

Graham and Parks

SCHOOL COUNCIL

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of School

(Official Minutes)

**School Council Meeting**

Called for 5:45 PM on January 15th, 2026 at the Graham and Parks School, 44 Linnaean Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138

Time

Name of School

Address

**School Council Members Present:** \_\_\_ Rabell Afridi; Karima Cherguaoui; Erin Garcia; Valarie Ifill; Fen Portmann-Katz; Lauren Morse, Dr. Kathleen Smith, Nasrin Belali; Lilly Havstad; Arjun Jaikumar; Ira Nichols-Barrer; Matt Patton; Guy Rosenzweig; Aboma Dirbaba; Jodi Rich

\_\_\_\_\_  
Names

**School Council Members Absent: Guy, Aboma,**

**Also Present: Anna Shin, Anita Hurwitz**

Names

Fen did the motion to approve the minutes

Valarie seconded the motion

\_\_\_ Ira Nichols-Barrer \_\_\_\_\_ in the Chair.

Name

A quorum of the Graham and Parks School Council being present, the principal called the meeting to order at 5:45 and read the call of the meeting

The meeting proceeded with a role call vote:

Notes - January 15th, 2026

### **Review & Discussion Staff “Mini-Grant” Proposal for SIP Funds**

- Build out potential mini grant application to share with the school council
- Funding sources for specific supplies are already available
- Funding in the district though different grants OEIB has a mini grant
- G&P grant application was modeled after OEIB’s example

### Noticings

- Allows educators to apply for \$500 or apply multiple times for smaller amounts
- Proposal must be connected to SIP goals
- Section at the end of data collection and measurement
- School council is mentioned in the mini grant application

### Wonderings

- Will data be shared with the school council? What is the expectation for staff to report back?
- How can we make this inviting to staff so we can get ideas submitted?
- Can we clarify the role of the council?
- How will staff receive the SIP as part of the application process?
- Are staff knowledgeable of funding resources?
- Who determines if a program or project is successful?
- How do we ask applicants questions as school council members?
- Do people know about approved vendors?
- Do you have to be on a team to apply?
- What would it look like to simplify the application process?

### Discussion

- How can we spread the word so that’s exciting? What do those invitations look like?
- Can announce this as a pilot; can apply as an individual or as a team
- Cohorts by grade levels do things together often so is a team based approach better so students are not missing out on experiences?
- Can refine ideas as we go
- It might make sense to start with individuals rather than teams so there’s more flexibility
- Teachers are very skilled at collecting data but street, map, satellite; more specific examples like artifacts, interviews, etc.
- Sharing artifacts and other data with school council

Valarie made the motion to adopt this application proposal for SIP mini grants

Lilly seconded the motion

10 council members voted yes

1 voted present  
2 absent

### **School Administration Report**

- 2 food markets largest ever at G&P; longer lines at the market, increase for requests for boxes
- Second time having a clothing swap at G&P; started spring of last year
- Turkey trot was well attended
- Principal coffee on the new reports cards
- Conference night was attended and pre-conference questionnaire; in the process of meeting with grade level teams in collecting feedback
- First round of grade level celebrations, Grade 5 is tomorrow morning, with a shift to really think about how we can better inform families on what kids are learning
- January 5: staff professional development day focused on strengthening collaboration; continuing to focus on a teaming structure to support all students; debriefed our first round of learning walks and planning our second round of learning walks; Beth also provided PD related to the SIP goal related to mL support
- Future PD around family celebrations is coming up
- Likely new start time will be at 8 AM at G&P for the upcoming school year (SY 26-27)

### **Community Comment**

- Opportunity for after school programming to use some puzzle, lego, or Spanish club; can we use SIP funds to build something there?
- Is it possible to see the brainstorm and ideas that are coming up prior to full applications for mini grants?
- What's the current status for volunteers in the school right now and can we plan to talk about this further at the next school council meeting?
- Why are the grant amounts so low?
  - Grants are \$500 so that many people can apply for these grants

Valarie submitted a motion to end the meeting

Karima seconded the motion

All council members voted yes

2 absent