



Somerville Public Schools

Education • Inspiration • Excellence

Winter Hill Community Innovation School

We Help Children Succeed

Governing Board

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Governing Board Meeting October 9, 2018 6 PM - 7:30 PM Conference Room

Minutes

Attendance: Chad Mazza, Jen Miller, Evan McAlear, Amanda Montero, Nick Robertson, Heidi Castro, Amy Wagner, Courtney Gosselin, Mary Lou S., Maura Vogel, Kenya Alfaro, Matt Collins, Deb Dixon, Amanda Payette

- I. New Member Introductions
 - A. All members introduce themselves
 - B. New Members
 - 1. Amanda Montero-WHCIS reading specialist
 - 2. Heidi Castro- parent of 3rd and 4th grade students
 - 3. Amy Wagner- parent of 1st and 2nd grade students
 - 4. Maura Vogel-parent of Pre-K student
 - 5. Kenya Alfaro-community representative of the Welcome Project
- II. Playground Updates
 - . Final part is currently being done--painting of the basketball court and track around it. It should be done by the end of the week.
 - A. There is a gate on the Medford Street playground now. It was installed over the weekend. Two feet of fence will also be added to that playground fence to prevent students from climbing over it. Foam blocks are now available on this playground for students to build.
 - B. There is also now a gate on the upper playground. When it snows it will be closed and staff will be allowed to park on the basketball court.
 - C. Windows and roof are done.
 - D. Outdoor classroom now has a whiteboard for lessons. City has a contract with Ground Work Somerville for programming for gardening. There is a day in the fall and a day in the spring. Teachers have to go directly to Ground Work for the programs but the space is always available.
- III. MCAS Update
 - . Overall, the growth scores were slightly above the state average for ELA and slightly below for math.
 - A. This was the second year of the new test.
 - B. Administration has met with all grade levels to review individual scores based on achievement and growth. This allows us to target specific groups of students, especially low growth/low achievement. All students will have a plan on how to move them forward and progress monitor them.
 - C. This is just one measure of student achievement. Somerville is part of a consortium for alternative assessment with Jack Schneider. He is also a Somerville parent. He has a whole-school quality survey.
 - D. Next meeting we will have a presentation on the MCAS results.



E. There is a question about how parents will learn about the MCAS. We will have sessions in the building for parents to discuss how the scores and the accountability work. We need to have a session on how to read MCAS scores in different languages.

IV. Wildcat Kickoff Update

Jen Miller discusses the changes to the back-to-school night this year

A. The focus was on providing parents the opportunity to look at school through a different lense and we need to do it collectively

B. One major change was bringing in community partners such as the Welcome Project.

C. Our goal is to really understand our community members, how we can best support families and communicate with them and how we all can best support learning.

D. Chad Mazza discusses how all teachers are focusing on family engagement as part of their professional practice goal. He stresses that we are looking for parent input.

E. Jen Miller discusses how we are not always sure what parents do and don't know.

F. Chad Mazza also discusses that we are looking at how we do conferences and if there is a more engaging model for families. Teachers should be reaching out early to parents if there is an issue with a student.

G. Feedback from Governing Board

1. The cafe was very popular and the style was new and effective. However the area was cramped so parents were not always able to get to the tables.
2. Matt Collins commented that 6th grade had a full classroom for the first time in five years. Many parents brought their children.
3. Childcare had 52 children signed in--looking to streamline the pick-up. Amanda Payette suggests color-coding the grade bands and having name tags that match parent to child.
4. Suggestion is made to have childcare at conferences throughout the year.
5. For next time, have more organized stations for students with varying activities.
6. There is a suggestion for the city-wide track and swim meet to come and discuss their programs at parent events.
7. Another suggestion: If there is a resource fair going on at all times, parents could go to classrooms and go to fair.
8. There is a question about parent communication and if there is anything schoolwide beyond the information received from teachers. Different grade levels use different systems such as Dojo or Schoology. There is also discussion around parent forums and how they have been used in the past and bringing in student voice. There will also be sessions for parents around Responsive Classroom and a Pre-K meeting to hear about Pre-K concerns.
9. There is a disconnect between Pre-K and the after-school program. This training could be beneficial to bridging the two worlds.

H. PTA--new board with officers

1. Tomorrow is the Walk-to-School day and there is a volunteer DJ.
2. Book fair is coming up. A sign-up genius has gone out for volunteers. It will be open until 1:30 on the ½ day.
3. Looking at different fundraisers and dining out once a month. Suggestions: El Potro, 99s, Bertucci's, Rudy's, Paint Nights, Margarita's
4. Penguin Patch Holiday Shop
5. Box Top Contest--exploring a classroom prize for the class that brings in the most
6. Has a Winter Hill card been explored as a fundraiser?

7. Winter Hill is a diverse community and need to think about how we engage all of our families, the PTA is feeling extremely encouraged by the level of engagement of families, the dining out is a great way to raise money and build community

V. Scheduling Update

. There have been changes stemming from the SEIP in grades 5 - 8. 5th and 6th grade schedules have been aligned.

A. Recess and lunch schedules have been streamlined with two grades at recess or lunch at a time.

B. Currently exploring how to maximize instructional time for special education and SEI 3 schedules.

VI. Meeting Dates

. We will meet on the following dates: 11/13, 12/11, 1/8, 2/12, 3/12, 4/9, 5/14, 6/11.

A. There will be a presentation to the school committee and all governing board members are welcome to attend.

VII. Other

. Friday is our Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration after school. Salsa and guacamole competition right after school.

A. There is a suggestion to have a dress code clothing swap at PTA night--would like to make it more of a swap with tickets if items or brought in or can pay .50 or \$1 an item. There is a suggestion to have listserv for the school. Maybe the PTA can use the Facebook page for this. Have a Winter Hill bag like the pink clothing recycling bags. May need to revamp idea to build inventory for families that do not have the means to bring in clothes. 8th grade graduation week have the 8th graders bring in their clothes. Start with a clothing drive at the next PTA.

B. All students are getting another Wildcat Polo shirt from Pozen Prize monies.

C. There is a request to have the building inspected for mold due to the years of leaks. Chad Mazza will consult with the superintendent.