

**STEM Magnet Academy  
Local School Council  
Regular Meeting Minutes**

March 4, 2015

**I. Call to order**

Mrs. Langston called to order the regular meeting of the Local School Council for the STEM Magnet Academy at 5:30pm on March 4, 2015, at the STEM Magnet Academy gymnasium.

**II. Roll call/Establish Quorum**

Mrs. Langston conducted a roll call. The following persons were present:

Jeremiah Abiade  
Maria Amoruso  
Deborah Bonner  
Deana Caccavale  
Deidra Harper  
Sadika Langston  
Jeff McCarter  
William O'Neill (left at 7:20pm)  
Gretchen Brinza  
Lindsay McGrane  
Zakiya Libby-Williams  
Maria McManus

Quorum was established.

**III. Review and Approval of Agenda**

Mrs. Langston moved to approve the agenda. Mrs. Harper seconded the motion.

Vote: 12 in favor

**IV. Review and Approval of February 3, 2015 Meeting Minutes**

Mrs. McGrane presented LSC members with copies of minutes from the February 3, 2015 meeting. Mr. Abiade suggested a few typographical edits. Mrs. Langston moved that the minutes be approved with the stated changes. Mrs. Amoruso seconded the motion.

Vote: 12 in favor.

## **V. Chairperson's Report**

- Mrs. Langston thanked the LSC members for their dedication to the STEM LSC. Mrs. Langston shared that all LSC members are working on completing the required training modules for LSC members.
- Mrs. Langston asked that LSC members make an effort to stick to the suggested timeline and keep in mind that we are here working for the benefit of the students.
- Mrs. Langston reminded LSC members that all LSC training modules must be completed by April 30, with the exception of Module 5, Principal Selection.
- Mrs. Langston stated that several LSC members attended on-site training for Principal Selection.
- PARCC testing will be taking place at STEM over the next several weeks.
- Mrs. Langston also shared that Ms. McManus sent out the link to the STEM LSC Weebly in the newsletter to parents. The Weebly site contains minutes, agendas, and committee descriptions. There is also now an LSC tab available on the STEM website.

## **VI. Principal's Report**

- PARCC – Ms. McManus stated that grades 3-5 will take the PARCC assessment with a paper-pencil test and 6<sup>th</sup> grade will take the test on the computer. All grades will take ELA and math assessments, including 3 reading sections and 2 math sections. Each section of the test will last 70 minutes. The PARCC assessment was originally supposed to be given at the beginning (BOY), middle (MOY), and end of the year (EOY). The test was not released in time to be given at the beginning of the year. MOY assessments will run March 9<sup>th</sup> – April 2<sup>nd</sup> and EOY assessments will be given April 27<sup>th</sup> – May 22<sup>nd</sup>. This time frame coincides with the NWEA end of year assessment, which will be given May 11<sup>th</sup> – June 12<sup>th</sup>. All grade levels will take the PARCC assessment in the gym due to the fact that students must take the assessment in rooms with no displays on the walls. Students will be tested from 8:30-10:00am and from 1:00-2:30pm. 60 students will test in gym during each session. Mr. McCarter asked what students would be doing when they are not testing. Ms. McManus stated that students would be receiving normal instruction when they are not being tested. Mrs. Caccavale asked if it was possible for parents to opt out of the PARCC assessment. Ms. McManus stated that students could either not take the test when their classmates sit down to take the test or that parents can send a letter to school saying that they are opting out. Mrs. Harper asked if students would take both NWEA and PARCC next year. Ms. McManus confirmed that next year students will take both NWEA and PARCC and that next year, PARCC would be a high stakes test. Mr. Abiade asked if the plan is for PARCC to replace NWEA. Ms. McManus stated that that has not been established yet. Ms. McManus also shared that the directions state that no extended time can be given for the assessments. A link to sample PARCC assessments was sent to parents in via email.
- Internal accounts – Ms. McManus passed out the balance sheet and cash

disbursement journal for the month of January.

-- Memo regarding in-person LSC trainings was distributed to LSC Members.

-- Sample motion form – Ms. McManus shared the sample motion form from the LSC Reference Guide that should be completed properly and put in records for motions made by LSC members. The document is available on page 17 and 18 of the LSC Reference Guide. Mr. McCarter asked if we are required to use this form for every motion. Mr. Pittman stated that it can be used, but is not required. Ms. McManus stated that the LSC manual states that we are to use this form. Mrs. Langston stated that this document also records how individual LSC members voted on each motion.

-- A certificate was presented to the school for participating in the NAEP assessment.

-- CIWP – Ms. McManus shared that discussion of mid-year updates to the CIWP will take place at April 2015 meeting. Prior to the meeting all members will receive copy of the current CIWP. Mrs. Amoruso asked about whether updates will be made by the CIWP committee prior to the meeting. Ms. McManus stated that we would work on updates for the CIWP at the meeting.

-- Ms. McManus shared that in the future, the money raised for out of uniform days will go to support the student council and it will be children's responsibility to promote out of uniform days. Mr. Abiade asked if the LSC is required to vote where the money for this fundraiser will go because the LSC voted on the initial proposal, as presented by the Friends of STEM. Ms. McManus stated that a student representative would come to the April LSC meeting to present on the how the money will be used by the student council. Mr. McCarter asked if there will be an accounting of the money raised.

-- MOY data for Network 6 – Ms. McManus presented the LSC with data regarding STEM's performance on the middle of year NWEA assessment. This data shows how many students are at or above 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading and math. STEM was ranked #3 in Network 6 with 82.1% in reading and #6 in Network 6 with 73.1% in math.

## **VII. Guest Speaker**

-- Marcus Pittman, Office of LSC relations – Fundraising categories and accountability – Mr. Pittman discussed sources of funding for CPS and shared that everything he was discussing was taken from LSC Reference Guide, which is available online. Within CPS, there are 6 categories of fundraising and the approval process varies depending on what type of fundraising is being done. Any cash raised through fundraisers should go into the school's internal account. Type 1 is fundraising that involves ANY students, and is considered an in-school fundraiser. These are the only types of fundraisers that can be continuous. These fundraisers require principal and network approval; and any disbursements over \$1000 would also require approval by the LSC. This type of fundraiser and the principal has discretion over what happens with the funds. Type 2 includes fundraisers conducted by external organizations, including not for profits, where the money being raised is going to benefit the school. These fundraisers cannot be ongoing and require principal, network, and LSC approval. All money raised for

these types of fundraisers goes into the schools internal account. Type 3 includes fundraisers where the profits are not just going straight to school, but will be shared by external organization. These are 1 time events and require LSC approval. Type 4 fundraisers are fundraisers where profits are for an external organization only. The principal, network, and LSC must approve these fundraisers. A fundraiser is considered type 4 if an external organization is soliciting school community on school grounds to raise funds. Type 5 fundraisers are considered catastrophe fundraisers and do not require LSC approval unless there will be any cash disbursements over \$1000. These fundraisers involve students raising money for catastrophe relief. Type 6 fundraisers are LSC fundraisers that raise money for operating funds for the school's LSC. Schools with 1000 students or less are allowed to raise \$1500 per year for an LSC fundraiser. Schools with more than 1000 students can raise up to \$3000 for operating expenses. Money raised through a fundraiser, where the purpose of the fundraiser is to benefit the school, must go through the school's internal accounts. Fundraisers on school property that do not benefit school must be approved by LSC and must include a disclaimer that the fundraiser is not for the school. Mr. Pittman shared that the LSC Reference Guide contains a fundraising account proposal. Mr. Pittman stated that it is the job of the LSC to monitor internal accounts. Mrs. Langston asked Mr. Pittman to define what it means when fundraisers involve kids. Mr. Pittman stated that a fundraiser involves students (is type 1) any time funds are collected from students. Mr. McCarter asked in terms of a "friends of" organization conducting a fundraiser off site, does LSC have to approve the fundraiser and do those funds sit in that organization's account or go through internal accounts. Mr. Pittman stated that the LSC does have to approve an off-site fundraiser to benefit the school and that the money raised does need to go through the school's internal accounts. Mrs. Amoruso asked Mr. Pittman if the LSC needs to do anything to invalidate fundraisers that were approved prior to the budget training that do not meet the guidelines for fundraising. Mr. Pittman suggested that the LSC have a discussion about these fundraisers and that we can also reach out to Jose Villasenor of the LSC Relations office with questions. Mr. Villasenor can be reached at 773-553-1400.

### **VIII. Public Participation**

- Mrs. Wilson asked about fundraiser for children going on a field trip. Mr. Pittman stated that that is okay if the fundraiser occurs once per year.
- Mr. Miranda clarified that fundraisers are considered to involve students when they take place on school property, during school hours, with children. Mr. Miranda asked if LSC approval is required for a fundraiser conducted off site. Mr. Pittman stated that fundraisers to benefit the school do require LSC approval. Mr. Miranda asked how charitable donations are processed and Mr. Pittman clarified that charitable donations have to go through a school's internal accounts.
- Mrs. Haviland asked for an example of a fundraiser that a "friends of" organization

would do that did not require the money raised to go into a school's internal accounts. Mr. Pittman stated that he would have to get back to us with an example.

-- Mrs. Haddad asked about the standing of the three fundraisers that had been approved by the LSC that involve students. Mr. Pittman suggested that the LSC go back and take another look at these fundraisers and whether or not they meet the guidelines for fundraising. Mrs. Haddad asked if the Friends of STEM should resubmit proposals and Mr. Pittman stated that that would be a good idea.

## **IX. Old Business**

-- Principal Selection – LSC voted to start principal selection process at a previous meeting. Mrs. Langston stated that the LSC is the Principal Selection committee and that the committee has the option to solicit feedback from the community. Mrs. Langston suggested that the LSC select a chairperson for the Principal Selection committee. Mr. McCarter stated that he wanted to make sure that everyone on the committee and community knows that this is one of the most important jobs of LSC. Mr. McCarter stated that Ms. McManus is an interim principal and that the LSC must go through the principal selection process or STEM will not have a contract principal. If we fail to go through this process and make a decision, the network officer or CEO will appoint a principal for STEM. Mr. McCarter stated that we are currently in the season of principal selection and that several principal positions have been posted already. Mr. McCarter feels that it is incumbent on us as an LSC to start this process immediately and that the first step in the process is posting an advertisement for the position through the talent office so that it appears in the in the CPS e-Bulletin. Mrs. Langston stated that because we are a new school, we did not begin with an LSC and that she feels we need a contract principal at this school. The LSC offers principals a four-year contract and without an LSC, STEM was not able to appoint a contract principal. Mrs. Langston stated that we have established our committee and that we need someone to chair this process. Mrs. Harper volunteered for the position. Mr. McCarter clarified that three meetings ago we voted that the committee would include LSC members only, but that the process would still be governed by the Open Meetings Act, requiring meetings to be open to the public. When it comes to principal selection, the LSC includes 11 voting members and 7 members must vote for a candidate in order for a contract to be offered. Ms. Hall asked if the teacher representatives are required to vote based on a teacher poll. Mrs. Marolda asked if that is true of parents as well. Mrs. Brinza stated that she would listen to all of her constituents. Mr. Pittman clarified that LSC members are not required to poll the groups that they represent in order to vote. Ms. Lohitsa stated that she felt that it was important for interested parties to come to the meetings, be present, and have discussions about the process. Mr. McCarter stated that this process is not a referendum on Ms. McManus, that as an interim principal, this process is required to identify a contract principal. Mrs. Langston asked LSC members to sign a confidentiality agreement and code of conduct for the principal

selection process. Mrs. Amoruso nominated Mr. Abiade to serve as chair of the Principal Selection process. Mrs. Langston nominated Dr. Bonner to serve as chairperson. Dr. Bonner declined the nomination.

The candidates then shared short statements about why they would like to serve as chairperson of the Principal Selection process. Mrs. Harper stated that she has an understanding of the school and parents and the needs of the school. Mrs. Harper had experience working with the Friends of STEM organization and as chairperson, she would look at key performance indicators that show areas of strength and deficiencies, in order to select a principal who can make us a level 1 school and create a safe environment that our students enjoy attending. Mr. Abiade stated that he feels that the person who chairs this committee needs to be unbiased and take extraordinary steps to involve the constituents in order to get feedback on this process. Mr. Abiade stated that the council is not representative of the diversity of the school and that it is important to involve the rest of the school community in order to make a decision that is best for the school, teachers, students, and parents. Mr. Abiade feels that this should be a data-driven process and stated that he has experience in making personnel decisions in his role at UIC. Mrs. Langston pointed out that a School Needs Questionnaire can be found in the LSC Reference Guide and that this process also needs to involve the chief for Network 6. Mr. McCarter suggested that we should strive to get our advertisement for the principal position at STEM into the next bulletin. Mrs. Amoruso stated that the LSC should plan to have a Principal Selection meeting before next LSC meeting. Mr. Abiade stated that the in-person training for principal selection stated that it would be idea for the committee to meet once per week. LSC members should complete the School Needs Questionnaire prior to our next meeting.

Vote: Mrs. Harper – 6; Mr. Abiade – 5

#### **X. New Business**

-- Community outreach ideas (e.g., create and distribute fliers) – Mr. Abiade feels that it is incumbent upon us as LSC members to reach out to the community and generate more interest in our meetings. Mr. Abiade proposed making a simple flier advertising the next meeting date to pass out before and after school. Mr. Abiade also asked about advertising LSC meetings on marquee. Mrs. Langston asked what should be included on the flier apart from the date and time of meetings. Mr. Abiade suggested that the flier include information on what will be discussed at the meeting, but should be brief. Mr. Norris suggested that it might be appropriate for the Principal Selection process to have more than one chairperson to ensure that this process continues to move forward. Mr. McCarter asked if Mrs. Harper would be open to working together with Mr. Abiade to chair this committee. Mr. McCarter made a motion that the Principal Selection process have a chair and co-chair with Mrs. Harper serving as chair and Mr.

Abiade serving as co-chair.

Vote: 11 in favor

Mrs. Langston suggested a flier be distributed prior to the next LSC meeting advertising agenda highlights. Mrs. Amoruso suggested that we also push electronic communication. Mrs. Harper suggested that Principal Selection be included on the flier. Mr. McCarter stated that he feels that the advertisement needs to be finalized before the next LSC meeting. Mrs. Brinza suggested that we used Doodle to find a mutually agreeable meeting time so that we are able to establish quorum at these meetings. Mr. Pittman shared that advertisements for open positions are posted every Wednesday and Friday in the CPS eBulletin. Mrs. Harper stated that in defense of the LSC, we wanted formal training on this process prior to moving forward, and that that has contributed to our timing in starting the process.

#### **XI. Committee reports and updates**

- Friends of STEM – No report.
- Facilities – Mr. McCarter reported that the committee been working hard and being productive. The committee recently created a document that was delivered to the CPS Facilities and Operations department that discussed a vision to expand seats for STEM. The document contains a strategic discussion with various scenarios for expanding seats for STEM.
- Bylaws – The LSC chair and secretary need to sign the bylaws document.
- CIWP – The mid-year review of the STEM CIWP will occur at the April 2015 LSC meeting. Dr. Bonner asked if there will be a committee and if there will be separate meetings. Dr. Bonner expressed her interest in being a part of a CIWP committee. Ms. McManus stated that there would be a committee with regular meetings.
- Budget – No report.

#### **XII. Public Participation**

- Mrs. Marolda stated that she recently learned that her student had participated in the 5 Essentials Survey and asked if parents were notified that their students were going to be taking the survey. Ms. McManus stated that the student portion of the 5 Essentials Survey was discussed at the last LSC meeting. Mrs. Marolda also asked when the parent portion of the 5 Essentials Survey would be administered. Ms. McManus stated that this typically happens around the date for report card pick up in the third quarter. Mrs. Marolda asked if parents had been notified about the survey other than at the last LSC meeting. Ms. McManus stated that she thought 5 Essentials were just to be taken by 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, but recently learned that CPS had pushed out the survey for grades 4-6. The survey was administered to students last week. Ms. McManus read through directions with the kids prior to their taking the survey. Mr. McCarter asked if

Ms. McManus was in the room when the students took the survey and agreed that parents should have been informed via a very clear message that students were to take the survey. Mr. McCarter also stated that he feels that Ms. McManus reading the directions seems like a conflict of interest. Ms. McManus stated that the content of the survey had nothing to do with her, but asked students about clubs and their classes. Ms. McManus stated that she left the room as students took the survey. Mrs. Marolda also shared her concern about safety of children and parents at the corner of Fillmore and Lafflin at dismissal. Mrs. Marolda urged the LSC to help Ms. McManus get a crossing guard for our school. Mrs. Marolda stated that the commander at the 12<sup>th</sup> district might be able to help us get a crossing guard.

-- Ms. Heveran asked if it would be possible to have the city make Lafflin a school zone between the hours of 2:30 and 3:30 to alleviate congestion during dismissal. Ms. Heveran also suggested that we reach out to the bus company to alert them to the fact that their bus drivers are not always driving safely. Ms. Heveran also expressed a concern about parents who don't watch their children in the street at dismissal. She suggested that we reach out to parents to ask them to make sure that kids aren't playing in the street during dismissal time.

-- Mrs. Delgado stated that while her children were attending Salazar, she learned that crossing guards are only provided for schools where more than 60% of the student population walks to school. Mrs. Delgado suggested that the school have a discussion with Hawkeyes about paying for the use of their parking lot during dismissal.

-- Mrs. Haddad asked if it would be possible to have a safety subcommittee at the school to follow up with the alderman. Mr. McCarter asked if it would be possible to create a flier/emails regarding drop off and pick up.

-- Mrs. Hernandez asked about safety on playground and whether parents could reach out to alderman to get the street blocked off during recess in order to give students a larger play area. Ms. McManus stated that the alderman told her that we couldn't block off the street because the street is a cul-de-sac. Mr. Abiade asked if we had made any progress on asking the alderman to be here during dismissal to help him understand the congestion and issues that our school is experiencing.

-- Mrs. Harper stated that she would be sending out a Doodle poll to find a good day for the LSC to meet regarding Principal Selection. Mr. Miranda stated that Powell's bookstore would allow you to use their meeting space for free. Mrs. Marolda stated that there is also meeting space available at Roosevelt branch library.

-- Mr. Pittman stated that the LSC would need to call the meetings about Principal Selection "LSC meetings" rather than "Principal Selection Committee meetings" as only the LSC can vote on matters of principal selection. Also, because of this distinction, Mrs. Langston will still be the chairperson for the meetings, though the identified co-chairs can also help to direct the meetings.

-- Ms. Lohitsa asked about how the community would be alerted to upcoming meeting dates. Mrs. Harper stated that she would post an agenda with meeting dates identified.

**XIII. CIWP/Budget Amendments (optional)**

**XIV. Closed Session (optional)**

**XV. Announcements**

-- Next Regular Meeting date Tuesday, April 14, 2015 at 5:30pm in the STEM Gym.

**XVI. Adjournment**

Mrs. Langston moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:28pm. Mrs. Harper seconded the motion.

Vote: 11 in favor.

Minutes submitted by: Lindsay McGrane