

School Leadership Team Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Virtual Platform - Zoom
Monday, October 4, 2021
5:00 pm – 7.00 pm

Members in Attendance:

- Sonita Ramkishun (Principal)
- Jean Kim (Teacher + SLT Committee Chairperson, elected in today's meeting)
- Leanne Bolson (Teacher + SLT Committee Timekeeper, elected in today's meeting)
- Edwin Mora (Teacher)
- Laura Parris (Teacher + UFT)
- Maria Hantzopoulos (Parent + PTA Co-President)
- Sue Sekar (Parent + SLT Committee Secretary, elected in today's meeting)
- Fiona Yung (Parent)
- Alisha Arthur (Parent)
- Dragos Bozdog (Parent)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5.05pm.

2. Review and approval of September 20, 2021 SLT meeting minutes

The draft minutes from the September 20, 2021 SLT meeting had been shared in advance. Some review points and changes were discussed and agreed. A motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded. All were in favor; none abstained.

The approved minutes will be published on the school and PTA websites.

3. Introducing the SLT

a. Purpose of the SLT

The purpose of the SLT is to work together on the Comprehensive Education Plan (“CEP”) goals and create and implement action plans to enable the school to attain those CEP goals. The school has CEP goals focused on Math, Science, ELA, Special Education and ENL students. The SLT should keep the goals updated and discuss and adjust as appropriate, based on changing needs and priorities. The SLT will use data-based analysis to update the CEP goals and make them applicable for current needs.

The SLT also undertakes a review of the school budget to ensure we are directing funding in a way that helps the school achieve the CEP goals.

b. Roles and Responsibilities on the SLT

The following SLT members were elected unanimously for the SLT Committee roles for the 2021-22 school year:

- Jean Kim – Chairperson
- Sue Sekar – Secretary / Minutes keeper
- Leanne Bolson – Timekeeper

The SLT Committee determined that the role of Task Manager was not required at this time and the Committee will keep itself on track with ensuring tasks and agenda items are addressed in a timely manner.

4. Q&A Session on Q300 SLT By-laws

The Q300 SLT by-laws were last updated on January 20, 2021, and approved in the SLT meeting on March 25, 2021.

The SLT reviewed the by-laws and engaged in discussion:

- Sonita is working with Student Government at the Upper Division to nominate a 7th or 8th grade student to join the SLT this year.
- The number of parents and staff are to be confirmed (and whether Sonita, as Principal, counts as a staff member or whether an additional staff member should be added).

- Regarding the clause about CBO participation on the SLT, this is specifically for CBO's that work in schools during the day on school programming. In the past, we have had CBO's (outside external organizations) attend some SLT meetings and give presentations on various topics of interest.

5. Staffing shifts (effective October 4, 2021)

In introducing this topic, it was noted that we are currently operating in a very difficult environment and the situation has been challenging for our whole community. The School Administration must protect the medical privacy of the staff so at times may not be able to answer parent questions about specific staff. However, it is important to note that the School Administration are focused on the health and wellbeing of all staff and students and asks that the community show understanding and compassion during these challenging times.

The following staffing shifts will be occurring effective October 4, 2021 (and have been approved by Dr. Composto).

Lower Division:

- Class 201 will have a long-term substitute going forward. Ms. Leanne will help lead the grade curriculum to ensure both classes are receiving the same learning experience.
- Class 301 will have a long-term substitute for ELA and social studies social-emotional and Ms. Stephanie will support across the grade.
- Administrative – Maria Panagiotakis will become Acting Assistant Principal for the Lower Division, once a replacement teacher is found for class 401.

Upper Division:

- Anna Hauser will continue teaching classes but will also be a Site Supervisor for a couple of periods a day.
- A new staff member (Alex Maysonet, from Central) will be joining Q300 in an administrative/support role at the Upper Division (and potentially Lower Division, if needed).

Anna Hauser and Maria Panagiotakis were invited to speak at the SLT meeting:

- Anna, who has been at the school since its second year, expressed that she is very excited to take on this new role and work with our Q300 staff and students in the new Site Supervisor capacity.
- Maria, who has been at the school for five years, expressed her gratitude for the opportunity. Maria has her Admin license and has been working as Site Supervisor recently, so she has experience working with the staff.

6. Reviewing CEP Goals & Action Plans

The CEP goals should be S.M.A.R.T. goals, meaning they should be **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant and **T**ime-Based.

The SLT reviewed the Q300 CEP goals and whether they were S.M.A.R.T. goals.

Observations and Next Steps shared:

ELA goals – for the Lower Division, pre-assessments have started which will assist in the development of the curriculum this coming year. For the Upper Division, students have started recommending books that they feel represent themselves (personality, families, cultures, traditions) and we will add some of those books into each classroom.

Next steps:

- Timeline should be specified for Math, Science and ELA.
- The goals should be updated to make note of i-Ready, which will provide data for Math and ELA (on top of the other measures).
- For the Social emotional goals, they should be updated to mention ASPIRE, Responsive Classroom, Sanford-Harmony.
- Update the goals on the fostering of peer-to-peer interactions connectedness for remote students (which was required in the hybrid learning environment where some students were fully remote). Alter this goal to provide support to those students now returning to the in-person learning environment as well as providing support for all students for meaningful in-person connectivity.

7. Reports

a. Principal Report

Beginning of the Year Assessments: We will soon be starting the i-Ready diagnostic screening to gather data to drive our educational instruction. Parents of Lower Division students have been asked to send their childrens' login and passwords, to enable students to undertake the testing at school.

For K through 2nd Grade screenings, we are using Acadience for reading and i-ready for Math. For Grades 3rd to 8th, we are using i-Ready for both ELA and Math screenings.

Parent workshops about i-Ready will be held on October 5th – more information can be found in Sonita's recent Principal's email.

Socialize with Sonita: Sonita will be holding "Socialize with Sonita" meetings on October 6th and 7th where she will have informal conversations with parents and guardians regarding whole-school matters. Note that this forum will not address individual student queries.

Diversity initiative: Q300's Diversity Admissions Policy (which was approved last year) was applied to incoming 2021-22 Kindergarten admissions. The policy allowed for 40% of seats to be reserved for students in certain lower-income housing, e.g. Section 8 housing, homeless shelters, etc. Under the diversity initiative, 19 Kindergarten students were accepted into Q300, 6 of whom were siblings of existing students and the other 13 were non-siblings. The other 29 students enrolled in Kindergarten were not diversity admission applicants – and 16 of those were siblings and 13 were non-siblings.

Note that the Diversity Admissions Policy was only applied for Kindergarten admissions. For 1st to 3rd grade admissions, the school offered open seats to waitlist applicants from prior years' G&T testing processes. A request was made about the initiative's demographic data however it is not available yet.

b. UFT Report - Appendix 1

The UFT Report was submitted in advance of the meeting and taken as read. The full report is attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

c. PTA Report - Appendix 2

The PTA Report was submitted in advance of the meeting and taken as read. The full report is attached as Appendix 2 to these minutes. Sonita also provided the following responses to the parent questions noted in the PTA Report:

Quarantine: Quarantining is required for people who are unmasked and who were less than 3 feet away from a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. It is recommended that those students/staff get tested for COVID-19. Where a possible case comes up, Sonita reports this to the DOE Situation Room and emails the COVID-19 test results sent in from parents. If the testing is positive, the school will make a list of all places the student was in the building or on the school bus in order to do contact tracing.

For students who are required to quarantine, they will have one-on-one discussions with the teachers (during office hours) to work out their asynchronous learning plan. Students who are kept home from school by choice will be marked absent.

Transition anxiety: The school is trying to address this with a lot more check-in conversations with the SEL support team (school counselors etc) Khary and Rachel. Parents are encouraged to contact the SEL providers or the child's teacher if they want to share any information about loss and grief, or any stress or anxiety about homework or transitions back to school, so we can help them address.

Indefinite leave for teachers: Addressed earlier in this SLT meeting.

OPT Busing: Parents should continue to escalate issues to the school by emailing schoolbus@q300.org - the school then reaches out to the OPT busing liaison. The school follows up on issues every 2-3 days. It can take some time to resolve issues, but we have seen some resolutions starting to come through in the last few weeks.

8. **Parking Lot: Questions and Comments**

None

9. **Next steps**

Action steps on the CEP goals will be discussed further in the October 18, 2021 meeting.

Data from the i-Ready assessments will be shared and questions addressed when the data is available, likely in the November 1, 2021 meeting.

10. **Adjournment**

Shout-outs were given to:

- Q300 staff who have been working hard, collaborating and adapting to multiple changes in this environment;
- Jean, Leanne and Sue for taking on the SLT leadership roles;
- New SLT members for their insightful questions during the meeting;
- The Q300 Administration and staff who are dealing with multiple changes and are working through solutions;
- Q300 students who are patient and flexible, it is a privilege for teachers to get to know our students so well and they have been resilient throughout this challenging situation;
- Sonita for leading the whole school through this very difficult time.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.08pm.

APPENDIX 1 – UFT report (Laura Parris) – October 4, 2021 SLT

- COVID testing is now happening weekly in schools
 - The city began weekly testing of 10% of unvaccinated people in all schools on 09/27/21; testing is only happening for students whose parents/guardians provided consent
- The city's new quarantine policy also went into effect on 09/27/21
 - According to the new policy, students who are masked and three feet apart do not have to be quarantined as a close contact if a student in the same classroom tests positive for COVID.
- Be sure to contact your child's homeroom teacher and the Main Office if your child will be absent (COVID-related or otherwise)
- Ensure that you're sending your child to school with a properly fitting mask
- Teachers will not be emailing newsletters; refer to the [Google Site links \(https://sites.google.com/q300.org/weeklyprincipalupdates/home?authuser=0\)](https://sites.google.com/q300.org/weeklyprincipalupdates/home?authuser=0) that Sonita shares
- [Queens UFT Parent Conference \(https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KxTvQpx-HrqeozNeZ0MtNVbi3TLsiKTr/view?usp=sharing\)](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KxTvQpx-HrqeozNeZ0MtNVbi3TLsiKTr/view?usp=sharing) - Saturday, 11/20/21

APPENDIX 2 – PTA report (Maria H.) – October 4, 2021 SLT

1. **PTA Meeting.** The first PTA meeting was held last week. Over 75 participants.

1. **Back to School Meet up.** Thanks to all the parents, caregivers, and staff who came!

1. **New Executive Board.** First we would like to welcome our new Board Members! Thank you all! They are: <https://q300pta.org/pta/about-us/>

1. **PTA Mission:** The mission of the Q300 PTA is to enrich and improve the educational, emotional, and social lives of Q300's students by providing the following: (a) Supporting activities that foster the core values of Q300: Inclusion, Inquiry and Responsibility; (b) Providing support and resources to Q300 for the benefit and educational growth of its students; (c) Developing parent and staff leadership, fostering and encouraging participation at all levels of the Association, and providing opportunities to participate in school governance and decision making; (d) Promoting a cooperative working relationship among the Q300 parents, families, staff, and administration; and (e) Providing a forum where parents and staff members discuss innovations and implementations of curricular and extracurricular activities that afford each student an opportunity to acquire the core values of Q300.

1. **PTA Elections.** Open Positions next meeting

1. **Class parents.** Two people can serve per classroom. Suni at the upper division at UDRep@Q300pta.org or Nick at the lower division at LDRep@q300pta.org are organizing.

1. **Covid Safety Task Force.** It is emerging and right now they are researching how to bring mobile vans to the school area to increase testing.

1. **PTA Enrichment/Funding Update**
 - Working with the administration to fund safety supplies including some air purifiers for larger spaces, extra kn 94 masks, and outdoor seating equipment.
 - Working with school to fund enrichment
 - LD: K-4: Arts Connection, 1 art and 1 music period (except grade 2 has Architecture instead of Art) Hoping to get architecture for 3rd grade too since they did not have last year.

- 5th Grade: 1 music period. i. Instrument restriction bc of COVID. ii. May use Guitars or ukuleles or may be music composition on computers. Working with Arts Connection
- 6-8 Grades: If teachers want to partner with an organizations
- UD Math and Debate Team expenses.
- We are also funding teacher wishlists, financial hardship funds, stepping up and graduation events, as well as professional development for teachers as needed and according to our approved budget.
- Due to space and other constraints by DOE, and until further notice, we cannot resume our TA program at this time.
- Our administration is in receipt of special recovery funds of which together with PTA funding will help support school enrichment and other needs

Q300 PTA Fundraising

1. **School-Wide Summer Read-a-Thon.** The Summer Read-a-thon is **still on** and has been *extended to Monday, October 18th*. Q300 is a community of learners and readers, reading throughout the summer months. The purpose of the Read-a-thon is to support our love of reading while simultaneously raising money for our school's enrichment programs. Our goal is for each Q300 student to raise \$50 (through sponsors far and wide) or to ask 10 people for donations! So far we have raised **\$695!** Let's keep it going, readers!

2. **Q300 Blooms.** If you love gardening - or looking for holiday gift ideas for someone who wants to add flowers to their garden - we are partnering with "Flower Power Fundraising" this fall! Now accepting orders for spring garden bulbs! By now you should have received our beautiful flyer via email about this fun initiative -- browse the different varieties of tulips, daffodils, lilies and more (sourced from the US & Holland) at <http://Q300PTA.fpfundraising.com>. Please note, the deadline for these online orders is **Friday, Oct. 15th**. Orders are shipped directly to your home, or your recipient's. A portion of the sales will fund enrichment programs. We've raised **\$489** so far! Visit the Q300 Blooms page to check on our PTA's progress with this effort. Thank you!

3. **PTA Shopping Kickbacks.** Earn money for the PTA just by shopping! Check out the list here of how you can earn money for the PTA throughout the year at [Q300 PTA Shopping Sites](https://q300pta.org/fundraising/fundraising-intro/) (<https://q300pta.org/fundraising/fundraising-intro/>) (including Amazon Smile program, Land's End uniforms, Mabel's Labels, Book Culture, and more).

4. **Vaccine Referral Program.** Q300PTA is an approved non-profit group that can receive \$100 for every individual who receives their first vaccine dose at a **City-run vaccination site or an in-home vaccination** and chooses Q300 PTA as their referral organization! Q300PTA will be able to earn up to \$20,000 (= 200 referrals). Do you have children who will be turning 12 this year? If they are receiving their first or second dose of a covid vaccine, they can also have a referral bonus sent to Q300PTA. Please keep this in mind if/ when vaccines open up for children ages 5-11 as well. Friends, family and neighbors can choose the group they wish to send a bonus to as well, at their first appointments; schedule online at: nyc.gov/vax4nyc or just walk in to a NYC run site. Protecting yourself and supporting your community is safe, free and easy. To find out more information about vaccinations, see this link [Frequently Asked](#)

[Questions about COVID-19 Vaccination | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html>) and [Frequently Asked Questions | COVID-19 Vaccine](https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/frequently-asked-questions-0) (<https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/frequently-asked-questions-0>). So far, we have earned **\$300** since our PTA was approved as one of the referring organizations! Thanks for spreading the word!

5. **Thanksgiving Pie Sales.** Since Q300's beginning, the PTA has organized a pie sale. Pies are picked up at school or sent home the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. We are doing it again and stay tuned! Betty Bakery and La Guli are our partners.

6. **Tea Collection** clothing company kickback. **October 4-12.** Q300 PTA has once again partnered with Tea Collection children's clothing company for a fundraiser. Every purchase made through <https://www.teacollection.com> will save you 20% off your purchase. Q300 PTA will also receive 15% of your purchase as a donation from the company. To receive your personal discount and the donation to the PTA, use code **SDF21Q300PTA**. The promotion *starts* on Monday, Oct 4th and **ONLY** runs through Tuesday, Oct 12th.

7. **Volunteer Survey** has gone out and the Membership Committee is forming PTA subcommittees!

Parent Concerns and Queries

1. **Quarantine Questions.** Many parents are still unclear about COVID protocols and what constitutes a close contact, given that students are unmasked during lunch and snack, engage in after school together, sit across from each other in some rooms and are often less than 3 feet, etc... There is also concern that if people choose to self-quarantine (if there is a case in the class or there was other exposure), the student will not be coded in a way

2. **Transition back this year.** Some parents across multiple grades have reached out about the transition back to school this year. In particular, they are worried about some of the in class and or homework assignments they are currently expected to do were not in fact taught last year, though it seems some families personally supplemented the curriculum. This is causing students stress and anxiety. Others are concerned that there is a rapid return that does not acknowledge the stress, grief, or loss that students have been or have experienced. It has been raised that this is a big departure from last year where there was more attention to this. It has also been raised that after so much remote learning, students in the elementary grades are still reliant on online tools rather than writing by hand.

3. **Indefinite Leaves.** There have been emails today about the news that two teachers are on indefinite leave. There is the concern about lack of consistency and quality instruction that in these grades, they had long term subs last year too. There is also a concern that the Q300 remaining to support the subs will get burned out as they have their own classrooms.

4. **OPT Busing.** There is concern that the buses are late or take too long. Aside from emailing OPT, there are questions about how the school is advocating for these children.