

School Council Notes
Tuesday, January 4, 2020

Notes by Mendie Welu

1. Greetings and Salutations
2. Public Comment (8:05-8:10am)

1/2 not sure if happened as a few of us were experiencing technical difficulties getting on the call

3. Assign note taker

No official note taker assigned, Mendie Welu took rough notes, Monica to supplement

4. Approval of previous meeting minutes. (October Notes as November Meeting cancelled.)

Approved by the group

5. COVID update-Nurses

Hillary is out for the next couple of days and Karen was busy, so Monica updated the group on the state of COVID in school. Also, Monica sent out an email to the school later in the day with all the details. They are:

4 community members contracted the virus over the break, they were not in school at the time

These members let Monica know, and she in turn followed protocol to let district levels folks know and they took it from there

As an aside, Monica was able to visit classrooms yesterday and was impressed with the level of engagement by the students and the obvious positive energy they brought back from break

6. Principal budget update from Monica

District school budget season is upon us with an effort this season to be transparent while also being up front that there is less state and federal money to dole out, so the budget will be constrained on top of the constraints posited last year

Complicating the budget forecasting is the real time numbers in the district (in person kids and RLA kids) vs a typical year of numbers pre-COVID; therefore, the District will be pursuing two studies for the budgets

Monica has control over very little in the District budget. Lawrence School receives roughly \$18k a year and Monica uses that for school supplies; staff professional development opportunities; and some special workshops

This school year, she had a very short window to use the money, was frozen by the end of November, so she worked with Jill Dempsey (K-2 literacy specialist) to pilot Lexia, a software platform, to supplement reading in the K grades. This proved to be very successful so they purchased licenses for 158 K-2 kids to use at home. Additionally, the District was able to provide 65 additional licenses to use with 3-8 graders identified as needing more support in reading. Monica also exploring similar software for Math, Dreambox. 65 licenses have also been granted by the District for identified kids at Lawrence

It was asked if RLA had access to these platforms and it was discussed that at the town level yes, but not at the school level

Monica also committed to the anti-racist work she and the staff had started at the school last year. 8 staff members have agreed to work together to explore equity in grading and inclusionary class practices

35 books on these topics have been purchased for the staff

There is also a commitment at the District level and this Friday there will be offerings during the PD day

Positive news and due to hard work of Panel 4, there will be town money (\$300k?) offered to schools to pilot weekly COVID testing for teachers with a 24 hour turnaround

No one was sure of town testing for families in Brookline and the last date for that program

7. Last month's homework in lieu of the November cancelled meeting. We can review and discuss.

. I asked for feedback on communication

-Some concern with union strike but positive on classroom, teacher, building admin, central office admin and PTO.

-Some improvement needed with district communication around COVI cases. This has been rectified with district Dashboard.

-Can there be a one-stop location for all communication like Slack or Bloomz?

Share reflections on SIP and answer questions

Climate and Community Goals:

-More opportunities for older students to help younger students and can count as community hours (on hold during COVID.)

Might this enable students who are excelling to develop and grow leadership skills? **PTO purchased recess bags for each classroom-going to offer 8th graders to get those bags set up and distributed-maybe longer term they can keep track of these bags? 8th grade meeting next week and could discuss more.**

-More opportunities for learning and discussing about racial justice

- How much has been done? What has not been done? What needs to be changed/adjusted?

General Comments: Definitions needed for families. **I'll defer to you to define these:**

-Databased instruction

-Anchor units

-Restorative practices