

# Masterman School Advisory Council

February 19, 2013, 4:50-5:50 PM

## Attendees:

Marjorie Neff	III.B.1 (Principal)	
Louis Borda	III.B.2 (PFT Building Rep)	(Not Present)
Kim Neu	III.B.6 (Department Head)	
Angelina Williams	III.B.3 (HAS President)	(Not Present)
Rita Marazzo-Haines	III.B.7 (Non-Instructional Staff)	(Not Present)
Hannah Kearney	III.B.4 (HS SGA President)	(Not Present)
Scott Philips	III.B.4 (MS SGA President)	
Donna Amit	III.C.2 (Teacher)	(Not Present)
April Claytor	III.C.2 (Teacher)	
Kathleen Dopkin	III.C.2 (Teacher)	
Nicole Geiger	III.C.2 (Teacher)	(Not Present)
Carolyn Gray	III.C.2 (Teacher)	(Not Present)
Barbara Horowitz	III.C.2 (Teacher)	
Jane Monaghan	III.C.2 (Teacher)	
Susan Stranix	III.C.2 (Teacher)	(Not Present)
Justin Weaver	III.C.2 (Teacher)	(Not Present)
Sam Garst	III.C.1 (Parent)	
Marian Gervasi	III.C.1 (Parent)	(Not Present)
Maurice Hampton	III.C.1 (Parent)	
Eden Kainer	III.C.1 (Parent)	
Laura Richlin	III.C.1 (Parent)	
Mathew Whitehorn	III.C.1 (Parent)	
Anndee Hochman	III.C.1 (Parent Alternate)	(Not Present)
Jeanne Ortiz	III.C.1 (Parent Alternate)	(Not Present)
Eli Levy	Student	
Marylou Finch	Parent	(Not Present)
Claire McCusker	Parent	
Alex Kwok	Student	(Not Present)
Donna Aragon	Parent	(Not Present)
Marjorie Brunner	Teacher	(Not Present)

1. Meeting called to order at 4:50PM.
2. Approval of Minutes of January 15, 2013 meeting- with minor corrections.
3. Principal's Report
  - a. Ms. Neff discussed reaching out to grade schools that have applicants with high absence/tardiness; principals are not particularly interested in having Masterman representatives come visit. We may try again after the budget cycle. Also, in order to address applicants for 2014-15 year, we'll need to focus on current 2nd grade students. Ms. Richlin suggested that it would be better to talk with principals directly, rather than school counselors.
  - b. The high school acceptance letters have been sent; Ms. Neff stated that the admissions process this year was very difficult, due to the high academic achievement of the applicants (average PSSA percentile was around 97%). Some parents reported confusion around PSSA percentile requirements, despite three attempts to communicate the high school requirements and process. May try to hold PSSA scores next year, until we get the percentiles for previous year; this is not precise, but will allow parents to get an rough idea of their child's percentile ranking.

- c. The school messenger system (robocall), which Masterman uses to send phone messages to parents, now supports call backs; if you miss the message, you can call back and retrieve the message. Ms. Richlin suggested that all messages should state, loud and clear, the name of the school.
  - d. Budgets should be received on February 28th; deadlines for submitting budget back to the School District are unclear. **[NOTE: Subsequent to meeting, the budget meetings have been delayed until early March.]**
  - e. Ms. Neu asked if Superintendent Hite supported Masterman, or had visited. Dr. Hite has not visited, but Paul Kihn had, and witnessed the problems with overcrowding.
  - f. Stepping Stones had conducted several meetings with former Asian, African-American and Hispanic male students, asking them about their experiences. Next, they are going to hold similar meeting with female students. Ultimately, Ms. Neff and Ms. Claytor would like to video tape some students' impressions, to share with faculty and staff; this may allow quieter kids to speak up and share.
4. Middle States Accreditation
    - a. Two meetings were held recently, working up to a schedule/plan. An accreditation program has been selected - Sustaining Excellence.
    - b. Ms. Neff went on a school visit to Elizabeth, NJ, on behalf of Middle States. That school had recently reconfigured, splitting apart into several separate high schools. The school Ms. Neff visited had 80% poverty, 70% ELL, and 1:1 iPad ratio.
  5. High School Report
    - a. Mr. Levy discussed a survey conducted with high school students. SGA will work with Ms. Dopkin on the data, but some surprising results already evident. Although many students reported stress, they only reported having two hours of homework a night. Mr. Hampton suggested making the survey a permanent process in the high school, to show historical trends. Also, a suggestion was made to survey the teachers, to determine how many hours of homework they believe they are assigning. Finally, the survey data may be used as a part of the Middle States accreditation process.
    - b. A suggestion to schedule homework was discussed; this would specify a particular night of homework for specific subjects. This would be very difficult, as some subjects require repeated practice (math), and would not be flexible enough for some subjects. Alternative suggestion was raise, to have teachers publish homework schedule a week in advance; this would allow students to manage their time, and better balance academics with their outside interests. There is no way for a teacher to "see" their students' schedules, to determine when their students are busy with other courses.
  6. Middle School Report
    - a. Canned food drive is yielding results, but very little participation of 7&8th graders.
    - b. Spirit week is scheduled for June, and spring fling dance is scheduled for April.
    - c. Red and White dance was held at the end of a school day this year; this allowed more participation.
    - d. Elections for middle school SGA are going to be held within SGA; this will ensure newly elected members are already familiar with structure and purpose of SGA.
  7. Home and School Association
    - a. HSA is holding a volunteer appreciation on Wednesday, February 20th; they will be recognizing two departing (graduating) parents.
    - b. Many, but not all, staff grants were approved. However, only 400 families (of 1100) have joined HSA; as a result the HSA may need to hold back on some staff grants. A question was raised- how does this years' HSA membership levels compare to previous years?
    - c. The HSA auction, Auction to Achieve, is March 16th; tickets on sale.
    - d. Clean up day is scheduled for May, date TBD.
  8. Meeting adjourned at 5:50PM.