

CARLISLE SCHOOL COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

October 10th, 2007, 3:15pm

Office of Patrice Hurley, Co-Principal

Present: Jim Halliday, Patrice Hurley, Sandy Kelly, Linda Vanaria
(Teacher/School Representatives)

Tracy Sands, Alex Krapf (Parent Representatives)

Ann James (Community Representative)

Absent: Louis Salemy

Quorum

The meeting starts at 3:35pm after quorum has been reached. Ms. Hurley supplies the grateful council members with brownies.

Re I: Introductions

As there are many new members on the council all members briefly introduce themselves and share why they chose to represent their constituencies on the council.

Re II: Organizational Matters

Mr. Krapf points out that the current council is not in compliance with the State's statutes governing School Advisory Councils due to a majority of school representatives over parent representatives. After a brief discussion, the members agree to continue this first meeting with the current member roster and have a fourth parent member elected in time for the next meeting to bring parent- and school representatives to numerical parity.

The schedule for upcoming meetings is reviewed and the meeting date and time for the next meeting are changed to November 5th, 2007 at 3:30pm.

Re III: Co-chair and Recorder

Ms. Hurley will chair the council and asks for volunteers to step forward for the position of co-chair and record keeper. Ms. Sands nominates Mr. Krapf and Ms. James seconds the nomination. In the absence of other candidates, Mr. Krapf is elected unanimously.

Re IV: Review of School Improvement Plan (SIP)

Ms. Hurley mentions that the Carlisle School Committee will want an update soon and asks Mr. Krapf to provide the new members with a quick review of the last council's thoughts and opinions. Mr. Krapf recapitulates some of the history, discussions, and conclusions that the last council had arrived at. In particular, he recalls that the last council wanted to change the format of the SIP to more clearly distinguish between

- New or core SAC goals.
These are the core items that the SAC deems extremely important. Such items may be newly added or pre-existing.
- Pre-existing SAC goals that only require progress monitoring.
These are the items that are carried forward from earlier versions of the SIP and only require status updates in the current SIP.
- School status report items.
These are items that are noteworthy because they reflect the work of other committees or of the administration. Such items should be recorded and reported but are not necessarily endorsed by the SAC.

Breaking the SIP into these different categories will require a significant format change. Ms. Sands, Ms. Vanaria, and Ms. Hurley will collect samples of other systems' SIPs so that we don't have to start from scratch again.

Re V: Discuss and prioritize Implementation Plans for the Year

Mr. Krapf volunteers his personal list of priorities to start the discussion and the other members follow suite. Members quickly agree that the top priorities of this year's council include the following items:

1. School Climate/Morale.

When the last SIP was finished there was no official sign of low morale or bad climate. Events at the end of the '06/'07 school year made it clear that this is one of the big issues that have to be tackled this year. Ms. Vanaria wonders whether the SAC can do anything to counteract the bad press that the school has received lately.

2. Budget Crisis.

CPS is facing a big budget crisis and the School Council should prepare a position that reflects inputs from the administration, the teachers, and the parents.

3. School Rules.

The school should review its rules and rule enforcement. Mr. Krapf uses the "Stay on campus" rule as an example. Middle schoolers are not supposed to leave campus and then return to take the late bus. This rule was specifically publicized at the beginning of the year but is commonly ignored and not enforced.

4. Academic Rigor/Homework.

Ms. Sands mentions that her children have attended many schools but have never had as little homework as in Carlisle. She also reports that she has heard that Concord children are better prepared for the rigor at CCHS. Ms. James replies that this did not used to be the case when her children went through CPS. Ms. Hurley recommends inviting a counselor from CCHS to talk about this. Ms. James is surprised when she learns that it is not common practice anymore to bring back high schoolers to talk about their experiences when changing from CPS to CCHS.

The meeting is close to conclusion at this point and the above points are brought into preliminary "headline" form:

1. Staff Morale Improvement (Faculty, Administration, Support Staff)

Build community

2. Review of parent policy handbook with respect to consistency in application & enforcement with involvement of all stakeholders, including students.

3. Participate in budget review – planning, voicing stakeholder concerns to decision makers.
4. Examine homework policy, curriculum expectations and how we communicate them.

Action Items

1. Ms. Kelly, Ms. Hurley, Ms. Vanaria, Ms. Sands will gather samples of SIPs.

The meeting is adjourned at 4:45pm.

Submitted by

Alexander Krapf

Co-chair & Master of Minutes