

Date: Wednesday, September 13, 2023

Time: 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm

September 2023 School Council Meeting Notes

School Council members in attendance: Abdel Sepulveda, Maria Collins, Karim Saied, Marcy West, Marissa Fried, Laura Hazard Owen, Carmela Ulmschneider

1. Welcome Back

2. Re-introductions of school council members

- a. Abdel Sepulveda, entering his 3rd year as principal of Peabody
- b. Maria Collins: Co-chair, parent to 1st and 7th grader
- c. Carmela Ulmschneider: School psychologist
- d. Marissa Fried, JK paraprofessional
- e. Karim Saied, parent to 1st and 3rd grader. 2nd year on school council
- f. Laura Owen, parent to 4th grader and 2nd grader, 2nd year on school council (and clerk)
- g. Marcy West, parent to JK and RAUC student, 1st year on school council

3. Approval of [June meeting minutes](#)

- a. Approved.

4. Presentation of preliminary MCAS data

- a. Data is still embargoed but some things we can say now.
- b. 5 major goals as school: 1) Bring our accountability rate from 86% to 96% in 2 years, 2) strengthen sense of community by working closely with families, 3) deepen DEI and belonging work, 4) reduce chronic absenteeism, and 5) intentional focus on healing.
- c. Results overall very positive, students moving from partially meeting expectations to meeting or exceeding expectations. But 86% to 85% because of 1 single issue: Attendance. Peabody penalized to the full extent when it comes to attendance, 0 out of 4 points.

5. Chronic absenteeism

- a. Now dedicated task force to look at chronic absenteeism. Home visits and other ways to help families
- b. Current [Massachusetts DESE definition](#) is: Absent 10% or more of the 180 school days. (Even excused absences, like illness, count toward this number.)
- c. How can parents help? Thinking about a walk-to-school bus.
- d. If your kid is late to school because of e.g. a doctor's appointment, this can be changed retroactively.
- e. Reminder: Individual parents are not being penalized, we understand that students may have to stay home for illness. The school (not individual parents) get penalized.

6. Family conferences

- a. Parents will be hearing from teachers

7. Back to school night

- a. Change in time, it's now 5:30-7, stay tuned for more details

8. Playground update from Maria Collins

- a. City is adding project to collect rainwater from roof to irrigate baseball field
- b. Bidding is hopefully going out ~now (last week/this week). The earliest the bids will be back is beginning of October
- c. Earliest possible start is November but could be pushed to spring depending on winter weather. Be prepared for ribbon cutting fall 2024
- d. Very exciting! Big project. Please be patient because to do this well and safely will take time but when it's done it will be great!

9. Looking ahead

- a. Michele Lippens will finalize Vision project
- b. Looking for volunteers for a subcommittee to **update Peabody school website** — it is out of date and isn't celebrating our gains. Time for a refresh and to update the messaging!
- c. **Student handbook subcommittee**. Cambridge has rules and regulations for this and then individual schools have their own handbooks. Make it more bite-size, manageable for everyone.
 - i. Reminder: Teachers do not dictate what students wear

10. New business

Bike bus had ~20 students this past Friday. Parent Catherine is organizing. Mr. P attends, Mr. S highly recommends.

Next meeting October 11 on Zoom. Future meetings in person TBD.