

School Leadership Team Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Virtual Platform - Zoom
Wednesday, January 20, 2021
5:30 pm – 7.30 pm

Members in Attendance: Sonita Ramkishun (Principal), Ali Lisberger (SLT Timekeeper + UFT), Chidi Amasiani (Teacher), Kiera Sullivan (SLT Chairperson + Teacher), Jean Kim (Teacher), Maria Hantzopoulos (PTA Co-President), Sara Clough (Parent), Sue Sekar (SLT Secretary + Parent, joined at 6pm), Ian Koh (Parent), Fiona Yung (Parent)

Observers: Anna Milonakis (Assistant Principal)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5.37pm.

2. Review and approval of December 16, 2020 SLT meeting minutes

The draft meeting minutes from December 2020 had been shared in advance. A motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded. All were in favor; none abstained.

The approved minutes will be published on the school and PTA websites.

3. NY Edge Presentation

The Chairperson (Kiera) gave permission for an external speaker from NY Edge to present to the SLT.

NY Edge is the largest school-based after school program in NYC. They focus on servicing under-served students with academic support, visual arts and physical education.

Programs offered for remote attendees include academic support, STEAM, Food Explorers, Literacy specialists, Power Play (classes for girls, to build confidence) and Champions Circle (students talk about their day and play games).

Programs offered for in-person attendees include Visual arts, Mixed Martial arts, Health screenings, Restorative circles and Movement (exercise).

The program is on Tuesdays to Fridays, from 2.30-4.30pm. They offer \$25 gift card prizes for high attendance. There are open spaces – families can contact them with questions or to enroll at ps17Q@newyorkedge.org.

4. Kids Rise Presentation

The Chairperson (Kiera) gave permission for Debra Allen, Executive Director at Kids Rise, to present to the SLT.

Kids Rise has been working with Q300 to create college savings accounts for our K-3rd grade students and families. They are very grateful to Sonita for her leadership and for embracing the program for Q300 and to Jenny for driving the program at the school.

There are 225 Q300 students enrolled in the program, and 122 families who have not yet activated their account, but they can do so this month.

They are making a special push for Kindergarten families to join and Fiona offered to share with Kindergarten families as well as third grade.

5. Kindergarten blended learning model – moving to 5 days a week

The school has developed a plan to bring blended Kindergarten students back 5 days a week, with PS17 providing us access to additional space on the third floor to make this work. A long-term sub from 2nd grade will move into Kindergarten. The goal start date for implementation will be March 1st. The 5 day model is only possible with the number of blended students at present and will not be sustained if the number of blended students increases should there be another open enrollment period.

6. Changes Announced to G&T Admissions

The SLT members shared facts that they are aware of (each from different members):

- a. The Mayor has announced that this will be the last year for G&T testing.
- b. According to the Mayor at his press conference, the plan is to take this coming year and determine what is the approach, which is not a singular high stakes test. He said he would unveil this by September 2021.
- c. The DOE put together a School Diversity Action Group (SDAG) Committee that developed a report last year which called for the phasing out of gifted education.
- d. The SDAG report suggested all schools adopt SEM (school wide enrichment models), something Q300 already does.

- e. Registration for upcoming testing will start in April, and testing will take place over the summer.
- f. This topic has been discussed for many years.
- g. The Mayor has promised intense public engagement with multiple stakeholders, including parents and educators, with the findings expected to be released in September.
- h. Current students already enrolled in gifted programs will finish their elementary school experience, according to the press.
- i. No official statement from the DOE has been given to schools.

The group also shared their open questions (each of these from different members):

- j. What will this look like for Q300 if there are no gifted programs in the future?
- k. What will this look like for Q300 if the admissions criteria is changed?
- l. What will be the fate of the various Citywide and District programs?
- m. How will this impact families with younger siblings hoping to come into the school? Will there still be sibling priority?
- n. How will this impact the Q300 Middle School?
- o. Since Q300 has two locations, will the DOE even want to maintain Q300 as a school?
- p. What will the admissions process look like going forward?
- q. Could there be an increased number of G&T seats available in the future?
- r. Will we even have G&T programs in the future, or will there be a focus on improving learning environments for all schools?
- s. How will G&T families and communities be involved in the process and when will schools be engaged and communicated with?
- t. What will happen when a new Mayor comes in?
- u. Will the Diversity Initiative proposal be applied in the upcoming testing period?
Answer from Sonita: It should be, but we are not sure how yet.
- v. How can we showcase and highlight Q300's practices, vision and mission so we can be a more inclusive school for all?

The school will engage with the community, when more information is available, to also start the conversation on plans for the future of Q300.

7. CEP Goals

The SLT split into groups to review CEP plans, goals, action steps and progress. The Chairperson (Kiera) gave permission for Assistant Principal, Anna Milonakis, to speak during the Literacy breakout session.

Math:

Goal: Students to improve their algebraic thinking by explaining their math reasoning.
Action plan 1: Students to complete a google form as an exit ticket – to be developed across K-8 and pushed out to all grades with the help of the teachers.

Action plan 2: Teachers to host development sessions for the parents – teachers are keen to do this to engage with the parents.

Action plan 3: Arranging PD for teachers for literacy in math.

Literacy:

The group discussed whether we should be updating our goals (SMART goals) and whether the Map Growth data is up to date or should be refreshed. We discussed at length the realities of the pandemic on our students and families and feel that the goals need to be recalibrated.

Action plan 1: Arrange PD for ELA teachers.

Science:

Goal: Students to become more proficient in scientific learning through inquiry-based learning. The group noted that our goals and action plans need to be adjusted for remote learning.

Action plan 1: Discussed using breakout rooms so students can work in investigative groups to discuss the engineering design process.

Action plan 2: Students to use Flip Grid to discuss what they did in their group sessions.

Wellness:

Goal: Increase physical, social and emotional wellness for students.

Action plan: Review data from Rachel. Also collect more data from students, perhaps with student surveys.

8. Review and finalize SLT by-laws

The SLT by-laws had been updated for the changes discussed in the December SLT meeting. The SLT members had reviewed the changes and suggested some additional minor amendments. Sonita will have the revised SLT by-laws reviewed by a DOE attorney before they are finalized.

9. Roles and Responsibilities of School and District Leadership Teams 2020-21 Training

The SLT discussed the training video in the context of two broad questions;

- How have our SLT and school priorities shifted due to COVID-19?
- How should we assess our effectiveness as an SLT?

Discussion ensued, including comments around;

- i. Constantly changing environment makes things more complex – and we should make sure our goals reflect the COVID-19 environment.
- ii. Goals to improve percentages can be challenging in this environment – during COVID-19, maintaining standards and keeping things on track can also be a goal.

- iii. One change made to reflect remote learning environment is that we are in the process of having teachers join each other's zoom sessions to share best practice.
- iv. We have also had teachers encourage talking about current events in morning meetings.
- v. We need to make sure we are engaging with and reaching out to students and families who are not as engaged and also more in need of support.

10. District 30 Initiative

District 30 schools will receive access to various learning programs from the New York State Integration Project – Professional Learning Community (NYSIP-PLC) Grant Phase III, which runs over 3 years from September 2020 to August 2023.

One of the purposes of the grant is to support NYS Education Department's renewed commitment to racial, socioeconomic, and other types of student integration in the state, by promoting staff understanding of the benefits of integration and to help staff create individualized district integration plans.

A range of professional development learning workshops are being offered for teachers and staff – the curriculum includes such topics as diversity, implicit bias, equity, proportionality and lesson planning to address such issues.

11. Reports

All reports were submitted in advance of the meeting and taken as read. Full reports are attached as Appendices to these minutes. Any updates to those reports (discussed in the meeting today) are outlined below:

a. Principal Report – Appendix 1

No additional notes.

b. UFT Report - Appendix 2

No additional notes.

c. PTA Report - Appendix 3

No additional notes.

12. Parking Lot – Questions and Comments

Change in SLT meeting dates:

Jean has been accepted into a leadership program which holds classes on Wednesday evenings so the SLT discussed changing the date for future meetings to Mondays, Tuesdays or Thursdays – Sonita will review the calendar and come back with some options.

Diversity Committee:

Some parents have been asking about when the Diversity Committee will resume meetings. It has been challenging getting this back on the schedule, but Sonita will revert.

13. Next Steps

The next SLT meeting will be in February 2021 – date and time to be confirmed.

The agenda will include the review of the Q300 CEP action plans and progress and also a review of the Diversity Initiative Proposal submitted in the prior school year.

14. Adjournment

The Committee members took turns sharing various shout-outs and appreciations including:

- a. Shout-out to Jean for getting into her leadership program.
- b. Thank you to Q300 leadership and staff for everything they are doing during this difficult learning environment.
- c. Thank you to the SLT for the openness and honesty and having a good deep discussion on school issues and challenges.
- d. Shout-out to the parents for their support of the school, staff and students.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.44pm.

APPENDIX 1 – Principal’s report – JANUARY 2021 SLT**COVID Vaccinations:**

The DOE has emailed all staff members links to book an appointment to get the vaccine. It is their choice whether or not they want to receive the vaccine. They are allotted 2 hours of non-chargeable time, if needed, to get this done. Parents should not be asking staff members if they have received the vaccine. It is a violation of their privacy.

College Awareness Week:

The week of January 19th will be College Awareness Week. Khary and Rachel along with other staff members have created lessons to support this initiative. On January 21 and January 22, we will celebrate by wearing our college t-shirts/sweatshirts.

Upcoming Social Emotional Topics:

Next month, we will be celebrating Black History Month and Respect for All Month. More information will be coming soon.

SHSAT Testing:

1. On **January 27, 2021**, all **6th through 8th classes** (including cluster classes) **will be held asynchronously**. 8th grade assignments will be listed as optional since most students will be taking the test.
2. On January 27, 2021, the upper division building will be open for both in-person and remote students who have signed up to take the test. There will be NO remote testing.
3. The total exam time is 180 minutes for students without accommodations and up to 360 minutes for students with accommodations.
4. All Upper Division teachers will be trained on the procedures for administering the SHSAT.
5. On February 10, if needed, we will be administering the make-up SHSAT

G& T Testing:

It was announced last week that G&T testing will begin in April and registration of students will most likely occur in the summer. We have not received any additional information at this time.

Fall 2020 School Experience Survey:

The Fall 2020 School Experience Survey is now open. The survey will capture anonymous feedback from families, students and teachers on their experience with remote and in-person learning during the 2020-21 school year to-date. The goal of the survey is to provide you with timely, formative and actionable feedback that you could use to improve both remote and in-person learning experiences at your school and to assist you in planning for the spring semester. The survey asks all respondents about their experience with remote learning, communications, technology use, as well as health, safety, and instruction for those students and teachers who attended school or worked in-person at any point during this school year. All students in grades 6-12, along with parents/guardians and teachers of students in grades 3-K through 12, will be able to participate in this anonymous online survey.

Links to the survey are available at schools.nyc.gov/experiencesurvey. The survey will be available online through Friday, February 5.

APPENDIX 2 – JANUARY 2021 UFT Report for SLT

COVID vaccine update:

The UFT was able to have 8,000 members matched with vaccine providers in the first six days of beginning the program. It's available to all who want to take the vaccine but not mandatory. There are concerns that they will run out of vaccines by the end of the week without additional support.

APPENDIX 3 - DECEMBER 2021 PTA Report for SLT**1. PTA Enrichment/Funding Update**

- In the Lower Division, the PTA funded a virtual arts residency through Arts Connection for grades K-4, began Jan 18
- We continue to work with the administration as per the possibility of scheduling other enrichments for both the Upper and Lower Division.
- The 42 chromebooks we purchased in August were delivered week of January 12; We have ordered others and are awaiting updates on these deliveries given the technology backlog
- We continue to work with the admin around using the approved PTA funds for other tech needs including chromebooks/printers as well as for professional teacher training in Responsive Classroom in the spring.
- Remember teachers, you have wishlist funds!

2. Events

- **Virtual Family Game Night - Saturday, January 23 at 5:30pm.** The PTA invites your family to an evening of fun and family-friendly competition with interactive game show-style challenges, scavenger hunts, charades, trivia, and more. Hosted by a live DJ, the event is open to all. Suggested donation is \$15 per family. See flyer here <http://q300pta.org/GameDay2021> for more information on how to join.
- **Virtual Family Cooking Class and Fundraiser with Lifeline Groceries.** The PTA is thrilled to host two fundraisers for [Lifeline Groceries](#), an organization that provides fresh, healthy groceries to food-insecure families throughout Queens. A majority of the net proceeds from these events will go directly to Lifeline Groceries (approximately \$45), with a small portion going to the PTA (approximately \$10). Please join us for these fun activities in the next month.
 - **Family Class.** For \$65 per family, the Connected Chef will lead a kid-inclusive cooking class. All ingredients will be delivered beforehand (if in Queens), and each recipe will offer food allergy sensitive suggestions/replacements. This will be held on a weekend in January, in the afternoon, TBD very soon.
 - **Adult Mixology/Appetizer Class.** For \$65 per adult family unit, the Connected Chef will lead a "cocktail and appetizer" class. All ingredients, except alcohol, will be delivered beforehand (if in Queens). This will be held on a weekend in February, TBD very soon.
- **Future Cooking Class offerings.** In lieu of the International Winter Potluck, we will be holding "in-house" family-friendly cooking classes tied to our cultures and heritage, throughout the spring. If you would like to offer your cooking talents to more Q300 virtual cooking classes for our community (and we know some of you are chefs), please contact Membership at membership@q300pta.org.

3. Committee Updates

Fundraising

- Direct appeal Update:
- Auction Team Meeting to rethink event and make it all virtual
 - Interested in Teacher and Staff Experience Prizes (virtually)
- We have Shopping Sites on website ([Stop & Shop](#), [Amazon](#), [Goodshop](#), [Shutterfly/Tiny Prints](#), [Children's Bookstore](#), [Book Culture](#), [Primary.com](#))
- Hoping to launch Spiritwear

Communications:

- Newsletter Update: Next deadline in March
- We added some new teachers to Mailchimp that were not on there

Membership

- Volunteer Survey Update: Most Committees have formed, but there are others forthcoming
- They are organizing events

LD and UD Reps

- Class Parents and LD and UD reps are organizing virtual community building initiatives by grade level

Community Affairs

- We have out co-located Food Drive and are still collecting food this week; Jan 23 distribution; this may be an ongoing effort
- Attended Presidents Council Meeting
- One School Update

Appreciations

Direct Appeal: Thanks to David and Sue for all of their work on the Direct Appeal! Thank you to all parents who helped to contribute in 2020. More information in the Treasury report.

Holiday Collection: Thank Agnes, Li, Erica, and others

Family Game Night: Big thanks to Erica

LifeLine Foods events: Big thanks to Abby

Flyers and Website: Thanks to Tomonori for the flyer making!