

**MWS School Family and Community Council
Third Meeting AY 22-23
Nov. 1, 2022**

Participants:

Jane Richardson

Jenna Lingsch

Tanisha Sheppard

Bethany Jacobs

Kerry Graves

Tyrone Crosby

Tracy Demissie

Mike Addabbo

Megan Wysong

Tahilin Sanchez Karver

Heather Owens

Allison Scott-Berkheimer

Carrie DeLeon Moore

Toja Okoh

Amalie Ward

Zafar Shah

Sara Long

Molly Allen

Michael Johnson

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Allison Scott Berkheimer	Facilities
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Amalie Ward (she/her)	→ Move to
<input type="radio"/> Bethany Jacobs (unassigned)	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Carrie DeLeon	C&A
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Danielle Shapiro	C&A
<input checked="" type="radio"/> E Jane Richardson	C&A
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Heather Owens (she/her)	Facilities
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Jenna Lingsch	Facilities
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Katy Chib	C&A
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Kerry Graves	Facilities
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Keyonna Saunders	C&A
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Megan Wysong	C&A
<input type="radio"/> Michael Johnson (unassigned)	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Molly Allen	Facilities
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Philip Weber	C&A
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Tahilin Sanchez Karver (She/her)	C&A
<input type="radio"/> Tanisha Sheppard (unassigned)	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Toja Okoh (she/her)	Facilities
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Tracy Demissie	C&A
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Tyrone Crosby	Facilities
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Zafar Shah	C&A

Announcements

11/11: "Caretaker Cafe" for Middle School

11/16: Building Update

Participants were directed to choose a committee breakout room for the duration of the meeting.

Culture & Achievement Committee

Participants: Jane Richardson, Tracy Demissie, Megan Wysong, Tahilin Sanchez Karver, Carrie DeLeon Moore, Amalie Ward, Zafar Shah, Keyonna Saunders, Katy Chib

VOLUNTEERING/RECESS CONCERNS

The first newsletter of the year included an invitation to contact Mr. Johnson if parents wanted to volunteer at recess. Grade band reps have received complaints of emailing and not receiving a response. Often parents report observing only one staff member supervising recess, so it appears the volunteer invitation has not been coordinated. A child was injured at recess and the communication and care about it was reported by parents not to be inadequate.

No response was given to Katy's email asking for updates about recess concerns. Jane Richardson pointed out there was an indication in the November newsletter that all volunteers must be background checked; it's ambiguous if this was meant to be a form of response to the

email. The injured student was injured at the blacktop; children are no longer being taken to the playground and this was never communicated to parents.

Background checks are conducted at the district level. Though district policy gives specific circumstances for which volunteers must have background checks, MWS requires checks for any and all situations; Ms. Saunders confirmed this policy and stated it made her personally feel most comfortable if all volunteers went through the check process.

Zafar shared this information about volunteering:

- [Register yourself as a BCPS volunteer.](#)
- [Find the list of current MWS volunteer needs.](#)
- [Read more about BCPS volunteering.](#)

All volunteers are checked against the sex offender database. For indirectly supervised, unsupervised, or frequent volunteers, BCPS requires a criminal background check. The BCPS Engagement department will cover the cost of the fingerprint background check (\$61.50) if that level of screening is needed for the volunteer service. The volunteer would need to register through the Partners In Education Portal (linked above) to authorize screening and payment coverage. BCPS does not reimburse other costs, such as transportation or parking.

This chart explains the type of volunteering that requires a background check:

Volunteer Screening Summary

	Description	Sample Activities	Sex Offender Registry?*	Background Check Required?
Supervised	School staff always present Volunteer never alone with students	Guest speaker or reader, competition judge and chaperone (educational day trip, supervised by teacher)	School checks prior to volunteer's service	No, except if supervised volunteer is in the school on a "frequent" basis. "Frequent" is specifically defined as in the school four times within a four week period.
Indirectly Supervised	School staff may or may not be present Possibility volunteer is alone with students Frequent volunteer, even if supervised	Mentor, tutor and chaperone (overnight, foreign travel)	School checks prior to volunteer's service	Yes, school sends volunteer to Office of Human Capital
No-Student Contact	School staff may or may not be present Students are not present	Saturday clean-up at school, administrative work during non-school hours and district office activities	School checks prior to volunteer's service	No

Ms. Demissie said she likes to use Bloomz to post volunteer opportunities in her class and suggests a Bloomz post would be useful for things like recess or cafeteria volunteering.

Is the background check a barrier to volunteerism or is the lack of response to interested volunteers barring the process?

SFCC can fill in gaps through proximity to the administrators and to the school district as SFCC's role is identifying concerns and communicating them to administration. Tahilin stressed that use of Ms. Long's newsletter or teacher's posts to Bloomz are a first step, but there must be follow-through steps thereafter. There needs to be a systematic process, including a procedure in place and communication to get the process done.

SFCC will create a Volunteer subcommittee of the Family and Community Engagement Committee to get background checks done and install volunteers. Tahilin suggests we do a quarterly push for volunteers— like an open call to fill out your application from this time to that time and we get a bunch of volunteers onboarded at once.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Tahilin says she didn't see any communication back about restorative practices or curriculum after it was communicated by Ms. Long in October's meeting that this information would go out. She wants to know the philosophy around the program and restorative practices. Katy asked for Tahilin to put that in writing so it can be resubmitted as a request for info to admin. Although we are a restorative practices school, we don't have a contracted provider and the information that we have received each time we've asked for clarification over the past two years has been confusing. There is an online curriculum called Second Step that is being implemented at the elementary level; this appears to be a Social and Emotional Learning module and not to be connected to Restorative Practices. We are all confused about what it is and what (if anything) is being done at school.

Zafar noted that during the prior academic year, the administration shared depersonalized aggregate data about discipline events, such as referrals to the front office, and this data demonstrated certain trends. It is an open question whether MWS records any information about the use of Restorative Practices and whether such information could be reported to SFCC. There was discussion about what the purpose of obtaining such information would be. Zafar explained that SFCC should have an interest in understanding whether restorative practices are effective and equitably used and that review of data about when and how restorative practices are implemented is crucial to this understanding. Tahilin agreed that review of prior-year data might make sense to understand trends in the use of restorative practices but questioned whether current and prospective data would serve any purpose. Others expressed that SFCC must press for data to ensure that record keeping is occurring and that implementation is meeting the school's stated commitment to the policy. Tahilin emphasized that the request for information ought to begin with identifying what types of information are recorded; for instance, what forms are used.

The purpose of asking for behavior and discipline data is to carry out BCPSS Board's policy that SFC Councils engage communities in shared decision-making to impact student learning and school improvement. Some parents have communicated to SFCC reps concern that restorative practices aren't taking place and that Black students are disproportionately punitively disciplined. SFCC is tasked with engaging stakeholders—including school administrators and the school district—in discussion around these concerns.

We had a robust discussion about this question. If the point is to see if restorative practices interventions are being used then maybe we have not been given the answer to the question because restorative practices interventions are not being used. Amalie noted that MWS became a restorative practices intervention site when Mr. LaLonde was the principal. Then Covid came and SFCC is unaware whether the staff have done training necessary to implement restorative practices correctly.

CONTINUITY THROUGH MIDDLE SCHOOL

Parents in 7th grade have met informally and are questioning the effectiveness of math being taught virtually. Those discussions reveal that parents are having to pay for tutoring to compensate for ineffective teaching while some are also considering transferring out of MWS because of the administration's decision not to staff the math class. This was raised as an example of how MWS loses students/families directly as a result of administrative decision making.

Facilities Committee

Participants: Toja Okoh, Molly Allen, Allison Scott Berkheimer, Jenna Lingsch, Heather Owens, Brian Owens, Kerry Graves, Tyrone Crosby

Maurice Gaskins, and Assistant Director of Facilities Planning, Design and Construction for City Schools sent us a list of specs for the new playground we could use for planning. Cyndi Smith followed up shortly after that with two estimates for a new playground from their existing vendors. ([Here is the link to those documents in our shared drive.](#)) Below are the notes from the Facility Committee's discussion:

- Ask the City if we can have a playground specific meeting to get clarification on the recreational equipment requirements
 - E.g. are we responsible for making the entrance to the playground ADA accessible
- Kerry noted that **we really need Principal Long to communicate to the City on our behalf to show the City she is really interested in this project.**

- **Who is our main contact at the district level regarding the playground renovation?**
Cyndi (Cynthia) Smith - Executive Director of Facilities Planning, Design, and Construction or Maurice Gaskins?
- Our existing play structure is definitely for older kids. How can we accommodate younger children?
- Does MWS have an existing grounds crew designated by the City?
- What grant opportunities are there for the playground from the city and state?
- Who is taking ownership of this project? The City? Not us:
 - We (PTO + SFCC) can contribute money but we need a PM
 - Let's ask Cyndi who is currently managing and got the 2 bids
- **Develop list of questions for the district reps before the community meeting on the 16th**
 - Are there space programming guidelines for planning the layout of the playground space vs. the technical specifications that were sent to us?
 - Is mulch allowable? The guidelines say no, but the proposals do include mulch.
 - Who currently manages groundskeeping at MWS? Do they do handle the current playground? This is an important question, related to maintaining the new playground.
 - Does the fence need to be updated as part of this proposal?
 - Can we get a playground design that accommodates all (pre-K through 5) ages in our buildings?
 - What elements of the existing playground are we allowed to keep, if any (current play structured, repaired)? How can we get feedback from the school community on what elements we should keep?
 - Is the City going to assess ADA access to the playground and modify as needed?
 - Does the 10 year warranty (identified in the specs provided by Maurice Gaskins) extend to existing structures that may be refurbished in the two proposals?
 - Do we have to work with the school district's contractor or can we use alternative ones; and also hire a project manager?
 - Can we have a playground specific meeting with the City facilities group similar to the building improvement meetings?

ADOPTION OF OCTOBER '22 MINUTES

Zafar shared the October 2022 minutes (and Spanish translation) by email to all grade reps, chairs, and admin members. The minutes were reviewed, moved, and seconded for adoption on Nov 3, 2022, via email.