

CITY OF MALDEN, MASSACHUSETTS



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EARLY LEARNING CENTER

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ELC School Council Meeting Wednesday, November 4, 2020

MINUTES

(Corrected 11/24/2020)

Members Present: Nicole Chelman, Heather Cochran, Rebecca Martin, Rick Rogers, Imene Bouziane Saidi, Elizabeth Paulsen Tonogbonua

Introductions

Rick welcomed members to the first School Council meeting of the 2020-21 school year. Members introduced themselves and their affiliation with Early Learning Center.

Hopes and Dreams

Members were asked to list their long-term hopes and dreams for ELC (beyond a return to in-person learning). After posting their ideas on Jamboard post-it notes, members were asked to elaborate on what they had chosen. Among the areas identified:

- All the classrooms cut this year to be restored at ELC.
- Robust plan to address social-emotional gaps when students return to in-person learning
- More parent and community involvement
- A dual-language program that would feed into a K-8 dual language program
- ILP classes remain small (ideally 6)
- Support for staff based on class size
- Maintain small class size to meet student needs
- Foster strong sense of Anti-racism through developmentally appropriate interdisciplinary work

Purpose & Responsibilities of School Councils

Rick reviewed the purpose of School Councils as defined in the 1993 Mass. Ed. Reform bill. Primarily this focuses on advising the principal on the development of an annual School Improvement Plan. He encouraged members to think about the “big picture” of the school community: *What kind of school do we want to be and how do we get there?* He also noted that School Council is often the one group in the school that brings parents, teachers and community members together to discuss these questions. He referred members to this link for additional information: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/advisory/schoolcouncils/default.html>

In addition, he reminded members of the obligation that school councils subject to the Open Meeting Law with agendas posted in advance, minutes posted, and meetings open to the public with a period for public comment. A question was asked about recording meetings. Rick will inquire about the policy on doing so.

Nomination of Co-Chair

The Principal and one other member serve as Co-Chair. The Co-Chair's responsibility is to assist the principal with developing the agenda and sharing facilitation of the meeting (if comfortable). Rick suggested the co-chair be a parent and asked for volunteers. The Council will vote on Co-Chair in December.

Principal's Report

Enrollment: 227 total (as of 10/30)
53 ILP students in-person (9 classes)
Remaining students are remote
2 Full-Day Integrated PK classes
4 Half-Day Integrated PK classes
3 ILP Remote (parent choice)

9 ILP classes began in-person on October 13. For the first two weeks, students came in 2 cohorts – 4 half-days per week. On October 26, these students began coming a full day. Rick reported the transition to in-person has gone smoothly. One member felt that a longer phase-in period with half-days might have been beneficial for some children –noting students are tired from the full day program. Nap time has been eliminated this year for health reasons.

ELC had its first positive COVID-19 case confirmed on October 30. Close contacts were told to quarantine through November 6 (14 days after last exposure). The classroom has gone remote during this time. Barring additional positive tests, those affected will return to school on Monday, November 9.

ELC School Improvement Plan

The Council reviewed the status of goals from the School Improvement Plan. Due to the sudden change to remote learning last March, 2020-21 goals were rolled over from 2019-20.

1. J-Touches were installed. We need to find out if staff feels they need additional PD in how to use these.
2. PreK Curriculum Updating (Math, ELA, Science) More information is needed about work that was done. Rick will talk to members of the PK Task Force who were charged with this work.
3. Student Support Team (SST) began that year and is established now. SST will begin meeting again when integrated classes return to in-person instruction.
4. Positive Behavior Support (PBS) has been a multi-year goal that will continue this year. PBS team has met already and has begun to develop plans for additional professional learning.
5. Family Engagement & Parent Nights: Family events are still on hold. PTO had its first meeting and is working to identify a new slate of officers. Rick will work with PTO to consider some virtual activities to help families feel more connected to school.
6. Restorative Circles: Staff had some training in how to conduct these in their classrooms.

The Leadership Team will discuss whether additional professional learning is needed in this area.

7. Peer Classroom Visits: The Leadership Team will discuss and update this goal. This could be connected to PBS work.

Next Steps:

The Council will revisit these goals in December when more information has been gathered in order to discuss possible areas of focus for this year – and the year to follow.

Rick described that the faculty has been having discussions about providing support to help parents with supporting their child during remote learning. If remote learning continues, this will be a key area of focus this year.

Meeting Schedule – Wednesdays 2:15-3:15 PM

December 2

January 13

March 10

April 7

May 12

June 9 (if needed)