



## Skinner West Local School Council

### LSC Meeting

Tuesday, October 17, 2023

5:30 P.M.

### MINUTES

**Dr. Rhea Bush**

Principal

**Kevin Bolden**

Parent Representative

**Dr. Stephanie Frawley**

Community Representative

**Sheila Howard**

Staff Representative

**Fadi Matalka**

Parent Representative

**Jackie Matthews**

Community Representative

**Nell Strong**

Parent Representative

**Dr. Katonja Webb Walker**

Parent Representative

**Dr. Ramel Werner**

Teacher Representative

**Vacant**

Parent Representative

**Vacant**

Teacher Representative

**Vacant**

Parent Representative

#### I. Call to Order

- A. K. Webb Walker called the meeting to order at 5:54 p.m.
- B. Present in-person were Assistant Principal Dr. Jeffery Brown, and LSC members S. Howard, F Matalka, J. Matthews, K. Webb Walker, R. Werner, and S. Frawley. Quorum in-person was established.
- C. K. Webb Walker motioned to allow virtual participation. Voice vote: passed with none opposed.
- D. Present virtually were Principal Dr. Bush and LSC member K. Bolden.

#### II. Approval of Agenda

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

#### III. Approval of September 12, 2023 Minutes

- A. S. Howard motioned to approve the September 12, 2023, meeting minutes. Motion was seconded. Voice vote: passed with none opposed.

#### IV. Announcements & Public Communications

- A. Friends of Skinner West (FOSW) -
  1. Walkathon raised \$91,000. Gym will be painted and refreshed over winter break. Floors will be done over spring break. Jeni's ice cream fundraiser raised \$450. Will do 2-3 more restaurant fundraisers and a fundraiser with Uncommon James.
  2. Concerned that STEM Lab does not appear to be being used. Developer donated money for the STEM Lab, and there is still money leftover for three years. STEM Lab was used last year but has not been used this year. School Improvement Committee spent a lot of time talking about STEM Lab yesterday.
  3. For teachers or student organizations that want to request funds, FOSW needs to get proposals a week or two ahead of time with information/context about the request so that approvals can be made.
  4. Merging PTO with FOSW would require both organizations to redo all tax filings, bylaws, etc. Gallery 111 is under PTO tax ID. PTO could file paperwork to rename their organization. FOSW sponsored Gallery 111 this past year only because PTO did not have funds due to not having a gala during covid.
- B. West Loop Community News - School Report Cards from the State will be released Oct. 30. Trick or treating on Madison will happen Friday, Oct. 27 from 4-7 p.m.

**V. Committee Reports****A. Confirm Remaining SY24 Committees**

1. Proposed merger of PTO with Friends of Skinner West - PTO originally fulfilled small requests but FOSW redid mission statement to be able to fulfill small requests as well. PTO's main function now is just Gallery 111 and related arts residencies. Goal can be accomplished on just PTO's side through name change and renaming officers to something to the effect of Gallery 111 presented by PTO. Merger with FOSW not necessary.
2. PPLC Chairperson - Tabling until November meeting. Must be an official vote by CTU members.
3. Bilingual Advisory Committee Chairperson - Committee nominated and confirmed chair and other officers at last meeting. Chair is Ms. Morales.
4. Confirmation of Communications Committee Chairperson - Looking for nominees.

**B. Committee Reports:**

1. Chairperson's Committee - No updates.
2. Special Education – LRE Committee - R. Werner provided the update. Last year, the committee chair was Mr. Bailey. This year, the committee chair is Mrs. Newmark. Each month is a different sport for Special Olympics. Students learn the sport each Wednesday then have a competition the last week of the month. Last month flag football, this month a break, next month bowling, then basketball in December.
3. School Improvement Committee - F. Matalka provided the update. Project to replace roof on the branch is completed.
4. LSC Advisory Committee - K. Bolden provided the update. School Improvement Committee met Oct. 16. Discussed STEM Lab and STEM curriculum. Upcoming LSC election. Current members and those who want to run need to apply. The window for applications has opened as of Oct. 16 and goes through Feb. 8. Election takes place in April. CPS has completed accountability redesign and will be asking for feedback. CPS will also distribute a survey to all LSC members to ask for feedback on LSCs overall. CPS will have a presentation next month on the busing situation.
5. Bilingual Advisory Committee - No update.
6. Advanced Math Committee - Zhu-Song Mei provided the update. Zhu-Song Mei has replaced Sue Bae as Advanced Math Committee Chair. Met with Dr. Bush on Thursday. Discussed overall objective for Advanced Math Committee. Goal of having all students ready for Algebra by 8th grade. Additional objectives for each grade. All math books have been received for all grades. Discussed single subject acceleration application process. Requested a more in-depth webinar for parents to learn how to apply. State of the school meeting from Dr. Bush will provide more updates including data.
7. Principal's Report
  - a) Dr. Bush calling in to the LSC Meeting from annual Illinois Principals Association conference. Got to meet again State Superintendent Dr. Tony Sanders who visited Skinner West over the spring.
  - b) Dr. Anand stepping down from LSC duties. Vacant Parent Representative LSC seat.
  - c) Sex ed parent information meeting took place just before LSC meeting. 6-8 grade students will have access to sex ed curriculum.
  - d) Oct. 26 is Report Card pick up and parent-teacher conferences. Parents/caregivers should be collaborating with teachers on times. Hybrid, in-person, and virtual options are available.
  - e) No school for students Oct. 27 due to School Improvement Day. Building will be closed. All staff will be involved in training. Professional learning is connected to CIWP priorities.
  - f) Skinner now has two social workers.
  - g) CIWP - two priorities for next two years: inclusive and supporting learning environments and connectedness and social-emotional wellbeing. Goals apply to both students and staff. Next CIWP milestone meeting is tomorrow at 4 p.m.
  - h) Schools from around the network came to Skinner to observe math practices. Work was led by teacher leaders.
  - i) Advanced Math Committee - Encouraging all interested parents to apply for single subject acceleration through CPS application, which closes Nov. 6.

- j) State of the School address coming in the near future. Skinner does have students who are not at grade level. Offering Tier 3 afterschool support for any student two years or more below grade level.
- k) Schoolwide absences trending down. Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions for chronically absent students.
- l) PBIS - Seeing effect of PBIS in some areas but not others. Year-over-year decrease in suicidal ideation and bullying but increase in level 3 and above misconduct. Examples of level 3 conduct include fighting, assault without injury. Level 4 would be assault with injury. Usually see these behaviors at middle school, but now seeing from fourth grade students. Approach is primarily restorative but have had to give out some consequences.
- m) Chicago is a sanctuary city. Welcoming newcomer families. Skinner already has robust English Learner services. 25 different languages spoken at Skinner. We are screening students as they come in and placing them in appropriate program per need. Have welcomed 18 newcomer families in two weeks. Anticipating more. Parents have been volunteering supplies.
- n) Shoutout to STAR parents/caregivers - volunteers have increased significantly.
- o) Instead of having one school tour for the year, now having monthly tours for prospective families. Tours so far have been successful.
- p) Attended CPS facilities meeting last Friday to discuss cleanliness issues.
- q) Tech recycling coming up.
- r) Request from Gardner School to use Skinner's gym for one hour 6-7 p.m. Dec. 14. Propose to charge \$250. They would be responsible for set up, clean up, take down.
- s) Enrollment is up. Exceeded goal to increase to 1,015. Went from 951 last year to 1,072 this year (including Pre-k and recently enrolled newcomer students). Increase in funding of \$314,197.42. Funds must be expended this year or they are given back to district.
  - (1) Propose \$155,000 for staff salary and benefits. Open an additional full-time teaching position. Could staff an additional STEM teacher. Third grade classes are at 30+ students. Increase funding for full-time dean of students. LSC approved this position but budget was \$40,000 short. Will be discussed at School Improvement Committee meeting next week.
  - (2) Keypad on back door. Get staff key cards. \$9,920.
  - (3) Fire retardant for the drapes. Approved by LSC but did not have funding at the time. \$4,970.
  - (4) Reset and update clocks around Skinner. \$4,980
  - (5) Full-time dance teacher doing an awesome job. First dance presentation of the year scheduled for this Friday. Want to update the classroom to look like a dance studio. \$15k for soundproof floors, mirrors, etc.
  - (6) Update front office. Paint and update furniture and add school branding. \$10k
  - (7) Update teachers lounges in main office and branch. \$10k
  - (8) Teacher classroom requests: new rugs, etc.
  - (9) Spanish instructional materials for math program.
  - (10) Professional development for staff - schoolwide conference. \$40k.
  - (11) Four negatives on salary line. Negatives happen when staff salaries change (for example, staff earns a master's degree or is hired with more years of experience). \$19,710.
  - (12) Portable sound system. \$1k.
  - (13) Copier maintenance. Skinner makes over a million copies per year. \$12k.
  - (14) Would leave \$20k on budget line to fulfill requests later.
  - (15) Internal accounts - negative on e-pay line to reimburse parent for child no longer in STAR. \$1,251.
  - (16) Internal accounts - \$5k transfer for refreshments at staff events.
  - (17) Internal accounts - Staff lounge upgrade. Two refrigerators. Waiting on quote.

**VI. Old Business**

- A. LSC Member Vacancies (2 parent & 1 teacher) - Have received one parent application. Will send out email to parents and ask for applications by Friday, Nov. 10. LSC will review applications before the next meeting and will ask applicants to attend Nov. meeting and introduce themselves. If there are multiple applicants, we will look at applications in closed session. Positions are just for remainder of school year. Parents will need to re-apply for next two-year cycle. Teachers will apply in the next cycle.

#### **VII. New Business**

- A. R. Werner motioned to approve renting gym space to Gardner School for one hour for \$250. Motion was seconded. Voice vote: passed with none opposed.
- B. J. Matthews motioned to approve budget requests as stated in the principal's report. Motion was seconded. Voice vote: passed with none opposed.
- C. LSC Rules of Order Update - Reminders of LSC rules of order. The chairperson calls the meeting to order, then facilitates the meeting according to modified Robert's Rules of Order. During the meeting, LSC members can ask clarifying questions and LSC Secretary records minutes of the meeting. Public comment is two minutes per person. Sergeant at arms maintains order and ends public comment after two minutes. LSC members are not required to respond to questions or comments raised in public comment. Answers to public comment will be included in the next month's agenda under new business. Following each LSC meeting, LSC Secretary will share minutes, then LSC votes to amend or approve minutes. LSC members must attend in-person. But LSC can allow virtual participation for public comment in by-laws.
- D. School Improvement Committee will discuss the legality of the idea of sending out a summary of the meeting after the meeting and whether draft minutes can be posted in advance of approved minutes being posted so that community members get access to minutes sooner.
- E. Fair Busing Petition - Parents starting a petition on classical/selective enrollment busing due to CPS busing shortage. CPS still has a 50% bus driver shortage and gives priority to students in special education.

#### **VIII. Public Comment**

- A. Amanda Rzepka - Too much supervision at lunch and not enough at recess. Students being told not to talk in class and to talk at lunch but then being told at lunch to have quiet lunch. At recess, supervisors stand all in one place. Request to hold meetings in cafeteria or multipurpose room so as not to disrupt sports. Questions about whether school will receive additional funds for newcomer students. Parents want to know how to help newcomer families - how to donate, etc. Question about what happened to the \$3k for the gross motor room. School should not give opinion on bus issue.
- B. Carolla Klein - Parent of third grader - Question about plan to address exploding class sizes in kindergarten. Two more centers opening that will be housing newcomer students. Works for furniture manufacturer and could potentially get donations for teachers lounge or could purchase with employee discount.
- C. Shayne Wulbert - Skinner Park advisory council requests - funds have been approved to improve sidewalks. Improvements happening at sidewalks around Whitney Young but not Skinner. Pumpkin palooza this Saturday.
- D. Daniel Orofimo - Question about when STAR afterschool will start.
- E. Valentina Schweickert - Request for additional resources for newcomer children. Child in daughter's class does not speak English, and teachers do not have translators. Children also need emotional support.
- F. Diana Giese - Question about money in the budget for copy paper.
- G. Patricia Gutierrez - Question what extra resources have been provided to teachers to address the influx of newcomers. Her son has been translating for children/teachers.
- H. Linda Randolph - Grandon is at school. Thank you for the opportunity to learn more about what is happening at Skinner.

#### **IX. Adjournment**

- A. R. Werner motioned to adjourn. Motion was seconded. Voice vote: passed with none opposed.
- B. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jaclyn Matthews  
Skinner West LSC Secretary