

P.S. 89Q

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM MINUTES

OCTOBER 29, 2019

3:30pm to 6:30pm

CALL TO ORDER

- **PTA President:**
Went to an SLT training and learned an SLT meeting should be two hours
Feels her questions from the last meeting were not answered
Feels that the tables being disconnected makes the parents feel less than the teachers
- **Dorgan:**
Explained that the tables are now arranged in a new way because of the new librarian. It was not intentional to disrespect anyone, she just didn't have time to move them this week
- **PTA President:**
Explains that she doesn't like how the parents are being treated in the main office (the secretaries were not responsive to her)
- **La Sala:**
Any parent who has an issue or complaint should make an appointment to see her
- **PTA President:**
Any time she asks to speak with the principal, they ask "What is the purpose of the meeting?" and don't allow her to make an appointment with the principal. The secretary who wants to know what the issue is, is the issue!
- **La Sala:**
They should speak to another secretary and ask for a meeting through them. Also, this SLT meeting is not the place to voice complaints about the school, it's for planning the school's educational program and give parents a voice.
- **PTA President:**
Can we tuck in the concerns during this meeting?
- **La Sala:**
Depends on the concern - if it has to do with an individual class or grade level, it is not something that should come up at the SLT
- **PTA President:**
My point is that the parents should have a voice and should be treated with respect. It's not her intention to just come in and complain.
- **La Sala:**
If my door is open, you don't need to go through the main office - you can just pop in and see me directly.
- **PTA President:**
Does she have a translator?
- **La Sala:**
I can understand but have a difficult time speaking. I'll call in my parent coordinator, a school aid, assistant principal, or someone else can translate.
- **Dorgan:**
Some questions we cannot answer because we don't have that info. The minutes reflect exactly what happened, the topics discussed, etc. We can bring up prior conversations in the next meeting.

- **PTA President:**

Can we see the budget? We know there were some cuts, and now the science teachers tell us that they don't have books for science for grades 3-5

- **La Sala:**

You're right that there were budget cuts, but be careful about any information that comes from teachers. None of the cuts affected core curriculum - these books come directly from the DOE and don't affect our school budget. The money that was cut was from other areas that don't directly affect student learning, like last year

READING AND APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER'S MINUTES

- Monika made a motion to accept the minutes
- Seconded by Wendy

SLT BYLAWS

PRINCIPAL REPORT: BUDGET UPDATE

Budget update:

- **Principal** - At the next SLT and PTA meeting, everyone will have access to see the current budget on Galaxy, including the additional money we will receive for the additional students we have over our original register.
- **Principal** - Still in draft phase, but "guesstimating" that the amount she receives will support the programs after school for extra help, PALS, Mondo and Saturday Academy. Lexia after school will be starting next week already.
- **Parent clarification** - the after school program is different and separate from the school?
- **Principal** - yes, through the department of youth development (a city agency that exists throughout the city). The program borrows our space and serves our community.
- **Parent clarification** - when there are issues after school, who is responsible?
- **Principal** - they are responsible!
- **Joan** - after the last meeting, went to check the bathroom and there is a special screen that the students cannot open
- **Parent** - saw young people on Gleane street selling drugs, and she's concerned that these people might be trying to sell drugs to our students
- **Principal** - Two weeks ago the gang task force from the police came to our school because I complained about the gang tags on the building across from us. There is a gang that their symbol/tag looks like MS13 but it's not them. The police are very aware and have been patrolling the area around our school. They want us to know so we can look at our cameras and let them know if we see anything.
- **Parent** - She sees it constantly because it's her street
- **Principal** - When I leave at 5 or 6:00 I see teenagers in the back, and it's illegal for me to lock the gate because it's a fire hazard, and it may be the only exit in case of a fire.
- **Parent** - There are people using drugs on the area by the steps on Gleane Street, and wants to know who to speak to about it so the girls in the girls' bathroom are safe.
- **Principal** - The gang task force told us to call the police directly if we see anything, so they should do the same. We can't close the gate in the front park because it belongs to the parks department, and we can't close it until dusk. After dusk, sometimes people jump the fence.
- **Parent** - Who comes and cleans it? I'm concerned that the kids will find something
- **Principal** - At night and in the morning at 5:00 our custodian AI is cleaning up.
- **Other parent** - Concerned that young people are breaking into the bus on Hampton Street.
- **Monika** - calls and reports all the time - you don't have to leave your name! Just tell them what you see
- **Joan** - The more people call and complain, the more it will escalate the need for more security.
- **La Sala** - We've been asking for a second security guard, which we are supposed to have. Priority goes to HS, then MS, then elementary. Not a good enough answer! Wrote a letter to the

superintendent, who sent it to the DOE, who sent it to the people in charge of safety. All of a sudden, they acted like she never asked for it, except she attached all the emails since January. I'm happy to say, Melinda Katz our borough president, called me yesterday and said the gym will get fixed, the fourth floor will get fixed, she'll give me another \$150,000. She finished that and said, "What else do you need?" I said they keep telling me the same thing, that there aren't enough guards. So I have a solution - somewhere in the city there's an elementary school with less students than us that have two security guards. I say, take one of the guards and give it to us because we have more students, and let them live with one security guard. If it's acceptable for us, it should be acceptable for us. Also, it's safer for them than it is for us. Now the borough president is fighting for that for us. Now the supervisor for safety is coming to the next PTA meeting so she can hear the concerns from the parents. Echo that message - tell the supervisor that they should take the second guard away from another school and bring it to us. Between now and 11/20, we need to find an elementary school that has two security guards but less kids than ours.

- **Parent** - Why was the other one taken away?
- **La Sala** - They are supervised by the police department so she doesn't have any say about that. We want someone who is permanent and not someone who comes and goes sometimes. They should be part of the family that knows our children. We have a very big job to do with CEP so I'm done

DOG

- **Ms. Pellet** - Our chancellor has supported using therapy and service dogs in schools to meet students' social and emotional needs. We have started the process into looking at how we can do this. Some concerns were allergies students have to animals. The animal we are looking at is hypoallergenic. We would put protocols in place for students who do have allergies to animals so their allergies would not be affected. If parents do not want their child to have contact with the dog, they do not have to. However, this would benefit students socially and emotionally. The dog would not be in one classroom every day. It may follow the schedule of the Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) teachers. It may also be a Google Form where teachers use it for certain lessons during the day, then the dog returns to the office. Any questions about the therapy dog program?
- **Parent** - Is the dog going to every classroom or specific ones?
- **La Sala** - There is a procedure where children will have permission slips to determine where the dog will go.
- **Parent** - Will the dog go room to room?
- **La Sala** - In a perfect world that would happen so that every child would get to experience the dog. But if a child cannot be near a dog, other children in the class would be able to spend time with the dog (for example, library) and the affected child would be doing another activity so no one feels left out.
- **Parent** - What activities?
- **La Sala** - We can decide that after we fill out application and get approved. We can decide as a School Leadership Team what we could do. One of the things the program comes with is a curriculum so they give us different ideas with what we could do with the dog. One thing is having children read to the dog. Children who are uncomfortable reading out loud to friends-- studies show they are more comfortable reading to the dog.
- **Parent** - Will children be distracted?
- **LaSala** - Example, when I walk into a Kindergarten room, they are excited because I'm new. However, in January they are not distracted because they know me. So, when it becomes part of the routine, it won't be a distraction any more. There is a school in the district that has the program. I can arrange a visit during the school day. I'll email the principal and ask the Parent Coordinator. It's at PS81 in Ridgewood.
- **Parent** - Would a goldfish or hamster have the same effect?
- **La Sala** - Yes, but there's also the affection piece (hugging, touching)
- **Ms. Pellet** - There's more of an emotional connection with a dog which is good for the kids to experience.

CEP GOALS: PABLO SCHELINO

- **Schelino** - We are going to take Part 3C and look at it to see if we are happy with what is there -- if we want to add anything or take away. We are going to do it on a Google Doc (with the questions and feedback given to us).

- **La Sala** - It will be on the shared SLT drive.
- **Schelino** - I will take care of the Chronic Absenteeism part.

BOUNCE PAGES/MICROSOFT TRANSLATE

- Wendy will put together a presentation to present to parents on these apps to help parents

QUESTIONS

- **Parent** - Update on auditorium renovations?
- **La Sala** - Person doing the renovations didn't want to put old seats back onto the new floor, so the project has stalled. We are waiting for it to be finalized (Dept. of Ed). Does not come from school level, comes from higher up.
- **Parent** - Hampton Yard renovations?
- **La Sala** - We will get that fixed and get a mural painted in the yard. Student Council will get ideas, interview artists, and choose an artist for the mural. For the front yard, two teachers wrote a grant for beautification. That will be happening as well. The backyard will be easier to keep clean. However, the front is used as a park so it's harder to keep clean and safe after hours. There aren't many places for the community to play in, so that's why it became a park.
- **Schelino** - Who could parents reach out to about that?
- **La Sala** - Catalina Cruz. With marijuana laws, the kids are not getting in trouble around schools. They are being told to go home by the police. The police aren't reacting with urgency. Children should not see or know about this. We need to keep it away from them. We can go to local politicians and let them know about the activity around the school. Catalina Cruz wants to help us.
- **Schelino** - Are there still police town hall meetings?
- **La Sala** - Yes, they still do them. It's worth going to. The Exec. Officer of Safety is coming to the next PTA Meeting
- **Parent** - We would like to try Breakfast with the Principal with parents for two months.
- **La Sala** - Tuesdays are usually good. That would be great.

Dorgan motioned to adjourn

Hannon seconded the motion.