

Newton Elementary
School Organizational Team Minutes
11-14-24
3:30

The Newton ES School Organizational Team meeting was called to order at 3:30 on 11/14/24 by Kasey O’Horo and seconded by Megan McGowan. The meeting was held in the Newton ES staff room.

Voting Members present:

Kasey O’Horo, Parent
Gina Topor, Parent
Rebecca Hickey, Parent
Kristan Sanchez, Parent

Pulamahaheo Berg, Licensed Staff
Samantha Olson, Licensed Staff
Lindsey Douglas, Support Staff
Meaghan McGowan, Principal

Non-Voting Members present:

Ashley Johnson, Licensed Staff

Members absent:

None

Online:

None

Agenda Items

1.0 Welcome, Roll Call and Approval of Minutes. The minutes from the meeting dated 10-16-24 were presented and motion to be approved “as presented” by Kasey O’Horo and Gina Topor seconded the motion.

2.0 Old Agenda Items

- 2.1 Select Chair and Vice Chair**
- 2.2 Select SOT Secretary**
- 2.3 Community Member Discussion**
- 2.4 Future Meeting dates/time**
- 2.5 Review of SOT Duties and Function of SOT**
- 2.6 Setting norms and procedures for SOT meetings**

3.0 New Agenda Items

3.1 Code of Conduct Review

The only suggestions have been regarding feedback for bullying: can it be done faster? If bullying is not substantiated early on, there is no need to proceed with paperwork. When it is substantiated, take it seriously and always err on the side of doing all the paperwork. It can be time consuming. Kasey asked if an email could be sent to parents to help define what is “bullying”. It could help give parents proper terms. Many factors can determine severity. One parent talked about personal experience with a bullying case that required all the paperwork and in the end, school footage proved it was an accident. Ashley (school counselor) has a sign at school to help kids define what is rude and what is bullying. The Principal will always notify parents if a kid ends up in her office. Both sides are informed. If a valid bullying claim is brought to school by a parent, a case will be opened. The moment it is reported, the school will make sure kids are safe. Kids also need to tell the school or an adult, not just a parent. It is difficult for the school to address bullying when a student only tells a parent and not an adult at the school.

Rebecca suggested an intake source where a level of threat can be determined. When bullying is reported a “notice of bullying” is sent to parents and identifies all the steps that will be taken. Principal McGowan says the stats are down for bullying this year so far. Info is available on FocusEd. The school system is strong, teachers are quick for reporting, RTI for behavior and intervention, talking to parents more, tracking at recess and using positive behavior reports with cosmo cash, cosmo cave, snacks, etc.

Pulamah asked if there is a video that the district puts out about bullying? Can it be put on the website so it can be clear “what is bullying”. Data collection and communication of the teacher is very beneficial. Samantha said the committees are beneficial. They are able to separate academic concerns from behavior concerns. There are specialists and everyone is on the same team. There are peer mediations and restorative justice practices.

We have until Jan to give feedback for any Code of conduct changes. It is a catch all for all behaviors but can be negative. Other than streamlining paperwork for bullying, no other suggestions were made.

Gina mentioned a student said something alarming to her, so it is a reminder to always report. It is a piece of the puzzle and good to report just in case. The school would rather know so they can navigate concerns. Ultimately, we need to keep kids safe and process what they are learning.

3.2 School Performance Plan

Not a lot of updates. Newton got applauded for 90% completed for students. Need more staff. Currently have maybe 20% completion for parents. Newton does take into account the feedback and does try to make changes that are helpful. A lot of communication goes out from dojo and emails.

3.3 School Events/Updates

School events: book fair is happening now, santa shop coming the middle week in Dec, talent show next week, choir performance in December, dinner night out, holidays and winter break. January has penny wars.

Monthly positive praise – student of the month – gets to go to cosmo cave. Cosmo cash has been very successful and teachers like that kids are getting praise for non-academic behaviors like manners and kind acts. A hype video should be done to show all the great activities available in the cosmo cave (Nintendo Switch, air hockey, basketball hoop a shoot, dart board, lava steps, etc.).

Counselor’s corner: Ashley said each grade is focusing on “learning about learning” and how they learn best (whole body listening, senses, brain, memory strategies, etc).

Clothing Donation Drive. Clothing donations happening until Thanksgiving break. All size clothing for kids K-5 including shoes. New underwear, hygiene items (deodorant and pads). Cosmo cash for donations.

Angel tree: coming soon. School is taking recommendations for families in need. Our community is very generous. It was asked if we should consider providing Thanksgiving meals, but no one has come to Ashley or the principal about any Thanksgiving needs.

Grief rock garden: coming soon.

3.4 General Discussion

Proposal to get more involvement from parents. Suggestions:

1. Entice with food
2. Make it easier if childcare is an issue – have kids go to Cosmo cave?
3. Offer later times in the day for working parents
4. There are other ways to engage families. Send out a survey to see how parents want to be involved (giving time, donations, helping in classrooms, nothing, etc)
5. Send out sign-up genius if volunteers are needed or wanted

There are many people that will volunteer. But the badging process can be an issue to getting parents in.

4.0 Information

4.1 Next Meeting - Newton Elementary library, Thursday December 5, 2024 at 3:30 pm.

4.2 MAP results: December’s meeting will have MAP results. Will see if we meet midpoint goals for 10% improvement from fall.

5.0 Public Comment Period

(Two (2) minutes maximum allotted)

6.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:22 pm. Motion to adjourn by Kasey O’Horo and seconded by Sam Olsen.