

Warren Prescott K - 8 School
School Site Council Meeting
November 8, 2017
Meeting Minutes

Opening Remarks & Introductions

Staff in Attendance: Mrs. Davis, Mr. DiGennaro, Karen (Instructional Coach), Principal Intern, Ms. Elias, Lindy Williamson

Parent Sign-In: Jessica Nolan, Mairan Marshall, Leigh Ann Steele, Nicole Day, Justin Flynn, Ames Forish, Jojo Longnecker, Christy MacLetchie, Chris Perkins, Cara Bradley, Jack Keleher

Mrs. Davis opened the meeting at 6:08 by introducing herself and welcoming all participants. She invited all in the room to introduce themselves. Following introductions, Mrs. Davis provided an overview of the agenda and introduced Karen (Instructional Coach)

MCAS Overview

Karen (last name) provided an overview of the WP 2017 MCAS results and how those results compare with BPS and state averages. A copy of her presentation is included with these notes (need to get that from Mrs. Davis). This year, WP families will receive MCAS reports for each student - the reports will be sent home by the WP in the coming weeks.

Mrs. Davis noted that the school is very proud of the scores and that they are a validation of the teaching and learning at the WP. She also noted that the WP decided to take the MCAS on computers - many parents were concerned about how this might affect results (concern about unfamiliarity with keyboarding was top). Mrs. Davis noted that students take interim tests on Chromebooks to help familiarize themselves with testing on the computer so that they are proficient with computer testing before they take the MCAS. She also stated that Chromebooks are now in each classroom from Grade 3 and up (no longer shared among classrooms) and students use them regularly.

MCAS Overview Q&A

Question: Is there a difference in results when the test is taken on paper vs. computer?

Mrs. Davis: Initially students taking the test on paper scored higher because it is easier to annotate on paper. However, students are being taught skills and strategies using the computer to help them annotate on the screen (highlighting, etc) and they are also allowed scrap paper. The interim testing provides opportunities to practice these skills.

Level 1 and Level 2 was mentioned here - about closing the gap between high and low need students but it didn't get into more detail - do you want to add anything?

Question: What do we do with the MCAS data now?

Mrs. Davis: Grades 1-8 are involved in data meetings that look at the MCAS and other assessments plus daily work to come up with a Learner Centric Problem (LCP) to design specific classroom instruction. Classroom instruction is being videotaped and reviewed to determine and share best practices. Mr. DiGennaro added that the LCP looks at very specific issues. He gave a 4th grade example regarding fractions on a number line. Students were having difficulty so the concept was retaught and a quick assessment was given to determine student understanding. He noted that students seem to enjoy the quick process and that improvement has been seen using this technique.

Mrs. Davis stated that many students taking the MCAS are on the cusp of the next tier (Meets Standards to Exceeds Standards for example). WP is working with those students to help them make the jump to the next tier. Karen (last name?) stated that the WP is making sure that students get immediate feedback. She said that when students know where they are going, it's much easier for them to get there (feedback - options - practice loop).

Mrs. Davis also stated that parents want to understand children's misconceptions and want to know how to support their children. The WP is considering allowing students to keep scrap paper and providing parent access to interim tests once they are completed.

Question: What other tests are students taking on the computer?

Mrs. Davis: Last year students took the ANET and this year they are taking Illuminate (a district standard). The test is given a few times/year. Students in 2nd grade are still using paper tests. WP staff is also considering migrating end of unit testing to computers to allow for additional practice.

Question: Do MCAS results influence district resourcing?

Mrs. Davis: Resources are allocated based on student population - general education vs. special needs. The district is looking at ways to expand the WP and more information on that will be provided to the WP community with it is received from BPS.

School Site Council (SSC) Meeting Dates and Times

Staff and SSC leadership have been discussing ways to encourage more members of the WP community to attend SSC meetings. There is a concern that the evening meeting time and the topics on the agenda aren't welcoming to some families. One suggestion was to hold a few SSC meetings in the morning - Mrs. Davis ran this idea by the BPS family engagement coordinator who recommended that the SSC meetings stay in the evening, but that a less formal Q&A may be appropriate for the morning. Suggestions for getting more families involved included:

- Morning coffee with Q&A (Friday 8:30 - 9:00, set agenda)
- A Google doc that parents/caregivers can use to ask questions or provide comments/feedback on school related issues - questions can be asked anonymously.
- Reinstate Principal Office Hours

21st Century Furniture Updates

The WP received a grant for \$111,000 to purchase classroom furniture. There was a predetermined list of furniture available for WP purchase. Options included yoga chairs, standing tables, special stools and other non-traditional classroom furniture. Teachers were able to choose items for their classrooms. Two classrooms will be completed done over with standing desks (one on in the upper and one in the lower grades). Sample pieces of furniture were purchased for students to try out. The furniture will arrive in the spring and if the furniture meets student and teacher needs, fundraising was suggested to as a way to purchase more.

New Business/Updates

Berkeley College of Music - The WP has a partnership with the Berkeley College of Music to provide additional music instruction to students in Grades 5-8. The College has lost some of the funding that allows for this partnership, so the WP Foundation will be providing \$10,000 to make sure that it continues. WP will also looking into expanding this partnership to include 4th grade.

Dr. Chang, BPA Superintendent, visited the WP on November 7, 2017.

Edvestors - Seed Fund Grant

SSC attendees were reminded that school uniforms can be purchased online through the WP Store. Some uniform items - especially gym pants - are still available at the school. A special clearance sale is being considered to liquidate the on-site inventory.

Calendar Items

December 9 from 9 am to 1 pm, WP will be at the TD Garden for the BPS Showcase of Schools. November 22 is WP Spirit Day! There will be flag football for grades 3-8 and a Turkey Toss for grades K-2. Students are encouraged to dress up, paint faces, etc.

School Start and End Times - BPS is considering school start and end times and all options are on the table. BPS sent out a survey earlier this month to gather family feedback about start and end times. SSC attendees were encouraged to take the survey and a link to it will be included in the WP weekly.

The Giving Tree - last year The Giving Tree program raised \$15,000 with the goal of purchasing air conditioners for each of the WP classrooms and the main office. While piloting some air conditioners, it was determined that the school's aging electrical infrastructure can not support the increased demand of the AC units. Money (and a bit extra for potential cost increases) has been set aside to purchase the units in the future. Enough money was left over to provide each classroom with \$100.00. All were in support of distributing the funds. There are no plans to run The Giving Tree this year, however some parents indicated that they like the idea and would like to have the opportunity to give. A parent volunteer is needed to run the program.

End 7:40 pm.

