



School Advisory Council (SAC)

Meeting Minutes

Friday, November 6, 2009

Present: Cathy Rozansky, Jill Duffy, Karl Mann, Mary Badillo, Akinlabi Hubbard, Blake Menzel, Nancy Friedman, Sherika McClendon, Michelle Tipton, Debra Williams, Gracie Kennedy, Dr. Kelly Coker-Daniel, Doug Skiles

Absent: Dana Long, Julie May, Lisa Weber (all excused)

Guest: Melanie Herring (parent)

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 A.M.

Opening Business

Cathy Rozansky opened the meeting with the explanation that since Dr. Coker-Daniel had to leave early due to a group of Principals visiting Julia Landon, the Principal's Report would be switched to the start of the meeting.

Principal's Report

The District Site Visit, conducted the previous day, November 5th, was successful. Dr. Coker-Daniel explains to SAC the purpose of these bi-annual visits and the items the group looks for when they visit. The reports were as follows:

World Languages - Ms. Linda Dennis is the model Foreign Language teacher in the District at this time. The one point of concern is the lack of ability for 8th graders to take a full year of Foreign Language due to the 8th grade Leadership Elective. Dr. Coker-Daniel explains that this item is being looked into for the coming school year.

PE/Health - Ms. Sandra Platock is a very strong first year Health teacher. She is utilizing the new Step 2 program as the primary source of her Health curriculum. Coach Harris and Coach Hasty were commended on their organizational efforts and on the fact that students were engaged the entire class period with no down time and smooth transitions. JL is also commended on hiring a teacher strictly for Health and keeping PE teachers focused on Physical Education. Math bell ringers continue to be a strong point for the school and are undoubtedly a main reason JL has had the success in math scores. The National Standards for PE should be updated for the Spring visit. Ms. Reni Fenton, the new Athletic Director, is the best first year AD the visitors have ever seen. Her efforts to create Coaches' Notebooks are positively noted. Dr. Coker-Daniel will be looking into receiving additional funds for the transportation necessary for the baseball and softball players to reach practice fields each day during this season.

Michelle Tipton asks if the funds for this item currently come from the school budget, and Dr. Coker-Daniel confirms this.

Foundations/Safe and Civil Schools - JL commended for the high level of detail in the procedural pieces such as morning and afternoon movement, structured movement, and cafeteria procedures. It is recommended that all first year teachers be given the opportunity to go to CHAMPs training.

Social Studies - The visitors communicated excitement regarding the implementation of reading strategies, student self-assessment, and rigor. They would like to see an increase in FRIES, the JL Writing program, and an increase in teachers using child-friendly language in the classrooms in terms of learning goals and standards.

READ 180 - JL is commended on the fidelity of the program, the creative approach to using a 4th writing rotation in each class, and the use of writing prompts as an additional element of the program.

ELA/Science/Guidance - will visit at a different time

Overall: The District is pleased with the JL Grade Recovery process. There were several comments made regarding the organization of the school, the high level of engagement of the students, and highly functioning leadership team, and the feeling of warmth from the students, teachers, and staff. The one delta noted was the inconsistency of the Team Time course.

Dr. Coker-Daniel shared the results of the Math Benchmark test: Julia Landon placed first in the district at the 6th and 7th grade levels, and third at the 8th grade level. Overall, JL is #1 in the district in Math among all middle schools.

The Science Benchmark test: JL is 2nd in the district among all middle schools. James Weldon Johnson is #1 with 72% of their students passing the test while JL is at 67%.

The JL PTSA has a parent challenge - encouraging parents to participate one time each month in a school-based event.

The October event was the Science Fair night.

On November 17th JL will host the High School Night. High schools such as Wolfson, Paxon, Stanton, Darnell-Cookman, Douglas Anderson, and Mandarin will attend to share information about their magnet programs with interested parents. The evening will begin at 6:00 P.M., but doors will open at 5:30 P.M. for parents to pick-up their OnCourse Parent Portal log-in information.

Dr. Coker-Daniel asks Michelle Tipton to share the PTSA sponsored Honor Roll events with SAC since she must leave to host visitors in the building.

New Business

SAC asks Ms. Bravo to clarify the way electives are handled from a Curriculum standpoint. There is concern as to why students and parents are not given more choice in the electives taken at JL.

Ms. Bravo explains that due to the small size of JL, there are very few options for electives. Not counting PE and Health, there are only four elective teachers teaching six elective courses. Students are not given an option in the electives they take due to the limited availability of ALL elective classes.

SAC asks for clarification on the 24 children taking full-year Spanish at the 7th grade level this school year. Ms. Bravo explains that a survey went out last year asking students if they would want to take a full year or only a semester of Spanish. The intention of the survey was to assist in the creation of the

master schedule and to determine if there was an interest in the full-year Spanish course. There were between 20 and 30 students who expressed interest, and the class was built to accommodate that number. The students in the course include those who participated in this survey, but also include some that were based on teacher-requested.

Jill Duffy expresses a concern of the word "Electives" since it gives the notion of "choice". Since there really is no choice, she questions whether the name could be changed. Ms. Bravo will bring this item to the leadership team for further discussion.

Cathy Rozansky makes a motion for approval of the October meeting minutes. Michelle Tipton seconds, the minutes are approved.

Cathy Rozansky asks for approval of the SAC ByLaws. Nancy Friedman makes a motion to approve the SAC ByLaws. Karl Mann seconds the motion, and the SAC ByLaws are approved.

SAC Budget

At the last School Board meeting it was decided that the SAC allocated funds of \$2.50 per student will not be released to schools. There were so many "A" schools that the School Recognition funds overtook all the funding that originally was to go to school SACs. After payment of Mary Badillo's Math Field Day request from the October SAC meeting, the budget stands at \$328.30.

Ms. Spiwak has put in a request for \$100 to pay for the registration for four students at Math Counts. Discussion ensues.

Jill Duffy expresses concern that with such limited funding, any money given must be for large numbers of students, not simply four. Michelle Tipton suggests that JL post in the website and school announcements a need for Business Partners to sponsor the type of request that Ms. Spiwak has brought forth.

Doug Skiles offers to have his law firm, Skiles, Davis, and Baker, P.A., sponsor Ms. Spiwak's request. The group expresses their gratitude to Mr. Skiles.

Melanie Herring asks if the faculty is aware of the limited funds? Ms. Bravo will share this new information with the teachers.

Michelle Tipton suggests the creation of a "Virtual Wish List" that could go on the JL website homepage. Nancy Friedman suggests that with each item on the wish list, teachers share a picture and short message to communicate the importance of their request.

Cathy Rozansky asks Ms. Bravo to send an email to Team Leaders/Dept. Chairs explaining the limited funds and that SAC will be serving as a funding liaison more than a source of funds. Jill Duffy reminds the group the SAC can't be a fundraiser and the point is taken.

Grace Kennedy makes a motion to deny Ms. Spiwak's request for SAC to fund the Math Counts registration. Jill Duffy seconds the motion, and the fund denial passes.

Cathy Rozansky will work with Mr. Skiles and Ms. Jacobs, the school bookkeeper, to allow Skiles, Davis, and Baker to sponsor the Math Counts registration.

Final Notes

Michelle Tipton shares the PTSA plan for the all A and A/B Honor Roll awards. Grade level representatives are planning honor roll ice cream parties for each grade level, and this is funded by PTSA. All A students, starting on Friday, November 13th, will be able to utilize the courtyard for their lunchtime. This will span the duration of the nine weeks. PTSA and SAC are asked to volunteer their time to supervise students. Ms. Bravo shares the lunch times and Michelle Tipton asks that anyone interested should "sign up" via email with both Ms. Bravo and Dr. Cummings. Ms. Bravo gives all SAC members a copy of the Reading portion of the School Improvement Plan. Discussion of the SIP is tabled for the December SAC meeting.

The next SAC meeting is set for Friday, December 4, 2009, at 7:30 A.M.

Akinlabi Hubbard makes a motion to adjourn. Karl Mann seconds the motion. The meeting is adjourned at 8:27 A.M.