

SIT/Education Team Meeting Minutes

Oct 9th 2013 4-5:30pm MS

Present: Alex Molina (chair) Ann Hampson, Beth Morris, Katie Alvarez, Kathleen Hartrey, Mark Fleischer, Charlotte Handy, Derrick Ciesla, Maria Monteiro, Wendy Randle and Abraham Pinales.

Welcome and Introductions: Alex welcomed us all to the table and then each person introduced themselves and described their connection to the school as well as an interesting fun fact about themselves.

Why are we here? Alex and Ann gave an overview of the strategic planning process so far and the charge of the committee going forward. Alex emphasized the importance of hearing every voice and coming up with an educational plan/model that makes sense to all and is financially sustainable. Ann clarified that the work of SIT would look different from the work last year, and that the departmental presentations would need to be streamlined in order to accommodate the new focus on strategic planning. She also emphasized that our work remains to cast a vision and remain strategic rather than getting bogged down in implementation details.

First Agenda Item - Our graduate student profile.

The team divided into three smaller working groups, one for LS, MS

and US with parent staff and administration representation at each one. Each group was asked to look at the survey data that had been gathered in the early phase of strategic planning as well as the new draft mission statement to identify the hallmarks of a successful graduate at each division reflecting academic excellence and strong age-appropriate social/emotional development. Every group had chart paper to record their conversations and prepare for a debrief on the conversations.

Debrief:

The Middle School group debriefed first. They defined an ideal middle school graduate in terms of education and social emotional development. They considered their ideal 8th grader as someone who is competent in all core subjects: humanities, math, science and English and who demonstrates empathy, resilience, flexibility and self-reflection as well as critical thinking. Such a student will be upper school ready and equipped with the technological competencies required for today's new learning and assessments (PARCC) as well as savvy about social media.

They also identified the need for all students in MS to be exposed to foreign language (Spanish) or art or music or theater and have options for physical activity through gym and sports teams. The ideal graduate of the MS will be kind, empathetic and self-aware, respecting diversity and all kinds of learners, as well as being a well-rounded citizen who is their own advocate and respectful of their

environment.

The Lower School group: The LS group thought that the data set from the surveys was too small to be valuable so focused on the Mission statement to guide their conversation. They recognized that some of the values built into the statement need to be made more explicit and could be strengthened at each grade level through specific activities and projects. They listed out the key components of the Mission Statement as follows: respects individuals, respects the world, personal initiative, perseverance, social responsibility. fosters discovery, critical thinking, rigorous academic program and maritime experiences. They then identified what is done in the building currently to promote these. Responsive Classroom approach, Monday Morning Meeting, STEM, Empty Bowls and Holiday charity projects are the current tools used to promote these key qualities expected in a successful 5th grade graduate at PCS. Generally the team felt that a lot is done implicitly but more needs to be done consciously with deliberate effort. There was discussion of how to record projects that build on these capacities.

The Upper School group: The US group considered the same qualities identified by the LS group and considered opportunities for improvement. A strength is the advisory system, but they recognized that it could be strengthened with a clear scope and sequence focusing on character development: personal initiative, perseverance, social responsibility, empathy, resilience, compassion and active

citizenship. They also thought that formal community service/ service learning projects would build our students' capacities for personal initiative and responsibility. They discussed the possibility of identifying a signature project at each grade tied to the maritime theme. They raised the need to develop our students into public speakers who are competent and confident and providing opportunities to develop these skills. The US team wondered how the school is deepening student and staff understanding of Paul Cuffee so that "In the spirit of Paul Cuffee's Life" takes on more potency. Raised for consideration were the need for AP and general college credit level courses as well as internships, career exploration opportunities, mentorships and job shadowing. The US team identified wondered whether PCS is up to date and resourced appropriately to offer a tech. readiness course that would ensure that our students have the technological skills to succeed in college. They also thought that PCS should offer life skills classes such as cooking, accounting and financial literacy as tools that would benefit all learners whether college bound or not.

The last 15 mins of the meeting was the debrief from the various work groups. Alex gave a brief heads-up for the work ahead and charged the groups with researching within the buildings what is offered around the maritime theme from grade to grade and considering how we measure our effectiveness at each level in order to make the transitions from division to division as seamless as possible.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30pm. The next meeting is set for Wednesday Nov 13th from 4-5:30pm at the Middle School.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ann S Hampson, Title 1 Coordinator PCS