**PS 24 PA General Body Meeting**

**February 15, 2017**

**Meeting called to order:** 7:40 pm

**Reading / Approval of Minutes:**

* Motion to approve from R. Heisler, Seconded by D. Weitz
* Vote: all in favor, no objections, no abstentions

**Financial Report: N. Levinson:**

* Valentine’s day sale this past Monday and Tuesday brought in ~$5,000 net
* Classroom Allocation requests for supplies re coming in:
  + Allocated up to $450 per teacher, about $3500 for clusters and $3,000 for other school support teams, and 1 mini grant for a book club
* S. Schwartz approved mini grants, have about $6,000 for that

**Principal’s report: S. Schwartz**

* Budget update: about a week after last PA meeting, the District Supt. allowed me to cut the vacant AP budget line to alleviate the budget deficit. Mr. Verdi is still on leave, that leaves myself as the only admin in the building
* As I like to be in classroom, starting tomorrow, the Borough field support center will send Claudine, an educational support administrator. I’m meeting with her tomorrow and giving her specific duties. I’m hoping that having her allows me to spend most of my time in classrooms and in teacher support meetings.
* Mr. Verdi has extended his leave until at least Mar 1.
* Asked N. Amster to be at tonight’s meeting, as she’s been crucial to keeping the building running
* Ms. Amster is going for school building leader license; I plan to have her as an AP next year, and she’s serving as a “quasi-administrator” now
* F. Byrne, parent coordinator is helping with a.m. routines and lunchroom routines in addition to her regular duties
* Several staff members are also stepping up to help

New teacher workshops:

* Two teachers who are pursuing administrative licenses created a new teacher workshop to acclimate newer teachers to being a DoE teacher, in the classroom and in terms of work / life balance. This is crucial support so they can be successful in our school moving forward.
* Learning walk: We shared results from our learning walk with staff: our students know what’s expected.
* Students what to do but not what they are learning. We need to build rigor, need to teach and tell children why and how the work we’re doing will make them better readers, writers, etc. these are skills they need for for today and moving forward.
* Next professional learning cycle will work to rectify this. It will focus on rigor and engagement:
  + How to identify intellectual engagement, being challenged, and learning, at all levels
  + That it’s OK for students to not know how to do something but what strategies and skills are we giving them so they can answer problems.
* New special / cluster schedule started on Monday:
  + Designed to even out time with every cluster over the course of the year
  + Added small group instruction for each teacher 1x per week: cluster teacher pushes in and teachers will pull out 6-8 targeted students, to addresses areas where students are struggling in order to help them move forward. Each GenEd student will receive small group instruction 1x / every other week; ICT class students will receive 1x / week.
* Feb. break test prep is on b/c we dropped AP budget line
  + Targets lowest third of students
  + Two teachers will teach the class from each grade (grades 3-5), math specialist and literacy specialist, 1.5 hours with each
  + Starts this Saturday
  + Teachers: Six know they are working, meeting tomorrow to lay out whole program
* Difficult decision needed regarding cluster / special teachers:
  + Have too many cluster teachers based on budget guidelines:
    - My plan is to take three cluster teachers and make them classroom teachers; one in each of grades 3-5; this will reduce classroom sizes to 26/27 per class from 31/32
    - Asking parents to give opinions to PA and SLT as to what do we value the most among specials, except art and phys. ed. (mandated): music, science, Spanish, social studies, library, etc.
    - Need one visual arts teacher, we now have two
    - Have two phys. ed. teachers as mandated
    - Today’s extra cluster teachers allowed us to put in place the small group instruction I just described and have scheduling flexibility; does not impact the amount of times students have in specialties (they will receive one period per day of instruction in a “special”)
    - Now we also do not have instructional coaches, so I want to have some teachers become instructional coaches and have cluster / special teachers to fill those roles or backfill classroom roles
      * Ideally, we’d take away four - five cluster teacher positions; of those, two teachers would become coaches; I’ve identified one person who’d I’d like to have become our math coach; currently looking for one person to be a literacy coach
    - I’m asking parents to say, what are the top three areas of instruction we’d want for clusters aside from art and phys. ed.
      * Rank our top three and email to PA co-presidents (i.e., music, theatre, Spanish, science, library, science)
      * PA will bring recommendations to SLT
      * S. Schwartz to make final decision but wants input
  + Meeting w/ Sen. Klein:
    - He shared his concern and wants to support us; I shared my vision for the school and my path to achieve it
    - Sen. Klein to give $100,000 to make physical improvements in the building
    - Had a teacher contest for ideas: winner was to create a brand new library / tech lab
    - Share ideas w/ PA and SLT
    - Parent concerns about bathrooms; PA to go to Ron at SCA to try to resolve
  + Parent questions:
    - 5th grade clubs:
      * We’re not going to have the 5th grade clubs this year; next year we’ll go from a 7 period schedule to an 8 period schedule, and will bring clubs back during 8th period.
      * After testing season is complete, the 5th graders will learn something to perform for graduation

**SLT Report: L. Moukas and D. Salanto**

* Discussion around perceptions of our school

**PA Bylaws Revision Update: L. Moukas and D. Salanto**

* Working on the revised bylines
* Awaiting new template from DoE

**C30 Update: L. Moukas and D. Salanto**

* No update but expect some notification around March 1
* Level 1 interviews did happen as expected

**Committee reports:**

* Nominations and Elections Committee: L. Moukas and D. Salanto
  + Need to create Nominations and Elections Committee, will ask for volunteers to serve on that in March; elections for PA and SLT will be at Jun 14 meeting; committee must consist of 3 - 5 members, with the majority from the general membership, remaining members selected by PA President and approved by the Exec Board
  + Committee assembles ballots, notices, attendance sheets, etc.
* Media Committee Updates: E. Straus
  + We’ve been mostly focused on social media; looking for positive pictures as way to promote the school using Twitter and FaceBook

**Upcoming Events: L. Moukas and D. Salanto**

* Auction 3/11: D. Salanto filling in for H. Makin:
  + Up to ~50 donations for the auction incl. wine tasting, tours, camps, etc.
  + Vacation destinations are needed; if you know of one this coming week, think of asking for one for the school auction
  + Buy tix and come, $50.00 per person, incl. two drinks, lots of hour d’ourves
  + $48 per person catering charge, no profit off of entrance, only off auction
  + $20 for teachers and staff this year
* Sounding Board and yearbook: M. Gauss
  + Request for pictures and articles

**Afterschool Committee Update: R. Heisler**

* Committee focusing on issues / concerns w/ Y! on-site program
* Meeting with director pending
* Looking at other models and options, i.e. PS 81
* Concerns are with programming, staffing (young teenagers watching young children); overall quality of the program
* PS 81 program has teachers and staff create classes afterschool; it is cheaper and more heavily used

**Movie Night Sat. in Mid-March (exact date TBA)**

* Timing questionable b/c ELA testing is the last week of March
* Considering making it a community event without charge
* More info to come
* Also open to other ideas for community events; please share ideas by email

**New Business:**

* None raised

**Adjournment:**

* Motion to adjourn by L. Moukas, seconded by A. Cohen
* Vote: all in favor, no objections, no abstentions
* Meeting adjourned: 8:45 pm