

CSC Meeting Notes Hamilton Middle School

Date: December 17, 2019

Time: 5:30-7:00 pm

Location: Hamilton Conference Room

Present: Dr. Christian Sawyer, Trista Fussner, Heather Wilson (Chair), Carolyn Leahy, Robyn DiFalco (secretary), Martha Gomez, Nilka Kentish (Vice Chair)

Absent: Melissa Megliola, Natasha Forrest (Carolyn had to leave mid-meeting)

Guests: Brian Jenkins (teacher), (parent), Tim Tanner (parent)

AGENDA

1. Welcome, agenda, norms and roles, opening rituals (5 mins)

Timekeeper: Trista

Observer/Norms: Nilka

2. Community mobilization time – Carolyn Leahy

- A printed list of events was passed out showing events January – February 2020
- We're hoping our January PTSA & AA-PAC (African American Parent Advisory Committee) meetings can have some overlap to collaborate on Jan 16
- Ex-STEM-aganza is going to be big; we've got a lot of collaboration from CSC folks, PTSA, and even the Denver Council PTSA. Event will include current families, prospective families, TJ high school, and community coming to this event. We'll need volunteers helping with exhibits, food, and more. Susana Cordova is probably coming, as well as our School Board Reps, Tay Anderson (At Large) and Scott Baldermann (District 1).
 - Let's promote to the community, post on Next Door.
 - Carolyn will email prospective families.
 - Once we have a 100-word blurb, we'll all share by email and online
- So we're asking everyone on CSC to help promote these upcoming events to our networks. AND thank you for being very engaged CSC members who help in this way!

3. SLT Chairs – update CSC on Master Schedule and Gain Input from CSC

- Brian Jenkins, School Leadership Team (SLT) co-Chair joined our meeting to share details about the decision process.
- Model C was the most "liked" by teachers but also the least liked.
- Round 2, after reviewing the survey input, asked them to weigh in again.
- Now top preferred option is: a 7-period day where they see each teacher every day with Friday shorter class periods to allow for an advisory period at the end of the day.
- Modified block (ABC model) was the least preferred.
- SLT is scheduled to meet this coming Thursday (12/19/19) to make a final decision – or at least a framework, as there are still some things we may need to tweak or flush out. But we want to be able to let our staff know before we go on break,
- Question about staffing: will we need to hire more science teachers or let go of math or literacy teachers? No, we've done the analysis and it has to do with the fact that science teachers are currently teaching electives but they won't do that anymore because they'll have a full load.
- We're trying to have equity among subjects, so equal # of minutes for math, literacy, science, social studies, unified arts. Question: are we solving the problem of equity with this new schedule? So we

see about 70% of the staff support having a schedule like this. Our professional full-time educators are saying this is what will lead to the best outcomes for our students. So yes, we are solving the root concern that initiated this change.

- Electives question about year-long electives and semester-long electives. We'll need to have an equal # of each (full year vs semester electives) so students who need to switch at that semester change have an option for 2nd semester.
- Losing the "Family Reads" class/homeroom – it comes back to how we build community at Hamilton with intention. Where do we build community? It's not through discipline, it's through engagement events that bring us together. So we're trying to have the schedule reflect this goal. Reading is so naturally reinforced in other subjects like social studies and that's happening.
- Question about including a class period for "clubs" – does this model allow for that? Yes, because on the one day per week that we have Husky Pride time, we get to bring in the club time.
- Question about decreasing math and literacy minutes per day – if we're the anomaly in middle schools, if no one else is doing this, if test scores are still important, then is this the right move? Again, we're trusting our professional educators that they believe in the importance of a well-rounded education, and this is the model they support.
- Potential impact on attendance – by increasing engagement and deepening the relationships with teachers seeing kids every day, we think we'll improve attendance because they want to be here.

Budget Briefing by Christian – key budget facts

- Reminder that we're (CSC) in an advisory role here
- Enrollment Trends
 - DPS provided us with some numbers based on birth rates and other demographic stats.
 - Looking at Hamilton compared to other Middle School trends
 - Looking at a cohort of students "In-Boundary": currently we're capturing 57% of neighborhood students. We had higher rates a few years ago, but go back further and we're about the same as 2012.
 - Also their used to be buses bringing kids in from out of neighborhood.
 - Back in 2014-2015, Hamilton had huge test results with the old TCAP test, then we all switched to Common Core and the CMAS test so that was a big thing back year that then led to a surge in enrollment.
 - Prior measurements were more focused on "Achievement/Status" whereas today we're move focused on "Growth". And a prior magnet program screened for those magnet students and now we're a more inclusive student body
- **Projections:**
 - Projected to be 56 students down next year compared to our current year.
 - Our General Fund has a 55K Variance next year.
 - Tiered Supports are also down \$100K
 - Budget Assistance is up by \$7500
 - Reserve/Carry-forward (\$42K)
 - Need to solve for \$592K for next year

Staffing Requirements:

- With schedule change, there are going to be some staffing changes.
- Looked at what the minimum requirements are for mental health, arts, PE, nurse, etc. and considered how much above the minimums are currently are. Just looking at where we could potentially reduce and still be compliant, but have savings. Not saying we want to do that, just saying we could.

- Math fellows – already outlined over email last week. Plan to cut this program and use the funds to support math teaching staff and intervention instead. Better integrated into our classroom structure, rather than pull-out sessions that remove students from classrooms.
- Contracts, retirees, YMOP (Young Men of Purpose)
- Teacher leadership model – we would lose money because the district co-funds it and it affects 20 teachers, they would lose their stipends and it wouldn't save Hamilton any money.
- Recruitment seems stronger
- Whole child team – they're making a difference; we've seen a change in student response surveys which is given during the year; students have better well-being, bullying reports are down. These are Deans, Social Workers, Psychologists. ICAP is the college readiness plan that all students complete and ICAP is up. Hundreds of suicide-risk reviews and we're getting kids support and we do an SRR. This is our Whole Child team. FACE (at DPS) says we've only had 1 bullying report to the district compared to several in recent years. But suspensions are up. So how effective are our Restorative Justice Practices.
- Additional personnel in Math has resulted in improved math growth
- Additional personnel in Literacy has not improved lit growth.
- Additional ELD personnel has improved Literacy, Math and ACCESS
- School tech partner has resulted in improved implementation of technology.
- Community Liaison has resulted in fewer complaints to the district/FACE

Prioritization Exercise 1: What are the key buckets of priorities the CSC values as administration goes to design models for CSC to finalize in January?

- Propose that we meet in January to work on Budget (an extra session)
- We each have 2 votes: 2 post-it notes. Do we want to go to the DPS store and fill the cart with a) Classroom Teaching Positions, b) Whole Child Team, c) Admin?
- Members put post-its up on the board. The CSC placed highest priority on Whole Child Team, then Classroom Teaching Positions, then Admin Support.
- Reflecting comments: Recruitment is so important for our budget. Challenge with low-income neighborhoods and lack of transportation.
- Comment: Makes me sad that Intervention didn't get votes because that's so critical. But in some of our minds we were thinking of SPED and ELD but actually Intervention is different, but also we have the Math Fellow funding (\$320K) that could support math intervention specifically. So we wouldn't be reducing math teachers, we'd be reducing math class sizes!

As we conclude, we have to make a budget for next year – we can either go with what the statisticians are saying or we go with the fact that our hearts are optimistic about enrollment next year. But if we make an optimistic budget and retain staff, we may need to let them go in October and then they can't get jobs. And if we need to rehire in fall, we may not get the best staff.

Observer notes: Nilka noted that we never have enough time; could have spent more time on each topic. But all good sharing and we're all on the right track. Others agreed it feels like the school is on a positive trajectory.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 14, 2020