

MINUTES
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT) MEETING
JUNE 20, 2017 AT 7:15AM IN ROOM 412

Approved by unanimous vote
at the September 26, 2017 Meeting

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:15AM.

In Attendance:, Rachel Polimeni, Rachelle King, Eileen Mishanie-Goldberg, Julie Norwell, Debra Mastriano, Nina Roosevelt-Collmer, Iuliia Stozub, Max Alvarez, Emma Balmuth-Loris, Pam Korson, Catherine Box, Deborah Middleton (7:20am)

II. Approval of Minutes

The meeting began with the group signing the SLT time sheets. As the minutes from the previous month's meeting were unavailable, Ms. Polimeni read the summary of her notes from that meeting. Approval of the minutes was postponed.

III. Science Curriculum

The group began a short discussion about PS 166's science curriculum: FOSS. FOSS is outdated and should be updated. Ms. Mastriano observed that more could be done to integrate math and ELA into science. In the social studies unit of study about restaurants, for example, teachers could incorporate math by graphing local restaurant cuisines.

In response to a question about to what extent teachers are supposed to incorporate science into their lesson planning, the teachers explained that they have their students work from the FOSS book. Half of the experiments are done in the lab with science teacher, Ms. Cardona, while the other half are done in the classroom. Teachers plan with Ms. Cardona so as to avoid duplication of experiments.

Ms. Norwell asked to what extent gardening is incorporated into the science curriculum. Ms. Mastriano responded that, while the study of plants is incorporated into science classes already, she would speak to the principal at the Manhattan School for Children to get ideas of how we might grow that unit of study at PS 166.

IV. Auditorium Renovation

It was reported that the long-awaited renovation of the auditorium was scheduled to take place this summer and would include all new lighting, new curtains for the windows and stage and a new sound board. There will also be headsets for people who need to communicate. A kindergarten dad, who is a professional theater designer, has offered some consulting help during the project.

Every effort will be made to use original materials where it makes sense to do so. For example, the hinges of the squeaky wooden seats will be oiled instead of replaced. And if a wood floor turns out to be under the current tiles, the wood floor will be restored instead of laying a new tile floor. Installing air conditioning is not part of the current plan.

The school's budget is \$310,000. The renovation is likely to cost more, but the School Construction Authority (SCA) will cover the rest.

The SCA will also be inspecting damage from water leaking through the walls near the roof in the SW corner of the building.

V. Assistant Teachers

Ms. Roosevelt-Collmer raised the topic of assistant teachers and how to utilize them to maximize their experience in such a way that benefits them as well as classroom teachers. She noted that PS 9 is following a model that is more of a mentoring program.

Ms. Mishanie-Goldberg said that PS 166 used to have a similar model some years ago, observing that the assistant principal in the year that she was hired was eager to offer real experience to teaching assistants by partnering them with real teachers. Ms. Mishanie-Goldberg said that it was a valuable experience for her and noted that many of the teachers currently employed at PS 166 started out with her as TAs in this school. She added that, while it's a lot of work to train the TAs, the effort pays off well by the end of the year.

The discussion then turned to how we might best use TAs during specials classes so as to help keep children active instead of sitting around.

Ms. Korson asked whether, on rainy days, we could rethink how students are handled in the auditorium. She said that on rainy days when students congregate there, it invariably gets noisy and teachers must raise their voices to restore quiet and maintain order. She suggested we think about how we might create a new dynamic in the auditorium, such as to have Mr. Shackman organize a sing-along on rainy days. Ms. Mastriano said she would look into the idea.

VI. Change of Guard

Parents members Ms. Box, Ms. Polimeni and Mr. Alvarez will be leaving the SLT in the new school year. The new SLT members will be Ms. Jennifer Jin, Mr. John Lucie, and Ms. Juliet Ross.

As for teachers, only Ms. King will be leaving. In order to balance the number of teachers with the parents, the SLT will need one new teacher to replace her.

VII. Residencies

In discussing other changes in the upcoming school year, the conversation turned to residencies. Ms. Norwell suggest several new ideas, especially for the older grades, including gardening, language (either a single language or a sampler class of several languages) or financial literacy.

Ms. Korson said that she has spoken to a friend who works at NYC Grows, which has a pollination unit. She suggested the possibility that they might come to school to discuss animals that pollinate and plants that need pollination.

The group agreed to continue this discussion in the new school year.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15am.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Norwell
Co-Recording Secretary