

January 14, 2025

Baldwin School Council Minutes

7:45 - 8:45 a.m.

School Council Members in Attendance

Parent Members: Caitlin Dube, Kate Flaim, Eugenia Schraa

School Staff and Community Members: Heidi Cook, Corianne LaBounty, Sara Oliveira, Susan Tiersch

Also present: Jen Nigro, E. Denise Simmons

Welcome

Welcome to City of Cambridge Mayor E. Denise Simmons and thank you for joining us today.

Agenda

- Review Report Card Prototypes
- Family Engagement

Report Cards

At the last meeting, we looked at the big picture of the report card redesign. The goal is to have consistency across the district. Dr. Madera is overseeing that process. Report cards have evolved over the years and will now be aligned to the curriculum.

A prototype of the report card was shared. There is a performance indicator rating scale from 1 to 4 = beginning to exceeding.

- 1 = Beginning
- 2 = Developing
- 3 = Meeting
- 4 = Exceeding

The standards come from DESE documents.

Standards are broad goals about what students should know and be able to do at the end of each year.

Curriculum is an organized plan of instruction consisting of a sequence of instructional units that engages students in mastering the standards.

This year, preschool and kindergarten will also have report cards. This is the first time kindergarten students will receive written reports.

Around the Room - Comments/Questions

Parent stated they would prefer to have two report cards a year with comments rather than four report cards without comments. Comments are helpful. Aware that this puts a load on teachers to-do (as does four times a year!)

Question about the goal of the report card - Is it for students to see their progress? Is it for parents? Is it to show growth? What is the point of assessments? What is most helpful for students? Does it make sense to include how much time is spent on the subject (on the report card)? What is the role of a report card within family engagement?

Four times a year seems very labor intensive for teachers. (The district settled on 3 times a year.)

The beginning of the year feedback is good. It's a good base for what is to come. The MCAS results come out early in the year. Screeners come out early and this is a reference point to give families a picture and also reassurance.

Explaining the performance indicators rating scale is very important for parents. A rating of 2 - developing - might be great, or should I be worried? In the first term, there will be lots of 1's and 2's, and that's okay because we are working to a 4 by the end of the grade. Families need to know that.

As we move up in the grades, it is important to understand what the report card will look like in middle school. That should be part of the transition planning/meetings.

Family Engagement

We did not have much time left for this agenda item. It will be discussed at the next meeting. We started with an exercise to think about your own elementary school experience. What was family engagement like?

We will review Karen Mapp's *Beyond the Bake Sale* Family-School Partnerships by going through a checklist about the school environment, and what we need to better understand barriers to family engagement.

Public Comment

There is talk on the listserv about school councils. Will there be an election for school council? The principals are talking about school councils in their meetings as well. We will have a call for new members in April. Last time, we did not have an election as we had the correct number of parent volunteers.

Next School Council Meeting and Meeting Schedule for the School Year

Next meeting is *Tuesday, February 11, 2025*

Meetings are in the morning from 7:45 - 8:45.

Remaining Meetings

- *February 11*
- *March 11*
- *April 8*
- *May 6*
- *June 10*

School council meetings follow the open meeting law. Meetings are open to all.

Students are always welcome to come to the library and may go to the cafeteria for breakfast at 8:00 or they may stay in the library until the bell rings at 8:30 and then go to their classroom.