

**School Leadership Team Meeting**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Virtual Platform - Zoom**  
**Thursday, April 22, 2021**  
**5:30 pm – 7.30 pm**

**Members in Attendance: Sonita Ramkishun (Principal), Ali Lisberger (SLT Timekeeper + UFT), Chidi Amasiani (Teacher), Kiera Sullivan (SLT Chairperson + Teacher), Jean Kim (Teacher), Maria Hantzopoulos (PTA Co-President), Sara Clough (Parent), Sue Sekar (SLT Secretary + Parent), Ian Koh (Parent), Fiona Yung (Parent)**

**In attendance: Anna Milonakis**

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5.33pm.

**2. Review and approval of March 25, 2021 SLT meeting minutes**

The draft minutes from the March 25, 2021 meeting had been shared in advance. 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. Review Strengths and Needs & Priority Areas**

A summary of the strengths, needs and priority areas discussed in the March SLT meeting (presented in the table below) were reviewed by the SLT.

Strengths	Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadly across most of the grades, performing above grade level (higher level on average)</li> <li>• Operational math/base-ten and base concepts were scoring on average of 95% or higher using Savvas Realize</li> <li>• 6th and 7th grade on average are reading at level or one level above</li> <li>• Improved from previous year overall Supportive Environment was rated high- 4.64% (2019)</li> <li>• Trust 2.85% to 3.00%</li> <li>• 85% of families get to visit classrooms or participate in classroom activities</li> <li>• Parent Feedback overall was positive</li> <li>• Technology was not a difficult transition for students 98%</li> <li>• 97% are using remote learning tools and easily accessible</li> <li>• 93% of students said teachers were readily available</li> <li>• Clear communication to families 50%, especially with Covid-19- 95%</li> <li>• 99% Teachers felt there was clear communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Had difficulty with understanding details and making connections</li> <li>• Understanding language, craft, and structure. (2-5, and 8th grades)</li> <li>• Writing conventions (k-8)</li> <li>• Algebraic thinking using different strategies</li> <li>• Remote learning and the gap. Will there be a larger gap? (using online manipulatives compared to physical ones)</li> <li>• How are you going to show your thinking and explain how you solved it?</li> <li>• 71% of teachers say that students feel challenged / 65% of students say that they are challenged in their classes (rigorous instruction)</li> <li>• 67% of teachers say that students build on each other's ideas during class discussion (high-order thinking capability)</li> <li>• 57% of teachers say that students behave well in class even when the teacher isn't watching.</li> <li>• 60% of students say that most students behave well even when the teacher isn't watching. (Q6e)</li> <li>• 52% of teachers say that students rarely or never harass, bully, or intimidate other students</li> <li>• Peer to peer connection 56%- children feel stressed out</li> <li>• Need of social-emotional learning</li> <li>• 67% of teachers say that their professional development experiences this year have been sustained and coherent.</li> <li>• Families concerned with live-streaming</li> <li>• Staff concerned with social emotional learning, especially with SWD and ELL</li> </ul>

## Develop CEP goals for 2021-2022 school year

The SLT went into breakout groups to develop CEP goals and action steps for the coming school year, to continue building on the following **priority areas**:

- A. **ELA:** Understanding detail and making connections, and understanding writing and language structure.
- B. **Math:** Algebraic skills, critical thinking, explaining solutions to math problems and real world connections.
- C. **SEL:** Foster peer to peer connections to assist with social emotional and academic growth.

- D. **Science:** Assessing needs and building SMART goals for the 2021-2022 school year and coming up with action steps.

The SLT returned from the breakout rooms and shared the draft CEP goals and action plans they had developed:

**ELA:**

Goal: Through the use of culturally responsive books, exemplar writing samples and diverse student experiences, students will develop their understanding of making connections, identifying key ideas, and language structure. This will be measured by student on-demand writing pieces and project-based assessments.

**Initial action steps identified (more to be developed):**

- Increase multidisciplinary planning for teachers and collaboration across teachers in different subjects, getting deeper with cultural texts (spending longer on studying a books) so students can cover more areas/subjects
- Professional development for teachers on project-based learning
- Developing project-based assessments
- Vertical planning by teachers

**MATH:**

Goal: Through inquiry-based learning and vertical planning, students will be able to demonstrate their critical thinking and algebraic skills by explaining their mathematical process in solving real-world problems. This will be measured by MOSL's (Measures of Student Learning), teacher-created assessments and Algebra 1 Regents.

**Initial action steps identified (more to be developed):**

- Vertical planning by teachers

**SEL:**

Goal: Students will engage in a schoolwide SEL framework to build skills in peer-to-peer connections tied to social-emotional and academic growth through morning meetings, advisories, classroom and family engagement enrichment activities, and one-on-one check-ins with social workers/counselors. This will be measured by a number of regularly scheduled morning meetings, advisories, enrichment activities and one-on-one check-ins with social workers/counselors as well as measurements such as instances of bullying, engagement in the classroom etc.

*Sonita asked for the group to include (in the above SEL CEP goal) the school's core values (inclusion, inquiry, responsibility), diversity calendar and PBSI (ASPIRE) – the group will take this away and update it.*

**Initial action steps identified (more to be developed):**

- Purchase of SEL books for school-wide reading for students over the summer

Sonita will upload the CEP goals into the I-plan portal.

#### **4. Empathy Conversations (as per Chancellor)**

The Chancellor has been discussing the below questions with Principals as part of planning for the next school year and requested that schools engage with their community on these topics. The SLT also discussed and provided the answers below:

##### **Reflections on school this past year:**

- How are you feeling about school year 2020-21? Why?
  - Lost opportunity
  - Overwhelmed, exhausted, drained
  - Hectic
  - Grateful
  - Resigned
  - Lucky (school did a great job)
  - Safe (COVID-19 protocols)
  - Safe space to connect with school staff and administration
  - Supported
  - Concerned
- What was a major success this school year? What was a major challenge this school year? (e.g., related to instruction, social emotional well-being)

##### Successes

- School has rolled with the punches, maintained positivity
- Live teaching right from the start of the school year
- Executive functioning skills in the younger grades (maintaining a schedule, logging on). Children learned to become more autonomous.
- Teachers went above and beyond to engage students
- Teachers were able to incorporate more technology into their classes
- Strong communication from school administration
- Blended model has been a success for students able to attend school and meet their teachers and friends

##### Challenges

- Teachers finding it hard to connect with students
- Connectivity for the students, with their peers

- Harder for students to engage with the curriculum
  - Not knowing what was coming next was unsettling
  - Students and teachers are getting tired
- What lessons have you learned during the pandemic that should inform planning for next school year? (e.g., around instruction, students/family/staff supports, racially just and equitable education)
    - Remote instruction didn't translate as well for younger grades, so in-person learning is better
    - Staff and parents need to be more forgiving of themselves, we cannot be perfect and attend to every single thing, and we need to be OK with that in these strange circumstances
    - Connections to culturally relevant literature and social issues was positive for students and kept them engaged
    - All households are not in the same situation, students may not be able to do things the way you expect, so being flexible and patient was important

### **Look to the future and think about next school year:**

- What types of supports do you think students, families, and staff will need for next school year?
  - More open discussions with staff on how to engage and connect with students
  - School-wide apps for all teachers to use on a consistent basis, so it's easier for everyone to use
  - More SEL activities and more one-on-one activities
- If schools were offered additional funding, how should they spend it and how would it benefit students?
  - Culturally relevant books for students to connect with
  - Additional funding to reduce class sizes
  - Professional development for staff (including trauma-informed instruction)
  - Compensation for teachers who work outside of school hours
  - Extra support for students who need extra help academically or social-emotionally (tutoring or extra academic or other assistance/attention)
  - A building to house our full school (across all grades) in one location

**5. Reports**

All reports were submitted in advance of the meeting and taken as read. Full reports are attached as Appendices to these minutes. Any updates to those reports (discussed in the meeting today) are outlined below:

**a. Principal Report – Appendix 1**

No additional updates.

**b. UFT Report - Appendix 2**

No additional updates.

**c. PTA Report - Appendix 3**

No additional updates.

**6. Parking Lot: Questions & Comments**

None.

**7. Next steps**

The next SLT meeting is May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021, where we will continue working on the CEP Smart goals for the 2021-2022 school year, in particular the Supportive Environment goal and the Science goal.

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7.32pm.

## APPENDIX 1 – Principal’s report – APRIL 22, 2021 SLT

### Newly Opt-in students:

We are able to keep Kindergarten, first grade, second grade, fifth grade, and eighth grade 5-days a week. All other grades will remain in the A/B cohort. All students K-8 will continue to be seated 6ft apart in the classroom. We do not have the capacity as a co-located school to move students to 3ft apart and accommodate for breakfast and lunch 6ft apart.

Class	# opting in
K01	1
K02	2
101	5
102	5
201	3
202	3
301	2
302	3
401	4
402	3
501	2
502	3
601	1
602	4
701	2
702	1
703	4
801	5
802	1
<b>total:</b>	<b>Approx. 54</b>

## **ELA and Math State test:**

ELA testing window: April 19 to April 29

Math State testing window: May 3 to May 14, excluding May 13.

ELA state testing was successful in both buildings. We scheduled in-person students on Monday and Wednesday and remote students on Tuesday and Thursday. Any make-ups and students with accommodations are scheduled in the remaining days.

	Lower Division (3-4)	Upper Division (5-8)	Total
# of in-person students that opted in/are you planning to test	52	84	136
# of remote students that opted in/are you planning to test	55	92	147
Approximate # of in-person students not being tested	3	17	20
Approximate # of remote students not being tested	23	42	65

## **April SEL Focus:**

This month we are focusing on Autism awareness month, Homelessness, and launching ASPIRE. Teachers will be engaging students in school wide expectations through our PBIS acronym. Khary and Rachel will be working with students to spread awareness of homelessness and will be conducting a collection of personal necessity items (soap, toothbrush, mask, hand sanitizer) to donate to a homeless shelter. We are encouraging all families to get involved.



**APPENDIX 2 – UFT report – APRIL 22, 2021 SLT**

**1. Historic Funding Increase for Schools:** NYC public schools will receive a historic boost in state aid in the budget passed by the state legislature in Albany on April 7. The final budget provides \$3 billion more for schools statewide, including \$1.3 billion increase for NYC schools.

**2. UFT Endorses Scott Stringer for Mayor:** The UFT held five town halls attended by more than 12,000 UFT members. On April 19, the UFT delegate assembly voted to endorse Scott Stringer in the June 22 Democratic primary for NYC mayor.

**3. Tell Your Representative to Co-Sponsor the THRIVE Act:** Today the AFT is holding a day of action to call representatives to add their support to the bill and include these bold provisions in the next recovery package. If passed, the THRIVE Act will invest a minimum of \$1 trillion per year for more than 10 years to create 15 million jobs and achieve full employment.

## APPENDIX 3 – PTA report – APRIL 22, 2021 SLT

### 1. PTA Funding Update

- Reminder about Teacher Wish Lists Funds! Should be expended By May 15th
- PTA has funds to help for Graduation, Moving Up, and Stepping Up expenses!

### 2. Events

#### • Fun Run: May 15- June 2

PTA is pleased to announce its first Fun Run! This is a virtual 5k (3.1 miles) run, (or walk, stroll or roll) conceived to work in our COVID-19 safe and socially distanced environment is ready to launch. You can choose any course you want. Don't worry about the time it takes, take as long as you want. All participants will get a specially designed Q300 t-shirt. The site to join is <https://zippyreg.com/register/q3005k>

Folks will have a 2-week period to complete the event, from May 15th to June 2nd. Feel free to join up with other Q300 families in your local neighborhoods and parks to do it safely together. Updates as to the Fun Run will be posted on the PTA website.

We would like to thank the following Sponsors who have graciously donated to the PTA:

[Code Ninja Astoria](mailto:astoriany@codeninjas.com) (astoriany@codeninjas.com) where kids ages 5-14 learn to code in a safe environment by building video games. Participants gain problem-solving, critical thinking, and STEM skills in a fun, safe, and inspiring environment.

[Kweller Prep](http://kwellerprep.com) (kwellerprep.com) which helps students get to the next level of their academic career. This program specializes in competitive middle, high school preparation.

[Arthouse Astoria](http://arthouseastoria.org) (arthouseastoria.org) is a nonprofit with a mission to bring high quality affordable visual and performing arts education for all ages and abilities to Astoria and the surrounding Queens area and

[Jackson Heights Orthodontics](http://www.jacksonheightsorthodontics.com) (www.jacksonheightsorthodontics.com) that utilizes proven state-of-the-art technology to not only enhance your experience but also provide you with the most efficient and gentle ways to straighten your smile.

#### • Auction: Month of May

- May 15 Virtual Game Night to celebrate
- Online Auction runs for two weeks in May (May 7-23)
- Collecting Teacher Prizes (Sue Sekar has sent email)

- **Spirit Wear Design Contest:** the PTA has launched "Q300 Strong" spirit wear t-shirts. The PTA has coordinated a design competition for the t-shirt and a bookmark, all of which would provide a creative opportunity for Q300 students. Providing the t-shirts school-wide would be a way to help amplify community spirit, given this unprecedented, difficult year, where the Q300 community has not been able to meet in-person. The remainder of the t-shirts would be sold to non-Q300 students, including Q300 family members. The school will cover the costs of the bookmarks.

- **Teacher Appreciation** is in the works too! Parents will provide boxed lunches for all - Jenny is collecting orders. There will be other surprises too!

3. **Shopping Sites:** We have lots of connections and kickbacks with: Stop & Shop, Amazon, Goodshop, Shutterfly/Tiny Prints, Children's Bookstore, Book Culture, Primary.com, Tea.
4. **Appreciations**
  - **Salsa Event:** Thanks to Suni Reyes and Eric Greenlund for an amazing event!
  - **Mango Lassi Event:** Thanks to Anar Chanda and Karthik and Nevo Chanda!