



Parent Teacher Council Meeting Minutes September 13, 2018

Welcome - Christine Meek

- Because of time constraints David Mannis from the Board of Education (BOE) will speak first followed by Superintendent Kim and Deputy Superintendent Lucero
- We will then continue with the rest of the agenda

Board of Education - David Mannis

- BOE spent a lot of time supporting the Stamford Public School (SPS) staff to develop their strategic plan and now on the cusp of delivering them
- Teacher and administrator responsibility has changed – SPS is developing “people”. BOE feels we are in a strong place
- Thank you to the PTC for the candidate forum
- BOE has a lot to feel good about – they are a team; acknowledge their own point of view but still work together well
- No questions for Mr. Mannis

Strategic Plan and Central Office Reorganization – Superintendent Kim and Dr. Lucero

- Refer to printout of the PowerPoint presentation
- Mr. Kim cut out the video for the presentation – but look at it on the SPS website – puts a face to the strategic plan (<https://vimeo.com/251979798>)
- Standardized tests are a supplement to what they can observe in the classroom day to day. Standardized tests are designed to create differences but don't describe well distributions of scores that are bimodal the way Stamford scores are.
- Reorganization of Central Office means that there are new staff members. Dr. Lucero introduced the following:
 - Olympia Della Flora (Associate Superintendent for School Development) couldn't be at the meeting – Mike Meyer – director of family engagement works with her
 - Dr. Mike Fernandes – Associate Superintendent For Intervention and Student Support – special ed/504 plans/interventions
 - Brian White – Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning – we didn't have anyone before whose main focus was teaching and learning
- This reorganization will give the schools more support. They were spreading themselves too thin and now have someone else to do operations. Each member of the team has 5-6 schools they supervise every day. Now Superintendent Kim has more time to go visit the schools too

- Strategic Plan (see PowerPoint for slides)
 - Slide 2 - Background: There was a lot of community participation in developing the strategic plan – parent, faculty, student, community member, tried to be inclusive as possible. The process had checkpoints – 4 checkpoints where there was feedback from business people, community leaders, students, etc. At the end of the process there was strong support from the community for the mission, vision, and goals of the plan
 - Slide 3 - Our Vision – intend to be transformational
 - Slide 4 - Our Mission – cultivating habits of mind, body, and heart (this will help children succeed in the long term). Standardized tests cannot predict this. They can't capture what is most important for students' success. The district is trying to reinvent the assessments for critical and creative thinking that standardized tests don't capture.
 - Slide 7 - Learning Organization. Things were being done that were good – teachers were learning together and learning to be better at their craft. Some classrooms (but not all) had students learning together. Families need to be engaged (all of them) to affect the outcomes. We need our community organizations (including PTOs) to play roles in engaging families & developing communities of practice. There needed to be a lot of work done on the curriculum, which is solid, but SPS wants to take the best practices and share them district wide – need to network communities of practice. We all need to share to influence the outcomes. They are still figuring out how to assess the outcomes. It would be great if everyone agrees that this is where we want to go with our kids. Need everyone district-wide to understand it in depth so we are all working toward the same goals. There will be a lot of training and conversation involved in this but this is how we can meet our goals. SPS will continue to analyze and monitor the standardized test scores but they are supplemental to what can be observed. Dr. Lucero gave the example of the PTC as a learning organization in that we have a unified goal and that we understand that we have a role in the education of our children
 - Slide 5 – The Learning Profile is the idea of what you want your child to be when s/he graduates. It is not just the academic piece. We want them to be kind, for example. We want to make sure all of our children are fed. There is a backpack program in all of the schools now. Some schools are adding to it. We have a problem with chronic absenteeism – we all want children to come to school. We can help our neighbors understand why it is important for children to go to school every day. Two days absent a month is chronically absent (18 days – 10% of the school year).
 - Slide 8 - Habits of Mind this is the academic piece as well as others. For example, enrichment gives children opportunity to excel in many areas. It is important to show children they have talent in different areas. Will see what is going on enrichment-wise in each of the schools and make sure it is even across schools. Additionally, if the district is involved early they can help children come to school ready to learn. If they do that they can read by third grade and then graduate from high school.
 - Parents have a role in this process – they want us to be a part of this plan

Questions:

Q1: Attendance – it is more than the students – what about the teachers?

Answer Lucero – staff and students need to be in school every day. This is a major goal for SPS – remind faculty why they decided to educate children. For small percent that doesn't come along with that will need to talk to HR

Q2: Talk more about Learner Profile

Answer Kim

The Learner Profile parallels the three pieces of the mission (see slide 5)

Mind – critical and creative thinking, metacognition

Body – physical activity, physical needs, food, prevention – making good decisions (wearing sunscreen on the beach, for example)

Heart – kindness, sharing, etc. see slide for the “big five” – social/emotional learning and non-cognitive – these five categories are correlated to lifetime outcomes such as earnings and pro-social behaviors

1. Motivation
2. Dependability
3. Perseverance
4. Team Learning
5. Cultural Sensitivity

These are in the top 7-8 of what employers are looking for

These are good but not necessarily everything like kindness/sharing/compassion, etc.

This ties into a new approach to discipline – kids who are inclined to behave don't need to learn this

The 5% who break the rules would do it anyway

The plan is to cultivate habits instead of criminalizing the behavior

The Education Council went over the learner profile last year in the fall and came up with a restatement in age appropriate language. The district will provide a framework so each school can take the elements and make them their own.

The district needs to assign learning tasks to provide students the opportunity to develop the learner profile

The plan is to design activities that encourage students. For example, tell a student, “Do this differently” instead of failing him or her.

Students won't be in the same place for this so they will need some differentiation

They want to move away from one size fits all – need to work with teachers, families, and alumni

Q3: Make sure we aren't short-changing the students that are toward the end of their time in SPS.

Answer – would love to do that but it is a large organization and will take some time to change mindsets. Principals are excited by it. So the hope is that teachers will get on board.

Q4: How can we engage our families in our local PTOs? What can we do?

Answer – example would be back to school night – usually it is two hours and then over. Take every opportunity to engage in a two-way conversation to talk about where we are going and what we need to do differently. Probably not just have PTO meetings but meet parents where they are if they can't make PTO meetings. Blog where parents could comment, for example, on important topics. Community partners might be able to do this better than SPS

Talk up SPS in the community instead of complaining about the 5% that is bad.

Q5 – is it possible to formalize an ambassador program?

Answer – That will be phase two to spread the word

Q6 – parents at NE had a meeting with marketing team at SPS and didn't feel encouraged. Instead of just focusing on the magnet schools SPS needs marketing for Tour Your School Day.

Answer – moving a mountain so change is slow. From district perspective we are making progress but we need to unite our messaging, etc.

Q7: Enrichment and critical thinking are hard to teach in large classrooms – can you add more staff to improve the fact that the burden is on one teacher?

Answer – good teachers make a difference – they have strategies and tools to help students develop those skills. Can't afford to give all students a low class size because it wouldn't produce the kind of change you want – instead the plan is to invest in replicating good teaching practices

Class size limits are used for budget purposes but composition is important.

There are some interventions for students who need it. Some push-in services were available.

There are different levels of practice in teaching critical thinking. Need teachers to buy in to this.

Healthy Food Choice – Lynn Rule

- Because of the inability to do food-based fundraisers we are getting money from this initiative
- Dollar amounts shouldn't change. The expectation is there will be a new contract to go beyond the three year initial contract
- Documentation is the same. Elementary school funds will go to the PTOs and middle and high school funds will go to school organizations
- Mid-November cut off time

Marvel fundraiser update – Lynn Rule

- 5 schools participated in the Marvel fundraiser last January and they sold 50 tickets
- Ask Lynn for more details

Angela Lorenti Memorial BOE Candidate Forum – Cheryl Pellegrino

- The candidate forum will be on Wednesday October 24th hosted by the PT Council
- All of the candidates have been invited – 6 people are running and hope all will be able to attend. Taking out ad in advocate and will promote it on social media

Other Business

- Updating PTC website. Everything will be on it.
- SPEF serves as bridge between community and SPS. Mentoring program in 17 schools

- US (United Stamford) Day is Sept 30 in Mill River Park – Marcus for Change 5K – all students can participate for free. Adults are \$25 in advance. Participation pass – a school can be sponsored for \$300 which pays for all of the staff and administration to participate. Spirit Award – school that has the highest percentage of affiliated participation will get \$500 for their PTO
- STEM Fest is being incorporated into it this year
- The Mayor’s Multicultural Council – dance and children’s parade – will start around noon
- Shira Tarantino – Sept 29 “Speak Your Truth” Open Mic Night – for high school students – get kids registered to vote – Eagles Loft in downtown Stamford – 628 Main St. – “Enough Campaign”. Please pass this information along.
- Please send board information to Lynn if you haven’t. Need presidents, treasurers, and PTC representatives (names and email addresses).

Adjournment

- Next meeting is Nov. 15. The agenda will be sent in advance.

Meeting Dates for 2018-2019

November 15

January 17

March 21

May 16

**BUDGET FOR
PT COUNCIL OF STAMFORD
JULY 1, 2017 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2018**

	Jul '17 - Jun 18	Jul '17 - Jun 18	Jul '16 - Jun 17
	Budget	Actual to Date	Actual
Income			
Program Income			
Membership Dues			
Total Membership Dues	13,650.00	12,200.00	7,500.00
Total Scholarship Donations	5,500.00	4,500.00	5,100.00
Total Income	\$ 19,150.00	\$ 16,700.00	\$ 12,600.00
Disbursements			
Contributions			
Community Events	1,000.00	-	-
SPEF	500.00	-	-
Miscellaneous			
Publicity/Newspaper Ads	1,000.00	750.00	750.00
Refreshments	200.00	-	-
The New School Gift	-	-	1,000.00
Web Hosting	-	-	67.00
Miscellaneous - Other	-	-	100.00
Insurance:			
Premiums	11,000.00	11,546.00	10,541.00
Claims	-	-	-
Scholarships Disbursed	6,000.00		5,500.00
Total Disbursements	\$ 19,700.00	\$ 12,296.00	\$ 17,958.00
Income	\$ 19,150.00	\$ 16,700.00	\$ 12,600.00
Disbursements	\$ (19,700.00)	\$ (12,296.00)	\$ (17,958.00)
	\$ (550.00)	\$ 4,404.00	\$ (5,358.00)
Beginning Equity @ 06/30/2017			14,057.30
Current Change in Equity			4,404.00
Equity @ 05/17/2018			18,461.30