

October 6, 2021 7:00-8:15am

School Council reps: Abdel Sepulveda (principal, co-chair), Pam Pecchio (parent co-chair), Tina Lieu (parent rep) Michael Simons (parent rep), Karim Ahmed (parent rep), Michele Lippen (educator rep), Marissa Fried (educator rep), Nicole Sullivan (family liaison)

Total participants: ~17

Action Items

- **Assigned to ???** - Solicit educators to join in school mission subcommittee
- **Mr. Sepulveda and Ms. Hedrington**- Draw up guidelines for Halloween costumes worn at school on Halloween
- **SC Co-chairs:** For next school council meeting agenda:
 - Culturally responsive teaching and learning (holidays etc.) (1st agenda item)
 - School mission and vision
 - Food rewards, celebration - come up with protocols
- **Entire school community:** Email Pam and Mr. S if you have any thoughts about next time or an agenda item: asepulveda@cpsd.us, ppecchio@gmail.com
- **All caregivers:** Reach out to, get to know other parents/caregivers outside your circle to make them feel welcomed
- Next school council meeting is 7-8:30PM November 3 in the evening (SC schedule: 1st Wed of each month) - we have to register for each meeting at https://secure1.cpsd.us/school_council/meeting_listing.php?schoolID=21

Agenda

1. Introductions (5 mins)
2. Brief Introduction about what School Council is (5 mins)
3. Discuss Norms (10 mins)
4. What is Peabody's Mission and Vision? (10 mins)

This month's topics:

5. Equity Audit Update (10 mins)
6. Assessment Data Report: MCAS, SEL (10 mins)
7. Food Rewards/Celebrations in Classrooms (10 mins)
8. Address Cultural Celebrations and holidays (10 mins)
 - How do we share information about major cultural/religious events pertinent to the community?
 - Incorporating more cultures into curriculum
9. Comment/Questions (5 mins)

Notes

Brief Introduction about what a School Council is (5 mins)

- State-mandated requirement of all schools in MA.
- SC Members = caregivers, educators, paraprofessionals, family liaison, building principal

- Goal: an advisory board to support the principal in implementing: annual review of budget, school improvement plan (SIP), but also schoolwide policies -- to create an environment that supports all the students
- SC looks at the broad picture, policy making. SC is not to address specific issues in a classroom as that should be addressed sooner.
- We want to go beyond compliance and make sure the partnership between school personnel and families is solid and informs the School Improvement Plan (a living document)
- Next SC meeting: we will get into the SIP: the template, the data that will inform our goals so they are data-driven
- Not unique to Peabody SC that it hasn't been functioning well -- often SIP left to the last minute but that is why Robin Harris (office of family engagement) is getting involved to fix that at schools

Discuss Norms (10 mins)

1. Be fully present (as you can be)
2. Listen for understanding
3. Speak your truth (be passionate)
4. Maintain a safe space
5. Lean into discomfort (we call each other in if needed; we are doing this because we have the same "north star" (guiding principle): our kids.
6. Take risks
(Peabody has great engaged parents. We will have subcommittees to do work. If you're shy, partner with someone who isn't shy.)
7. Accept and expect non-closure (some issues need to be revisited later)
8. *Go slow to go fast* (to implement new policy and protocol with fidelity and sustain them); let's think meta, aspirational, big. We are going to take risks and dare to be great because our kids deserve nothing less.
9. Assume best intentions, attend to impact (analogy is if someone steps on someone's foot, you didn't mean it, but you apologize and empathize with the "ouch" impact)

What is Peabody's Mission and Vision? (10 mins)

- We have the pledge, but school mission is not obvious on the school website (https://peabody.cpsd.us/about_our_school/our_mission) The pledge is not a mission or a vision by itself because it doesn't move us forward.
- Mr. S on what the mission should be:
 - Student-friendly
 - Anyone can memorize and understand no matter who you are (from K, non-native speaker, caregivers, educators, to administrator)
- Mission statements range from wordy to short like: love and inspire
- Let's work as a council and with parents, students, teachers to come up with a vision for next 5-10 years grounded on equity, culturally responsive teaching, anti-racist/anti-bias work and for everyone to reach their full potential. And so everyone who comes to Peabody experiences growth (social/emotional, personal, academic, etc.)
- Looking for a catchy, easy to understand, attainable slogan like you see in businesses.
- How can we create something that kids will buy into?

How to approach this?

- Create a subcommittee
- How about starting with surveying the students, teachers and caregivers?
- Ask parents to talk to other parents
- Look for mission or value words; use a word cloud
- Come up with a metaphor/example to understand “What is a school mission statement?”
- Interested in working on subcommittee: Michael S., Amanda G., Sebastian S., Abdel Sepulveda, Yuisa C., Ilja K.
- NEED to get word out so we can include more educators in subcommittee

Equity Audit Update (10 mins)

- Teachers have taken the staff questionnaire (due today) which is quite thorough and tough, but looking for people to be as honest as possible.
- Will push out caregiver questionnaire next week
 - Explore working with room parents to get high return on caregiver questionnaire
- We are not waiting for the full results of the audit to start the equity work. We are already moving with professional development. (Daily short message, Ms. H is teaching the class that she does at a college to the educators in our building.
- Sense of urgency is real, not waiting till Dec to start the work. At the same time we need to be kind and gentle to ourselves -- data will show old practices that maybe were not kind
- Equity Office will analyze data
- Focus groups: Q. How will they be structured so that people feel free to talk? Focus groups will be
 - Mixed backgrounds
 - Affinity based

Assessment Data Report: MCAS, SEL (10 mins)

- Good news/Bad News
MCAS first-- data on results *(get from Mr S)*
- We need to catch students where they are and move forward.
 - *Q. What strategy are you thinking of when you say to pick students up where they are and move on? This seems very challenging.*
 - A. Using an acceleration academy roadmap to ID the skill they are lacking (it's like rowing while fixing a leak) in a 4-6 week intensive roadmap provided by DESE -- as opposed to the “remedial work” mindset -- while monitoring. This isn't easy work, but we are here to do transformative work.
- Peabody did better than the district and the state.
- At accountability performance we are still at “meeting or exceeding targets”
- Comparing overall grades 3-5, students surpassed the district in ELA and math
- District surpassed the state.
- But we are not yet at the point of being a “school of recognition” (= one of the top schools in the state). Mr. S wants to get there in 5 years as our goal.

Screeners being done now (almost done w/ELA)

- Noticing more students below grade level in ELA and math (compared to previous years)
- Reasons include: COVID (nothing subs for in-person learning)
- Math screener we are using “Forefront” K-2
- Screener in grades 3-5 is iReady

- Access scores for English Language Learner also see drop in performance compared to previous years (not fault of anyone, it was situational)
- We are student driven and data informed.
- SEL (social emotional learning) Competency Questionnaire for teachers taken at school start and gave us feedback
 - Schoolwide we are at start of cohesive SEL curriculum
 - When we look at data for individual classes, teachers graded themselves as proficient, but may not be translated to bigger picture.
 - Next step: our building social worker, Mr. S and Ms. H -- looked at SEL curriculums and found "Zones of Regulation" meets our needs best (using SIP). Will "train the trainer" by training a cohort of teachers
- Thinking of generating a caregiver report that is informative but not overwhelming (as results are very detailed) -- A lot of talking with kids about math to see how they feel about it. It will help at parent/teacher conferences about how your child learns. It's just one data point to help educators know which students need more support.

Food Rewards/Celebrations in Classrooms (10 mins)

- Sharing a meal is community building and fun, which is why we share food
- But concerns about allergies, religious/cultural restrictions, dietary restrictions -- brought up by different families
- We understand the why we do it, but is food reward/celebrations a best practice?
 - Parent who had to provide alternate food with 1 hour notice when there was a surprise party
 - Allergies are not disclosed for privacy issues

Views

- Not be blanket statement like "no food" but be strategic
- But also want people to feel they belong (not being left out)
- Food can be cultural sharing
- Maybe for day-to-day things we don't use food
- As a school, we can be very intentional in the way we talk about food.
- We can say what allergies are in the classroom as a whole.
- Can we have the food culture, but have alternative (e.g. candy w/o gelatin for religious; or allergy-free items)
- Maybe food has to be done with intention and in a thoughtful way that considere culture, allergy, equity
- NOTE: No food celebrations at this time due to covid -- but parent reports food is appearing in classrooms now

Mr. S: Motion to table this until next meeting so that we can come up with protocols

Address Culturally Responsive Teaching/Learning (10 mins)

How do we share information about major cultural/religious events pertinent to the community?
Incorporating more cultures into curriculum

There are schools of thought to acknowledge nothing or everything.

Mr. S likes to highlight and celebrate as it teaches our kids to be multicultural.

If there is something a family celebrates we can highlight it.

****We will start the next SC meeting with this item.**

Mr. S is already getting questions about Halloween. Plan so far:

- No parade (because not every child participates in that)
- Ok with kids coming to school in costume (just no face masks)
 - Let's have a statement about what costumes are ok. That is: not offensive, not cultural appropriation
 - Mr. S and Ms. H will come up with a statement here

Comment/Questions (5 mins)

Next meeting will be in the evening: Nov 3

Questions in the chat as the meeting was ending:

1. From educator: I did want to ask for a way of reaching out to caregivers perhaps through classroom parents to ask what kind of school events would be most useful, relevant to them in terms of connecting with the school and their child's learning.
2. From parent: Many people have questions about covid pool testing schedule, I know there are staffing issues but parents are regularly texting each other to see who is getting tested... and it keeps changing!