

Graham and Parks School

Cambridge Public Schools JK-5

Steering Committee

15 October 2020

7:00 – 8:45 pm

Steering Committee Meeting Norms

- Be punctual & prepared
- Avoid side bar conversations
- Be mindful of air time
- Assume positive intentions

Committee members in attendance:

Administrative Appointees:

Tony Byers - Principal
Claudie Jean-Baptiste - Assistant Principal
Lauren Morse - Family Liaison
Jodi Rich - Community Representative

Teacher Representatives:

Karima Cherguaoui
Erin Garcia
Katie Lynch - Co-Chair
Melissa Mihos

Parent Representatives ([bios here](#)):

Kris Dickson - Co-Chair
Christian Henry - Secretary
Xing Tian

Other Attendees:

Pete Meilor
Shibabo
Ayvah
Leila
Angela Chang
Arrin Katz
Jenn Chen
Ayumi Kawato
Lindsey Encinas
Katie Lynch (parent)

Not in attendance:

Jessica Britton - Hiring Committee
Representative

Meeting Convened | 7:03 pm

1. Introductions | 7:05 pm
2. Principal's Report | 7:12 pm
 - a. *Staffing/Professional Development Updates*

Tony Byers shared that for the staffing needs in the current school configurations:

- a) remote 'virtual learning' stance for all students since mid-September, and
- b) in-person learning for the past 2 school days for the JK, K, 1st grade and select 2nd and 3rd grade students,

that a large number of staff role shifts were required over the summer. Because Graham & Parks started with a large number of paraprofessionals who are certified to teach or in graduate school along the path to certification, fewer newly recruited staff were needed. All staff positions are currently filled.

b. Facilities Update

The two first floor bathrooms have new floors and partitions. The plumbing work in the building involved installation of 4 new sinks for handwashing in both the main entryway and also the cafeteria, with repairs to sinks throughout classrooms. HEPA filters, many more individual student desks, and window shades are also recent new additions. Classrooms are assigned to use only particular bathrooms, which now have occupancy limits. Hallways are one-way only. The gym, auditorium, and cafeteria have limited programming uses so that students are only present in spaces

which meet the district's requirements for fresh air, circulation, and filtration. The normal 3 custodians in the building have been increased to 4-5 by the district.

c. In-person Learning Update

The first in-person day (Tuesday October 13th) went as well as it could have reasonably gone, given all the classroom prep required of teachers in a very compressed time frame. There are lots of new routines for snack time, for mask management by students, for how to use playground spaces, and for how to move about the building generally. Feedback from parents present at this meeting on the first 2 days was generally positive, and according to teachers emotions are running high, people are resilient, and everyone is learning and adjusting.

d. Remote Learning Update

The fall roll out of remote learning was much more effective than the sudden switch to virtual learning in the spring. All grade 4 and 5 students are in remote learning now. While many obvious things shifted, one less obvious disruption common to nearly all students this fall is having a new classroom community because of the changes to teacher roles required in order to support the students in remote-learning. There was one school before, now in terms of staffing assignments and student groupings there are effectively 2 schools in 2 different spaces.

During remote learning, free lunch is available for all families every school day at Graham & Parks through at least December 2020. Also there will be school supplies for students available for pick-up on a scheduled basis through the fall.

Reflecting on the sudden mid-March school closures, the takeaways included that the various tech applications didn't seamlessly fit together into a cohesive educational experience. Now there is a much more coordinated remote learning set of software solutions. The scheduling protocols for remote and in-person learning this fall got crafted toward the end of the summer in a just-in-time way, given that the district level model wasn't clear earlier on. This has had implications for use and adjustments to space, staff, and equipment. A similar planning challenge continues as winter weather will change the effective use of the building. Reading support in particular depends on teachers accessing students via chromebooks, which some families do not yet have access to. More chromebook computers have been back ordered since May and are expected next week.

3. Family Engagement Update | 7:42pm

The current efforts underway to connect families to resources focus on technology and access to the virtual classroom, access to food, after-school programming, and student learning supplies. The student support team continues to meet to structure ways to address any extraordinary needs of students and families.

A 'curriculum night' series of events is scheduled to be held throughout the week of October 26th. The virtual zoom meeting space allows more families to participate, the events are scheduled later in the evening, and families with more than one child can more easily attend. Shout outs to cafeteria staff who have been working every day since March, and often making 2 different meals each day.

It was proposed that a virtual international food night, with sharing of recipes be organized. Jenn Chen has volunteered to write a blurb and contribute a recipe to the event.

It was proposed that parents could organize an after-school series of meetups, or game nights, or movie nights.

G&P's anti-racism work over the summer included staff training and discussions facilitated by Melinda Barbosa. A small group of parents met over the course of 3 weeks this summer to discuss Jason Reynolds and Ibram Kendi's book Stamped: Racism, Anti-racism, and You. Going forward: a date will be proposed for an accessible open parent discussion event, leading up to an invitation to a whole school read of "How to be an Anti-Racist". Volunteers from throughout the G&P community are invited to have input and help coordinate and plan these anti-racist parent engagements, including research on other resources and efforts by CPS schools.

4. *Celebration of Leadership* | 8:22pm

Claudie Jean-Baptiste and Tony Byers have performed the leadership function at a very high level under stressful conditions. Thanks and celebrations of them were extended. It was agreed that the quality of remote learning has benefitted from their superlative efforts.

5. *Other updates:* | 8:25pm

The process to secure an Expeditionary Learning school designation within the EL Education network of schools has been put on hold. A School Improvement Plan process will be clarified by the district and shared with the Steering Committee.

Meeting Adjourned 8:32 pm