



School Leadership Team Meeting December 15, 2020

ATTENDANCE:

(Virtually via Zoom application)

School Staff:

- Robin Edmonds (Principal)
- Amy Dulsky Little (UFT Representative)
- Janilda Valentin (Teacher)
- Kendall Bayer (Teacher)

Parent Representatives:

- Michelle Bell (Parent)
- Carolyn Coffey (Parent)
- Soraya Gonzalez (Parent)

Absent: Stephanie Santos, SLT Chair (Teacher), Lucy Mendieta, PTA President (Parent), Kaiesha Scarbrough (Parent)

Meeting Start Time: 7:10am

OFFICER REPORT:

Robin: Stated that students returned on the 7th with kids in k-5th - 18 children in total. The school is currently taking a look at blended children who have not returned as of Monday. Now the DOE has a process for reaching about non-returns and coming up with a process which, includes possibly forcing remote learning for those families. We have accurate numbers about who is in building and half of the list of kids will be able to come back, about 10 kids on each A and B day. Some had close contact or quarantined so we know when they'll be returning. We'll continue to take a look at that list. All of the students (1-5 in blended learning) returning had to have consent to test to come back to the building. That occurs weekly now and they test about 19 people each time they come to the building. We were able to get consent quickly for most families, and many did it on their NYSSA accounts before returning to building. There was only 1 family that has chosen not to consent. The DOE is reaching out consistently to principals to survey if schools can do 5 days a week for all students. We would need larger rooms and more staff, and then we can commit to 5 days. During the SLT meetings last year we talked about models and we agreed to prioritize the group of autistic children (Self Contained class) and they have been coming to the building 5 days a week since we started. We could potentially have K, 1 & 2 come 5 days a week if middle school does not return. At this point we don't know about the plan for middle school. When the choice is made we can look at expanding out 5 days a week for K through 2.

There has not been information about the Learning Bridges program, for those k-5 families that do need additional childcare in school days.

Amy: Stated that there have not been talks from the UFT and we know the numbers are about 6%. Is there any talk about there being a cap since previously the cap was 3%?

Robin: Stated that she met with Madga DeGomez, Director of Health for the DOE, and she said that there has not been any talk about that.



There is an operational breaking point. There is a 9/10 to 1 ration from students/staff in the building. When it comes to staffing, it depends on a tri-state infection rate, not city rate or zip code infection rate. That's where the teachers are coming from on average. The rates are reviewed and every day screenings are done. The DOE is getting data about how many staff are out and how many are infected. At that point if the staffing is not adequate to provide the 9/10 to 1 ratio, that would be the operational breaking point - When schools can no longer be staffed. Last week there were three people out for close contact and only the k-5 teachers are in the building. It's getting harder to staff as the infection rate goes up and the exposure increases.

Carolyn: Asked what is Muscotas rate and what are their numbers? Does that affect the kids coming 2 days days?

Robin: Stated that Amistad is in the same place as Muscota depending if our middle school comes back. Both schools will be affected by availability. Both middle and older kids are in the large spaces because it's easier for them to manage themselves in a cafeteria instead of the Kindergarteners.

Carolyn: Asked if the space will still need to be shared with Muscota if the middle school kids don't return?

Robin: Stated that the spaces were divided before the pandemic started. Amistad took the library and cafeteria, and Muscota took the gym and art room. The auditorium was left as a non-planned space. If there is a staffing shortage and there was a need to safely distance, there needs to be a space to use. There would be division of those spaces so there's the capability of bringing more groups.

PTA REPORT:

Michelle: Stated that the virtual fundraiser just launched - selling cookie dough online. A no contact fundraiser and the PTA won't be doing distributions. Kadri floated an idea about a virtual book fair currently being done at another school, for a February fundraiser. The PTA has a holiday virtual toast next week with a surprise guest.

ELA GOALS AND OBSERVATIONS:

Robin: Stated that in the last meeting there was a discussion about reviewing ELA Goals this meeting. Data was put together to inform the SLT as to why the goals were originally chosen. For the data from the spring 2019, what are the strengths and weaknesses and what can be seen as progress monitoring? The data shows the school's overall performance of the 4-year trends (graphs, tables, etc).

Janilda: Stated that in the first table any grade can be tracked, for instance for the 4th grade the grades increased every year with the exception of the 3rd grade.
The cohort data increased every year.

Kendall: Stated that for the 6th graph (formerly 5th graders) It looks like they had a slight decrease this past year, but the last time they were tested they had a slight decrease. Where are the students currently at?



Soraya: Stated that there was not a particular pattern seen, specifically for the bar chart. The percentages are scattered per grade/per year. What is the common factor? Are there inputs that are affecting the outputs and is there a variable that can be used as a baseline to help establish the new goals?

Amy: Stated that the data seemed consistent within each cohort over the years. What can be done throughout the years to leverage the cohorts as they come in with more challenges? It seems like there is unevenness or a wide range of readiness and challenges when the cohort comes to the school, and what can be done which is a much better question.

Michelle: Asked what are the differences in the make-up of the different cohorts that are impacting their performance? In this year's 5th grade (from the 3-4th grade year) they've had almost a 20 percent drop, and this year's 6th grade has had a drop. 32-26 seems like a big drop although we don't know what the standard deviation is. The children have stayed consistent throughout the years, so what might be the differences in the kids coming in and how can we focus on the cohorts specific areas of needs in the incoming students? What adjustments can be made to provide for them at the support they need? For ELA and not math - what are the language pieces that might be playing a role?

Carolyn: Asked what the differences are since teachers are staying the same. What external factors are affecting internal grades that seem to be better or worse?

Robin: Stated that 7th and 8th grade tend to perform the strongest. They are the highest at on or above grade level.

For the rest of the data, what might be some pausal factors? Any idea of what might be causing the inconsistency in that journey?

Amy: Asked if there are more students coming in who are in more economically insecure situations?

Robin: Stated that (Enrollment) has been more consistent. The year (Robin) started with Amistad enrollment was at 380. Last year it was over 420. Noting that almost 2 full classes of students entered Amistad - in the testing grades it could be a factor.

Carolyn: Asked if the admissions process has changed at all.

Robin: Stated that (admissions) has not changed. Janilda has helped to do assessments on kids, however one of the major changes has been that when (Robin) started at Amistad, SETS was the program given to all students. There was only 1 ICT class in the 8th grade. The difference is that ICT means that there are 2 teachers teaching in a general-ed setting in order to provide whatever additional support is needed for students with disabilities. Prior to that it was just the SETS approach which means there was only 1 teacher servicing all 9 grades who would either push in or pull out. Most of the time it was to pull out students for small group learning, but then those students would miss 5 periods in ELA a week and then spend time catching up. So, we now have ICT in all 9 grades. That is a major shift in terms of learning and teaching for kids.



It transitioned in – It's in the 8th grade and then we had it in K, 1 & 2 and then we built it year to year so that we have all 9 grades, and we added the additional staffing so it's an additional teacher per grade.

Michelle: Asked if in 2016 it was K, 1 & 2 for the first cohort that was tested in 2017? Do we see an impact of that across the general population?

Janilda: Stated that having a co teacher impact much of what happens in the classroom specially for kids who need more support. While I'm working on one assignment, another teacher is taking on another set of students one on one It's very impactful to have a second teacher at all times in the classroom. Even during zoom classes it's amazing because they monitor and they jump in and help on the call.

Robin: Asked what else can affect the data? Initially Amistad was a whole language approach to learning and then it shifted to a phonics base approach (2.5 years ago). Also, Last year the school moved to having instructional coaching with Anabel and Estephania. Anabel's data was very good at 65% and 71% for 7th and 8th grade. Anabel's data as an ELA teacher was very good. To have her now coaching last year and we don't have that impact data nor the coaching and then again this year, im interest to see how Anabel is sharing her practices vertically will impact the data.

Janilda: Stated that in the first year that Robin joined Amistad, it was the year that the school started implementing iready which has made a big difference with the older kids. It was something that was successful when it was consistency.

Robin: Stated that we can see the data clearly by focusing on students with disability and how it has changed over the last couple of years. We see the 3s and 4s progressing. The level 1 are staying the same overall. The majority of students' IEP classification has been in speech and language disabilities. Math tends to be a little bit better. We always question how speech and language impacts math because of the word problems and the applicable math.

Carolyn: Asked if the students with disabilities are equally English and Spanish primary language kids?

Robin: Stated that it does vary. We have students whose services are denoted in Spanish because it's their dominant language. For the majority of students their services are given to students in, English about 2/3 English and about 1/3 Spanish. We have been working with Bilingual Special Ed, a Department in central to identify students who have Spanish on their IAP but whose zone schools don't provide those services like. They might not be a dual language for ICT to be given in Spanish. They have been working with us identify those students within the city who can use our school's model and we have seen the Spanish designation increase but it's not 50/50.

Soraya: Stated that she's familiar with iready through Ella's work, but not familiar with Fountas and Pinnell. Is it used for ELA or is it used for math? If so, when is it used.

Janilda: Stated that Fountas and Pinnell is the reading system (ELA) that we use to evaluate the students for guided reading. The teacher determines the reading level that the student is in – a measuring tool (A-Z). The exam is given every marking period to determine the student's reading accuracy.



Robin: (In reference to Kaiesha's previous comment regarding Fountas and Pinnell) – The Baltimore school system was using Fountas and Pinnell as a reading program, but it is an assessment tool that allows teachers to measure the fluency and comprehension of students and to allow us to measure what types of books are at their level that they can do independently. For guided reading it's going one level above because now you're working in a small group with the teacher to learn the things the reader will need to do in order to access that next level of book.

The Fountas and Pinnell assessment is a standard reading passage for each of the levels A-Z, it's a way you denote mistake or pauses or self-correction and then you add it up in a tally. We have it in both English and Spanish and its standard set of passages for all. Doing F&P takes a lot longer remotely as you can imagine but we have been collecting that data and I created a spreadsheet which I can share (when we go into progress monitoring) and we can take a look at the average per each grade in Fountas and Pinnell in English and Spanish - Last fall vs this fall to understand the impact of Covid on reading acquisition thus far and in iready since that is a reading-based assessment and the majority of the NYSED state points on test are testing reading. It's a slight majority in 3 & 4 and in 5-8 its about 2/3 of the points are reading based. About 1/3 is writing based. Testing and looking at reading is important in looking at ELA.

Michelle: Asked if this is the system for assessments, what program or model are we using for teaching? I know the little ones are now doing phonics, is there anything else that we incorporate multi sensorial learning in the reading techniques?

Robin: Stated The reading program that we use in addition to phonics and intervention based program is the teachers college reading and writing. It's not multi sensorial. Most curriculums don't use a pedagogy approach. Most curriculums are about materials sequencing. In terms of large muscle movement, those are more captured on a move to improve pedagogy approach in getting kids to associate different movement-based things into their learning for brain impact and memory. It won't be captured in a literacy curriculum.

Michelle: Stated that she had done neuro psych testing at SUNY and some of the testing were multi-sensory approaches to reading and writing and so do we incorporate any of that for those having a hard time utilizing the ICT model. Special ed is good for all students not just some. Is there a way we can incorporate some of those things?

Robin: Stated that there are a vast majority of kids coming in that are English dominant. In terms of an overall k-8 curriculum we don't have that and I haven't seen a program that has that, that we have that.

NEXT MEETING:

Robin: Stated that during the next meeting the team will look at the ELL data so that it can be telling of the ELA data. A Progress monitoring repost will be available for iready, and fountas and pinnell.

Meeting End Time: 8:08am