



THE ANDERSON SCHOOL (P.S. 334)

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

Meeting Minutes June 19, 2013

In Attendance: *Jodi Hyde - principal, Diane Heith - K-2 parent rep, Nicole Cardinale - elementary teacher rep, Joy Heinze - PTA co-pres, Laura Mount - 6-8 parent rep, Paul Radvany 5-8 at large parent rep, Leni Cohen -K-2 teacher rep, Robert Moy - UFT rep, Diane Kirksey-Floyd - 3-5 teacher rep, Paula Seefeldt - 3-5 parent rep, Mindy Wigutow - PTA parent rep, Nicole Chandonnet - 6-8 teacher rep, Rina Cohen Schwarz K-4 at large parent rep, Tim Rodgers teacher rep at-large, UFT Representative*

CEP

Ms. Hyde was informed that the SLT needed to develop tentative goals for 2013-2014, despite not yet receiving the ELA and Math test data. Recommendations from SLT:

- Achieve state top 10 ranking on new ELA test.
- Integrate science and other non-fiction into the regular classroom curriculum.
Example: Mr. Moy suggested aligning 3rd grade unit on simple machines with unit on Egypt.
- Citywide teacher assessment instructional goals - have 4-6 observations for teacher effectiveness. Encourage academic discussions
- Building on the current year's CEP regarding competitions, increase the variety of competitions; increase the level of success in competitions.

ELA and Math State Tests

Promotion (or cut scores) data was received. All Anderson students met promotional criteria and will be promoted. Actual scores are not yet available.

Calendar Change

Due to the new state law regarding assessment of teachers, teachers are now required to have additional Professional Development due to the new expectations. Given the already packed teacher schedule and the desire to make the PD meaningful through an extended amount of time rather than short meetings, Ms. Hyde is proposing the addition of 6 half days over the course of the school year. There will be bus service on these half days. Wingspan, Chess and other options to make the additional half days easier were also discussed. This change needs to be approved by the PTA.

Request to Reinstate Spring Break Trip to Spain

Two 7th Grade parents (Rita Kopelman, Margo Waldman) requested a reconsideration of the decision to no longer offer a Spring Break trip to Spain for 8th graders. Two 8th grades went on the trip, the last time in 2011. The parents noted the benefits from immersion, the infusion of planning into the curriculum, the additional cultural and global focus, increased leadership skills, increased self-confidence and self-esteem.

- Ms. Hyde and Ms. Chandonnet agreed with the parents' assessment of the value of the trip and also noted that the trip was well organized and very well done by the tour company used.
- Ms. Hyde and Ms. Chandonnet noted the problems that lead to the cancellation of the program.

- o Very demanding on the teacher in charge and on the administration. The liability concerns are significant and numerous, particularly regarding health and safety.
- o Was a great motivational tool in the weeks immediately prior to the trip and right after, but also created a very detrimental “haves vs. have nots” scenario among the students.
- o Fundraising did occur at the time, but not enough to truly offset the \$3000 cost, or increase the number of students able to travel.
- Was suggested that parents could coordinate it themselves with the same tour company but that no Anderson teacher could join an unsanctioned trip.

Planning for Ms. Hyde’s Absence

As noted in her May letter to the school, Ms. Hyde will be going on Maternity Leave in November, returning at the end of January.

- In her absence the two Assistant Principals, Ms. Jordan and Mr. Schliessman will take on many of her responsibilities, including SLT.
- Someone from Network will come to the Principal’s Cabinet Meeting to represent Anderson and offer other assistance to the VPs.

5th Grade Bubble Plans

No changes to the plans reported at the May SLT meeting. Parent response to the plans appear positive, particularly regarding the semi-middle school immersion, rather than total immersion.

Teacher Assignments

Teacher assignments for 2013-2014 have not yet been made; the bubble class makes things more complicated. Change always occurs.

- 4th Grade teacher, Becky Cohen is leaving Anderson to go to Speyer

Time Management Program for Grades 5-8

The program will be offered to the students in the 3rd week of school, dates are complicated by the early Jewish Holidays

- Investigation into a suitable provider continues. Ms. Heinze will investigate recommendations from several private schools.
- The PTA will invite the provider to provide a presentation to parents, the same week or close to the timing of the student program to assist parents in obtaining the life skills they will need as their child transitions to middle school and the increased workload and responsibilities.

Homework Policy

Parents expressed concerns about the homework policy:

- Discrepancies between classroom work vs. in class projects
- Credit for doing homework.
- Test anxiety due to the increased importance of the tests.
- Few tests, thus few grades, determining overall grade.
- H.S. and College emphasize projects and research papers over tests.
- Possible to be in the bottom half of the class, percentage-wise, with a 95.

The Homework Committee will be evaluating the policy over the summer. Focusing on:

- Consistency of guidelines from syllabus.
- Classroom work vs. in class projects.

Electives

Middle School:

- Consider adding Stock Market trading elective.
 - Stock Market Enrichment was so successful, parent volunteers offered to run the program (for 13 weeks) as a middle school elective. Uses the game Market Watch.

4th Grade:

- Consider adding Bridge.
 - Unfortunately 4th grade schedule is very crowded. Recommendation to consider as a lunch club or after school.
 - Could send interested 4th graders during their Friday choice time to 6th grade elective.

Sports for 3rd-5th

Request to add more sports opportunities, particularly track for the elementary grades.

- Ms. Hyde and Mr. Rodgers noted that space constraints make it impossible. Gym and yard are all shared space. The current sports teams do not have enough scheduled time. No ability to add additional group needs.
- Mr. Rodgers noted that interested individuals could join Girls on the Run.
- Clinics could be added.
- Ms. Hyde and Mr. Rodgers emphasized the benefit of having something to look forward to in middle school.

Chaperones

Questions about the chaperone selection process for the Boston and Plymouth trips. In Boston, particularly, there were many more female parent volunteers than male volunteers.

- Ms. Hyde noted that the administration makes the selections from the parents who volunteer with consideration of who would be most helpful.
- Recommended that the class parents work to enlarge the pool of potential parent volunteers.

Language

Planning for 4th grade Spanish continues. Unsure at this point if Mr. Cox is returning. There are no plans to add a second language to the lower grade curriculum. A second language continues to be a middle school elective.

June Edutainment

Very successful enrichment program.

- Circus was awesome. K-6 had an assembly. Grades 3-6 received workshops.
- Shakespeare Sings – also awesome. 4th graders not as familiar with Shakespeare but now have exposure in preparation for future focus.
- Historical Society Scavenger Hunt – buddying the grades, extremely successful. Recommended to continue to do that for other events, or opportunities.

For next year:

- Scheduling problems with publishing parties and end of year work. Very full schedule for 3-5.
- Spread it out or save to last two weeks. Although schedule problem might relate to lost week from Sandy.
- Lego robotics could not be scheduled for the K-2 classes, recommendation to add it to next year.