

J. R. Masterman School Advisory Council - Meeting Minutes

October 14 2014, 4:45 - 5:45PM - Emergency meeting to discuss additional funds

Attendees:

Jessica Brown	III.B.1 (Principal)	
Louis Borda	III.B.2 (PFT Building Rep)	
Tara Hayden	III.B.3 (HSA Representative)	
Alex Kwok	III.B.4 (HS SGA President)	Not Present
Alfredo Pratico	III.B.4 (MS SGA President)	
Kim Neu	III.B.6 (Department Head)	
Bernadette Kearney	III.B.7 (Teacher)	
April Claytor	III.C.2 (Teacher)	
Carolyn Gray	III.C.2 (Teacher)	Not Present
Mike Neights	III.C.2 (Teacher)	Not Present
Jane Monaghan	III.C.2 (Teacher)	Not Present
Steve Gallagher	III.C.2 (Teacher)	
Joanne Donahue	III.C.2 (Teacher)	Not Present
Nicole Geiger	III.C.2 (Teacher)	
Todd O'Neill	III.C.2 (Teacher)	Not Present
Andrea Appel	III.C.1 (Parent)	
Alison McDowell	III.C.1 (Parent)	Not Present
Anndee Hochman	III.C.1 (Parent)	
Mathew Whitehorn	III.C.1 (Parent)	
Meg Wise	III.C.1 (Parent)	
Sam Garst	III.C.1 (Parent)	
Bridget McFadden	III.C.1 (Parent Alternate)	
Yvonne Lee Clayton	III.C.1 (Parent Alternate)	Not Present
Ranim Albarkawi	MS SGA Vice President	Not Present

- 1) Meeting opened 4:45 PM
- 2) Approved minutes of September 16th meeting, with minor edits.
- 3) Ms. Brown gave an overview of two events that impact school operations: leveling and additional funding.
 - a) Annually, the school district adjusts staffing to reflect enrollment; this process is called leveling, and can add or remove teachers from a school. This year, SDP allocated an additional .8 full time staff position to Masterman.
 - b) The additional funding allocated to Masterman is \$118,000. As a “model” school, Masterman has been allocated \$100 per student. The school district is distributing \$15M total; additional distributions are scheduled for January/February (\$15M) and sometime in the spring (\$13.8M).
 - c) Ms. Brown distributed an outline of her thoughts on what to do with the additional funds, as well as the additional staff from leveling:
 - i) Additional counselor: Purchase an additional counselor, using the .8 staff position from leveling, and adding .2 from the funding allocation. Note that, since the counselor will be starting in November, Masterman only needs to allocate 80% of the annual cost. Rationale: Two counselors are simply not sufficient, given both college applications and the new high school application process. The counselors are also tasked with additional responsibilities this year, including setting up events (college fair, PSAT testing). The new counselor will be selected from laid off counselors that have middle and/or high school certifications. Ms. Wise asked how the additional counselor would be allocated; Ms. Brown indicated that this would be worked out with the existing counselors.
 - ii) Additional support staff (noontime aide): Purchase a third noon time aide to help manage morning and lunch time duties. Right now, two noontime aides handle lunch- one in the lunch

room and one on the roof. In the morning, Ms. Brown handles the auditorium, and Ms. Harrison handles the portico- this is extremely problematic and tenuous. An additional noontime aide will help cover both the morning and lunch time.

- iii) Additional school operations support: Right now, Masterman has a school operations officer (Ms. Cruz) for three days a week. Purchasing two additional days (.2) would be very helpful in managing the operations of Masterman; this includes ordering supplies, financial management and helping the front office personnel. This may be complicated, as Ms. Cruz may be already allocated to another school.
 - iv) Extend Philadelphia Young Playwrights: PYP is a great organization, but only selected classes participate. Ms. Brown proposes to extend their participation, to benefit five classrooms. Ms. Wise asked if the additional classrooms could be concentrated in one grade, in order to ensure that every kid has a chance at participating; Ms. Brown was unsure, as it requires teacher commitment.
 - v) Extra curricular, books and supplies: \$15K would be allocated to extracurricular activities fund, \$10K in overtime and \$36K for books and supplies. Ms. Wise and Ms. Appel asked if the book and supply fund could be focused on repaying teachers who are personally paying for supplies; several teachers indicated that it was just expedient to purchase things directly, but all felt that Ms. Brown was very supportive and clear that any expenses can be submitted for repayment.
- d) Several people had suggestions for how to spend the additional funds:
- i) Mr. Whitehorn suggested funding buses to bring tennis and baseball players back from practice at 33rd and Diamond.
 - ii) Ms. Neu suggested looking at the computer support and teaching team. Right now, our computer support person (Rich) is funded by the HSA, but only for 80 hrs/month. This limited support means the computer teacher is swamped with support tasks.
 - iii) Ms. Garst raised the issue of funding restrictions; while the HSA and donors are restricted in the things they can fund, and it may make sense to concentrate SDP funding on those things the HSA could never fund (primarily teachers and staff).
- 4) Several parents raised concerns about the source of the additional funds. Although there is nothing explicitly indicating the source, it is clear that the funding is the result of the School Reform Commission's recent cancellation of the PFT contract, and the associated changes to health care insurance.
- a) Several parents were in favor of not accepting the money at all. Beyond simply a protest, there was also concern that the money would not actually be distributed, pending legal action by the PFT.
 - b) Others argued that Masterman should accept the money, but register protest in some other means. If Masterman refuses the money, the SDP may simply be distributed to other schools.
- 5) A general consensus formed that the SAC should accept the money. A long discussion ensued about the appropriate means of registering protest, centering on the upcoming School Reform Commission meeting on Oct. 16th.
- a) Mr. Pratico distributed a letter the middle school government had approved, that he was planning on presenting at the SRC meeting.
 - b) Several parents mentioned the Masterman Advocates for Public Schools (MAPS), which has drafted a letter which they intend to present at the SRC meeting.
 - c) Ms. Wise volunteered to draft a letter from the SAC, which we could all vote on and (assuming it passes), present at the SRC meeting.
 - 6) Meeting adjourned 6:15PM.