

# KING OPEN SCHOOL COUNCIL

(Official Minutes)

## School Council Meeting

Called for 6:00-7:00 PM at the King Open School, 850 Cambridge St, Cambridge MA 02141

**School Council Members Present:** Principal Williams (Chair), VP May Petrov, Kate McGovern (Co-Chair), Izzy Pereira, Liz Randall, Ada Riggins, Bucky O’Hare, Neusa DaCosta, Amber Villa, Alison Munroe, Jose Jimenez, Shalini Ayre (Minutes).

**School Council Members Absent:** Ruth Jones, Jackie Gantzer, Aram Harrow.

A quorum of the King Open School Council being present, the Vice Principal, May Petrov, called the meeting to order at 6.06pm, Wednesday June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and read the call of the meeting.

## Agenda:

- School Schedules for 24/25 school year
  - School Council Elections
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**Overview:** School council members discussed ways to enhance elections and engagement, improve literacy instruction, and plan for the following year's calendar. Also discussed was adjustments to the school schedule and curriculum, including the addition of a new special class, reorganization of existing classes, and implementation of a new curriculum. Emphasized was the importance of planning ahead, a hybrid voting system, advance notice, solid coaching sessions, flexible scheduling, and cultural responsiveness in the new curriculum.

## School schedule changes for next year:

- Upcoming changes and schedule updates for next year are discussed.
- School schedule for Monday-Friday, including start times, dismissal times, and lunch/recess schedules outlined.
- Curriculum changes include 150 minutes of literacy instruction for CPP, 165 minutes for K, and flexible instructional blocks for grades 1-5 informed by district scheduling requirements.
- Discussed challenges with scheduling literacy and math instruction due to restricted instructional minutes (35 minutes for math for CPP, 60 minutes for K-5) and the addition of a sixth prep for teachers.
- Ways to navigate the added layer of Portuguese language arts instruction and find flexible scheduling options for when interventions are pulled in small groups were brainstormed.
- Specials, such as library, will be more episodic and flexible, while others like PE will remain the same.

- The new curriculum will have more science and social studies embedded, and specials like technology and health will be rotated per semester.
  - It was explained that the health teacher is assigned to KO 3 days a week. While some grades have a year-long health curriculum, KO makes health available to all students.
- Discussed challenges with fitting the new 165-minute curriculum into the existing schedule, with some finding it difficult to navigate and schedule.
- The curriculum has been tested in other districts with positive results.
- The district is flushing out biases in curriculum, adding information for teachers on historical contexts.
- There is a need for adjustments in the curriculum to address biases and ensure bridging between languages.
- Schedules are a work in progress, with errors and challenges identified and being addressed through software and team collaboration.
- The schedule for literacy, social studies, and science blocks, noting that some blocks may be split due to time constraints explained.
- Discussed the implementation of a new math curriculum and the need to minimize splitting blocks while ensuring adequate time for each subject.
- Will be changes to morning meetings, including longer blocks and more knowledge-based discussions.
  - The reasoning behind longer blocks, including increased exposure to knowledge and vocabulary.
  - Explained that first graders are expected to learn how to read and understand texts simultaneously, while fifth graders are not decoding CVC words.
  - The two-hour first grade literacy block, including interactive, conversational, and picture-based instruction.
- An additional 10 minutes will not be taken from recess or lunch time, and every school across the district will have the same allotment for recess/lunch (grade levels 1-5 50 min. and 60 minutes K/PPP).

### **School Council Elections:**

- The election process explained, including the nomination of 3 candidates and the opening of 3 seats.
- The voting period will be open until next Monday, with 35 ballots cast so far.
- Highlighted the importance of announcing new members to the community before the end of the school year.

### **Future Planning:**

- A hybrid voting option for families who cannot attend school council meetings in person.
- Suggested a need for translators at meetings to accommodate families who speak different languages.
- Planning a date for a school council meeting in August, considering the availability of members.

- Council members appreciate the opportunity to contribute ideas and thanked each other for their efforts.

### **Action Items**

- Finalize the schedules and have them ready for teachers before they leave for the summer.
- Encourage more voting in the school council election by the deadline of next Monday (17th) and extend the deadline if needed. Post ballots around the school.
- Schedule a summer meeting in early August to plan the calendar for the following school year. Identify dates via email.
- Review the school council training materials if not able to attend the online training session.