



## Skinner West Local School Council

### LSC Meeting

Thursday, January 25, 2024

5:30 P.M.

### MINUTES

**Dr. Rhea Bush**

Principal

**Kevin Bolden**

Parent Representative

**Dr. Stephanie Frawley**

Community Representative

**Sheila Howard**

Staff Representative

**Fadi Matalaka**

Parent Representative

**Jackie Matthews**

Community Representative

**Nell Strong**

Parent Representative

**Dr. Katonja Webb Walker**

Parent Representative

**Dr. Ramel Werner**

Teacher Representative

**Daniel Orofino**

Parent Representative

**Vacant**

Teacher Representative

**Ronak Patel**

Parent Representative

#### I. Call to Order

- A. K. Webb Walker called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.
- B. Present in-person were Principal Dr. Rhea Bush and LSC members F Matalaka, J. Matthews, K. Webb Walker, R. Werner, S. Frawley, K. Bolden, D. Orofino, N. Strong, R. Patel, and S. Howard.
- C. Quorum in-person was established.

#### II. Approval of Agenda

- A. K. Bolden motioned to approve the agenda. Motion was seconded. Voice vote: passed with none opposed.

#### III. Approval of December 19, 2023 Minutes

- A. D. Orofino motioned to approve the December 19, 2023, meeting minutes. Motion was seconded. Voice vote: passed with none opposed.

#### IV. Announcements & Public Communications

- A. Friends of Skinner West (FOSW) - Amanda Rzepka gave the update. FOSW ordered cheerleading skirts and basketball uniforms and is working on soccer equipment. FOSW is backed up on filling teacher requests from before the holidays but is working on it. Portillo's fundraiser went well. Lou Malnati's fundraiser Feb. 21 from open to close. Gym is painted. Waiting on CPS Facilities to get back to Dr. Bush regarding having the same person do the floors and schedule during spring break.
- B. West Loop Community News - No updates.
- C. PTO/Gallery 111 - Gala will be March 9. Save the dates went out. Tickets going on sale soon. Need silent auction items.

#### V. Committee Reports

- A. Chairperson's Committee - No update.
- B. PPLC - R. Werner provided the update. Did not meet due to snow day. Need to reschedule.
- C. Communications - Dr. Bush provided the update. Currently preparing for the website redesign. Meeting to discuss Feb. 21 or 22. Will be asking teachers if any of them want to be involved. Will be gathering parent, student, and staff input and creating a website sub-committee.
- D. Special Education - LRE Committee - R. Werner provided the update. Special Olympics for the month of January is soccer. Next meeting is Feb. 1. Approved two new programs at the last committee meeting:
  1. Red Kite is an adaptive theater program for young people on the spectrum and diverse learners. Students engage in social-emotional learning (SEL) through sensory drama-games. Start on 8-week program after spring break.

2. Girls on the Run inspires participants to recognize their strength, increase physical activity, and confidently stand up for themselves and each other.
- E. School Improvement Committee - K. Bolden provided the update. No Continuous Improvement Work Plan (CIWP) updates. At the last meeting, the committee followed up on STEM curriculum. There will be further discussions. Discussed Spanish curriculum. Will be working with the administration to find areas where Spanish curriculum can work for all students. Discussed disciplinary issues going on at school. Will put together a survey for parents to inform a vision for electives at Skinner. Next meeting next week. Next Facilities meeting is Jan. 26.
- F. LSC Advisory Committee - K. Bolden provided the update. All candidate applications for LSC Elections need to be in by Feb. 8. There was discussion at the last LSC Advisory meeting around a potential school board vote of removing School Resource Officers (SROs) from schools. There was a recommendation of allowing each school to decide. Vote did not occur at today's CPS board meeting.
- G. Bilingual Advisory Committee - Dr. Bush provided the update. Ms. Morales was leading the BPAC meeting right now. Voted at last committee meeting to use funds to have PD to support parents of ELs. School currently has 40 newcomers. Three transferred out since last month.
- H. Advanced Math Committee - Dr. Bush provided the update. Meeting coming up soon.
- I. Principal's Report
  1. Article came out about unscrupulous activity from former a Skinner administrator that happened years ago. Dr. Bush sent email out that emphasized commitment to integrity to school community.
  2. Lunar New Year celebration coming up Feb. 8. Tasting events, dancing. Will be like nothing Skinner has ever seen before. Will be livestreamed.
  3. Black History Month - educational support staff submitted proposal around weekly events to celebrate Black culture.
  4. Mr. Corona, Skinner parent, owns a camp site outside of Peoria and is offering use of the site to 50 Skinner middle school students (targeting students with most need for SEL) to go down and work on SEL skills through canoeing, fishing, etc. and for a team building retreat for the entire staff.
  5. Personnel - Still have Spanish teacher vacancy. Actively interviewing.
  6. CIWP - CIWP-Instructional Leadership Team collaboration meeting was held to do progress monitoring. Next CIWP meeting next month.
  7. Will be restarting free afterschool tutoring program next week. Teachers and support staff are leading. Targeting students at risk for summer bridge as well as Students in Temporary Living Situations.
  8. Shoutout to special education team - district leaders came from across the city of Chicago to visit cluster program. Commented on teachers' use of curriculum with fidelity. Classrooms were beautiful, engaging, and welcoming.
  9. PD - Skinner was asked by district to host the mandated training on physical restraint and time out practices.
  10. Assessment - Mid-year assessments occurring for K-8. Skinner selected to participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress: Feb. 14, only 8th grade, for statistical purposes only, not for accountability, totally optional. Ms. Morales in the process of ACCESS (English language proficiency) testing for 168 Skinner English Learner students. 5Essentials culture and climate survey in progress.
  11. Dr. Brown provided a school safety update: Skinner is a phenomenal school, does have incidents. Fights and serious incidents are down compared to last year. Biggest problem is vaping, smoking weed, drinking alcohol at the park. Students who commit infractions do receive consequences. Remains confidential. Staff must abide by rights and responsibilities in student code of conduct. After any incident, Dr. Brown conducts a thorough investigation to get all sides of the story - looks at cameras, conducts interviews. Suspensions do not fix kids. Many factors outside of school affect student behavior. Limited in terms of what interventions can be taken. Students may need outside counseling, but a lot of times families do not accept the outside resources that are offered. Lack of information sharing from DCFS or other agencies to Skinner mental health staff. Students are not criminals. Interventions focus on re-teaching, coming from restorative position with intention of repairing harm. Students model behavior at home, may be learning retaliatory, aggressive behavior or substance use from adult role models

at home. School culture team meets often to discuss Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS), school norms. Middle schoolers are buying into the PBIS rewards system, want to earn the tokens and redeem them for incentives (like principal for a day). Schoolwide conversations to encourage students to report concerns have been effective.

12. Soul City Church - Request to rent parking space on Sundays. Previous contract cannot be located. Will ask Soul City how much they were paying previously and bring back to LSC next month.
13. Budget requests:
  - a) 5th grade field trip. Mandarin teacher Ms. Hu will take all fifth graders to Peking Acrobats in Skokie. \$1896. transportation \$1,080. Student field trips account and general funds.
  - b) 4th grade field trip led by Ms. Makris. White Sox opening day in May and White Sox parade. \$1,800 for admission. Buses TBD. Internal accounts from student fees. Part of student fees is so that all grades can have a free field trip.
  - c) Chartering coach bus to the camp site owned by Mr. Corona. (Coach bus due to length of trip.) \$2-3,000. Internal accounts - old Camp Edwards account.
  - d) IXL schoolwide renewal \$25,300 for reading, math, science, and social studies. Internal accounts epay.
  - e) Ms. McGann librarian \$2,370 for books. Raised funds from book fair. Just need LSC approval to write check.
  - f) STAR personnel transfer - \$100,000 to fund through end of the year. Teacher and support staff payroll buckets. Internal accounts STAR afterschool.

**VI. Old Business**

- A. None

**VII. New Business**

- A. J. Matthews motioned to approve the budget requests. Motion was seconded. Voice vote: passed with none opposed.
- B. STAR Program Timing and Capacity - LSC member discussion of exploring ways to have STAR to start closer to the beginning of the year. Staff, especially support staff, want the opportunity to supplement income. No income over the summer. Teacher time is 8:45-3:45. Support staff is 8:15 to 4pm. Also working STAR makes for a long day. STAR started one month into school this year to prevent staff burnout and absences later. Pay career service staff through what union has negotiated. Outside vendor will want to bring in outside staff or pay minimum wage. Discussed idea of sub-committee to discuss options. Commit to communicating earlier about what the start date is. Will send communication via Aspen. To address burn out, could start two weeks in instead of four weeks in but add in extra no-STAR days throughout the year the day before school holidays. To alleviate the wait list, could look into offering opportunities to employees of other schools (must be CPS employee to be paid).

**VIII. Public Comment**

- A. Lindsey Wheeler - Parent. Requesting more communication regarding Spanish teacher vacancy.
- B. Tina Patel - Parent. Concern regarding not enough soap in bathrooms.
- C. Amanda Rzepka - Request for gym class to use multipurpose room when there's indoor recess. Is there a Valentine's Day Dance? Yes. STEM Curriculum will be discussed during School Improvement Committee.
- D. Marita Connelly - Parent. Concerns regarding school safety issues.
- E. Heather Smith - Parent. Requesting more transparency regarding Spanish teacher vacancy.

**IX. Adjournment**

- A. K. Bolden motioned to adjourn. Motion was seconded. Voice vote: passed with none opposed.
- B. Meeting adjourned at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Jaclyn Matthews  
 Skinner West LSC Secretary