE

outreach recommendations as per outreach Notices and C30 process to create a robust principal pool.

The next PTA meeting is scheduled for January 23, 6:15pm at our LD where they will include a brief presentation by Arts Connection as per upcoming enrichment cycle as well as an election for Co-VP of Fundraising.

The PTA is excited to participate in celebrating the upcoming Arts Showcase in the LD, January 17. These enrichments have been funded by the PTA.

January 31 is the annual International potluck at the LD. Alumni have been invited. All are welcome to enjoy treats and activities representing our schools multicultural community.

The PTA library committee is committed to helping the school in continuing to evaluate its selections and supporting the school toward finding ways to have comprehensive materials on hand.

The PTA would like to remind teachers that they have a \$500 wishlist fund from the PTA If needed and have not used yet.

UFT Report

Teachers and staff got together for a farewell celebration for Bill on January 8, 2020. Well wishes and kind words were shared.

As far as criteria for the principal position, any candidate who is being considered should have a few years of experience as an administrator --either as an AP or interim acting. Some feel it would also make sense to hire someone with middle school experience given that both AP's have elementary experience. While many would like improved communication and transparency, staff members are generally happy with how the school is run (e.g., curriculum, teacher assignments, advisory, electives, etc.) and don't want too many drastic changes.

There was a lot of talk after an email was sent out on January 6, 2020 by Dr. Composto indicating that parents are pushing for a former teacher to apply for the position. This caused anxiety and concern for some teachers who worked with him in the past. For the sake of transparency, many teachers indicated that they would leave Q300 if they got the position. We know that teacher retention is important to parents and wanted to share how folks are feeling.

Parents clarified that they are not pushing for any specific candidate, they are simply reaching out to as many candidates as possible to create a robust pool. Anyone who is

qualified can apply. At the last meeting, Dr. Composto indicated he would help out anyone who would be willing to apply.

SLT Membership Composition

According to the by laws, we are imbalanced and not in compliance with the Chancellor's Rights/Regulations. Anna can't be on by default, the two co-presidents (only 1 is allowed- one has to be voted in and they cannot alternate.

Lynn-observer/Milko-voted in).

Someone can always be an observer but cannot vote. When Chidi came on we were 6 and 6.

SLT Decision Making

The diversity proposal should be voted on how it was decided. We're agreeing to 40% of incoming kindergarteners for underserved students. Make a motion of incoming kindergarteners, NYCHA, district 30, housing and Districts 4 & 5, 97th percentile.

The committee also agreed that it would like to aim to prioritize 40% of its incoming K seats for underserved students. All but one member is in agreement with this percentage of seats. They feel 40% is too high and could jeopardize the ranking of the school. A conversation ensued about doing what's in the best interest of the community which includes increasing diversity within our school. Members also discussed ways to share the diversity plan with the entire Q300 community so there is transparency about what we're doing and thinking.

Sibling preference was brought up and we don't know who is 97 or 99 percentile. We need to challenge them and support them no matter what. Trying to offer opportunities for all kids and we're not lowering the bar.

Even if we allocate this percentage like Daniel mentioned, we may not see the diversity right away -- it's going to take time.

Principal Vacancy

The outreach committee is in the process of contacting a list that was purchased by a parent to help identify people out there. There are roughly 3,500 people who will be contacted. The whole goal of it is to increase the pool and make it a robust and even playing field. Anyone who is qualified can be a part of the process. Everything is on a schedule and so far we're working on it.

There is genuine and authentic work that is occurring amongst the parents and they are spending a lot of time on this. All with the intent that the teachers have trust and faith that everyone has the best intentions and there will be no favoritism. PTA is just responding to Dr. Composto's refrain and that there is not a large number of candidates. The parents did not invite candidates to apply, they are just trying to generate neutral

candidates, to help the children and what the school needs. We need stability and we don't want it to be a political process. We don't want a lot of turnover. If we put kids first, the rest will work out.

- We're in agreement that we want to post on the Q300 website as of February 3rd, as long as it's okay with Dr. Composto.
- Feb. 3 to Feb 18: This is when the principal vacancy will be posted. It will be posted for 2 weeks.
- There's a sub-committee that has been formed that asks for all feedback from parents, faculty and so on with the criteria that we want for the candidates (level 1 committee is who comes up with the questions). We have this criteria- to help accumulate what questions should be asked (qualities). All questions need to be the same across all the applicants. We want a candidate to move the vision and movement of the school, not to push people out based on their own ideologies.
- Teacher asked about the list of candidates that the PTA has purchased and who is making the outreach?
- Observer speaks: a parent purchased a list of assistant principals (AP) and principals (less than 3,000- dated/outdated) from a consulting firm where the applicants are located within a 40 mile radius and given among the parent volunteers. They are circulating a notice that was in the PTA bulletin. A number of parents on the committee have reached out to AP's and Principals. They have had very few bounce backs and more than half of them are open to applying. If the candidates who apply are not part of the pool, they should let the PTA know and they will get them in contact with the appropriate people. Dr. Composto has agreed to help get them along the way.
- The reason why the PTA purchased this list of available AP's and principals was to get the word out there and to notify qualified applicants in a broader way.
- When we get down to criteria for the applicants, we must be transparent and open of what it will look like.

We want to hear from the teachers.

- Teacher- candidates were underwhelming being on multiple c30 processes.
- Principal outreach committee will make an outreach to Dr. Composto to ask for openings in the candidate pool.
- IA principal, Sonita Ramkishun- also administration should have a say... they are going to be the ones to train the new candidate and things could easily change.
- As we think about criteria and forming questions around these ideas. What qualities are important?
- Level 1 Committee- Dr. Fahey will reach out to Lashawanna. But the questions are confidential, and therefore the administration will not be included in that.

Can the children in the student council advisory with Esteban be chosen a different way?

The children were picked based on classes and popularity and some kids feel left out that they didn't get a chance.

- Teacher- advisory would be a good place where they can conduct polls or create a survey to get the childrens' opinion. We should create a summary of what students thoughts are for the new principal candidate. Poll the teachers on this

job during advisory. All students should have a right to voice their opinion. There should be a dialogue amongst the children to discuss this.

- Could the teachers take notes while advisory is discussing these concerns? Ask UD teachers how they feel about this.

Parent- the first notice included most of the qualifications for the intended principal.

Mission of the school, etc.

- Confratute is the longest running summer institute on enrichment-based differentiated teaching held at the University of Connecticut for over 40 years! Confratute is geared toward providing educators with research-based practical strategies for engagement and enrichment learning for all students, as well as meeting the needs of gifted and talented students. In-depth Training in the Schoolwide Enrichment Model; Differentiating Instruction & Curriculum. Bill had sent out an email asking the staff who was interested for the summer about 2 months ago. Administration will follow up on this. This is the teacher's choice because contractually teachers do not have to attend any Summer professional developments.

Anna is present on the Wellness Committee.

CEP Goals 2019-2020

Draft of CEP Goals and Instructional Focus 2019-2020 (Chidi has requested to be apart of the CEP Committee)

Committee reports- 10 minutes of questions should be allocated towards this instead of actually going through the minutes.

Observers Questions/Comments:

David Wang, Lynn Kennedy, Jenny Lando

Next Steps:

Re-read all the goals and revisions for the next meeting to have a discussion. Potentially break into sub committees for example: progress monitoring (big focus- how goals are being met)

Bulk of agenda should be CEP goals

Meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.