

J. Graham Brown School  
SBDM Meeting Minutes  
February 9, 2016

In attendance: Angela Parsons, Shawn Wilson, Lisa Billings, Liz Byron, Neysa Jones, Amy Thornton, Elizabeth Bricking, Ashley Chesman, Elisa Pitmon, Sam Graber and Candice Luijk.

Missing: Pam Willison

Guests: Paula Broyles, Mary Todd, Elona Mack, and Amy Bordogna

The meeting was called to order at 4:31 PM.

Dr. Parsons distributed the meeting's agenda. The council reviewed the agenda. Ms. Billings moved to approve the agenda, and Ms. Jones seconded. The agenda was approved by consensus.

Dr. Parsons distributed copies of the minutes from the January 12, 2015 meeting. The council reviewed the minutes. Ms. Byron moved to approve the minutes without changes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Chesman. The minutes were approved by consensus.

Dr. Parsons presented the council with a good news report.

- Norah Wakefield, Liz Byron, and Mary Todd sponsored our 1<sup>st</sup> World Quest team. We came in 3<sup>rd</sup> place.
- Elisa Pitmon coached the MS Quick Recall Team to 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the play offs!
- Mary Todd coached our high school quick recall team to 2<sup>nd</sup> place in Division 4 and 4<sup>th</sup> place in the LG&E Tournament!
- Jon Fejes had 8 students in grades 5-8 who participated in All-County Choir.
- Allana Thompkins had four students place at the state level in the Dr. King Writing Contests.
- Stacy Powell inspired our elementary students to create over 900 valentines to be distributed to Meals on Wheels recipients.
- Awesome Homecoming Week! Thanks to Norah and Liz and our Pep Club. Our Spirit Week, Pep Assembly, and Homecoming Dance were amazing!
- We hosted Governor's Cup for the middle school and the high school! Amy Bordogna and Randy Cox did a great job coordinating both events.
- We hosted the All "A" Basketball Regional Tournament, in spite of snow days. We really appreciate the work that Justin does for our school.
- We had a wonderful Martha Ellison display dedication event in the lobby. It was a moving night for many alumni, former faculty members, and members of the Ellison family.

Dr. Parsons invited public comments.

Ms. Broyles addressed the council. She spoke about concerns she had with 8<sup>th</sup> graders on the block schedule. Ms. Broyles distributed a packet of information to the council that highlighted her concerns, made recommendations for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade schedule, and contained copies of emails from teachers expressing their thoughts on 8<sup>th</sup> graders on the block schedule. Ms. Broyles stated that the block schedule has been tried at other middle schools and Brown in the past, and that most schools, including Brown, end up going back to a six period day. She also stated that under the block schedule, 8<sup>th</sup> graders were expected to complete 3-4 hours of homework per night, leaving little time for other activities.

Ms. Todd addressed the council regarding her support of 8<sup>th</sup> graders staying on the block schedule. Ms. Todd stated that students struggle in transitioning to the block schedule, but 8<sup>th</sup> grade is a better time to transition to it than 9<sup>th</sup>. She stated that, unlike in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, negative grades in 8<sup>th</sup> grade are not added to a student's permanent transcript.

Dr. Parsons reported on the results from the second proficiency cycle. In elementary, there was an increase in proficient and distinguished (P&D). There was a drop in scores for math, but it was expected. For math, teachers prefer to follow the sequencing in their GO Math curriculum, which they believe better meets the learning needs of the students but does not align with the district curriculum map. Ms. Pitmon and Ms. Billings both spoke in favor of the GO Math sequencing over the district curriculum map. This drop in scores is expected to increase by the end of the year, when the tested material has been covered and students retake the proficiency test. Science P&D increased, while in social studies, the first proficiency stayed the same and there were fewer proficient scores in the second cycle. Mr. Wilson noted that one teacher has discussed that they have fallen behind from the curriculum map, but they are working to get caught up.

For the middle school proficiency assessments, there was an increase in reading, math, and social studies. High school had an increase in reading and math. Biology follows a different sequence than the district, and the proficiency test does not reflect what has been taught yet. In U.S. History, 100% of honors students were P&D. The Advanced Placement students follow a different sequence and have not yet taken the proficiency.

Dr. Parsons reviewed the calendar of upcoming important dates/events with the council.

- February 10 - Principal's Advisory Board
- February 12 - Middle School Dance
- February 16 - PTSA Board Meeting
- February 18 - Alumni Association
- March 1 - MS/HS Pre-KMEA Band & Choir Concert

Mr. Wilson gave an update on admissions. Forty-eight acceptance letters have been mailed to the parents of incoming kindergarteners. Rejections letters were sent to those who did not complete the admissions requirements. Interviews will soon be scheduled for incoming middle and high school students who scored the highest on the admissions criteria.

Ms. Mack presented the report from the FRYSC Office. She noted that every two years the program plan to meet required components for the center are updated. Brown and Central High School share one center and the data within the report is a compilation of both schools. Some members of the council expressed a desire to see the data for Brown only. Ms. Mack indicated that she was not able to disaggregate the center report data between the schools. Ms. Mack discussed the impact of budget cuts on the center and how center services are accessed through referrals. Ms. Mack explained that substance abuse referrals can be made by anyone. Dr. Parsons noted the positive comments she has heard regarding the *Just Between Teens* program for middle school. The council and Ms. Mack discussed the possibility of adding a distracted driver program for high school students in the future.

Ms. Byron and Ms. Thornton gave a report from the Vision Statement Formulation Task Force. Ms. Thornton stated that over 316 vision surveys have been completed by students and parents. She noted that the website directed survey participants to a list of historical Brown School documents that relate to the original and historical purposes and intentions for the school. These documents are available to be viewed by survey participants. In March, the data will be disaggregated and presented to the council. Members of the council stated that the survey was user friendly and easy to complete.

Dr. Parsons explained to the council that at the current rate of reviewing policies, many policies had fallen out of compliance and many more soon would. Each policy must be reviewed every three years. Dr. Parsons stated that the council will need to review more policies each meeting to get into compliance and that, for next year, she would develop a schedule for reviewing policies in the future to maintain compliance. It was additionally noted that when the school bylaws were changed, it created discrepancies between the bylaws and policies, and that as policies are reviewed they should be updated to properly align with the bylaws. She explained that, for example, the new bylaws require the curriculum committee to address scheduling, but current SBDM policy requires a scheduling committee to address scheduling. Additionally, the policy for hiring consultation was removed from the bylaws, leaving no current policy.

The council reviewed the Student Dress Policy (2004). The council discussed the possible implications of changes, and some noted appreciation of the general language that was used.

The council reviewed the Alignment with State Standards (2014) policy. A typo in the policy was noted. Members of the council asked for clarification of the term “programs.” Dr. Parsons stated that it was referring to academic programs. It was suggested that the term “programs” be changed to “academic programs.” Alterations were made to the language in the policy, and the council conducted a first reading of the revised policy.

The council reviewed the School Schedule (1997) policy. It was again noted the need to change the wording from the Scheduling Committee to the Curriculum and Instruction Committee. The council also discussed the need for clarification on the intent of the word “schedule,” differentiating between the daily bell schedule and the master schedule. The council conducted a first reading on the policy.

Dr. Parsons gave a report from the Curriculum and Instruction Committee. The committee has discussed the creation of parent institutes, such as a math night or supporting students with ADHD. The committee has also discussed ways of using seniors in the instruction of content in elementary grades. The committee is also recommending the addition of drama classes. In exploring the possibility of adding these classes, the committee found issues with scheduling. Drama classes will affect chorus classes and staffing positions, which require the overstaffing of a music teacher to add a drama teacher for 2016-2017.

Mr. Wilson gave a report from the Safety and School Climate Committee. The committee is attempting to create an afternoon dismissal plan to increase student safety and create a plan to deal with unsupervised students after school by the end of the year.

Mr. Wilson gave a report from the Scheduling Committee. Scheduling Committee meetings have largely focused on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade block schedule. At their last meeting, the committee reviewed academic and behavioral data for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, comparing them to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class from the prior year and how the same cohort performed as 7<sup>th</sup> graders. The current 8<sup>th</sup> grade class has improved in academics and behavior from the cohort's prior year. The 8<sup>th</sup> graders have improved academically over last year's 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Additionally, current 8<sup>th</sup> graders have the same number of referrals as last year's 8<sup>th</sup> graders, at the same point last year. Copies of this data were distributed to the council. Elementary teachers have expressed a desire to keep the current schedule, as it relates to elementary related arts. The council discussed the 8<sup>th</sup> grade homework concerns that were brought up by Ms. Broyles. Several parents on the council expressed concern that homework for their 8<sup>th</sup> graders seemed both excessive and redundant. The council discussed concerns with homework at multiple grade levels. The council has requested that the issue of homework be addressed by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee. Additionally, the council will review the homework policy at an upcoming meeting. It was noted that changing the bell schedule for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade would have an impact on elementary related arts and would result in a loss of a teaching position at the middle school level, to be replaced by a high school position. Ms. Chesman moved to approve the current bell schedule for next year. Ms. Thornton seconded the motion. The bell schedule was approved for 2016-2017. The council also expressed a desire to explore the possibility of a block or quasi-block schedule for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders for the 2017-2018 school year.

The council conducted a third reading of the Discipline and Classroom Management Philosophy Policy. Ms. Pitmon moved to approve the policy. Ms. Byron seconded the motion. The policy was approved by consensus.

Ms. Chesman reviewed the final wording of the Assignment of All Instructional and Non-Instructional Staff Time Policy. The council conducted a first reading of the policy.

The council appointed a task force of Ms. Chesman and Ms. Luijk to draft a new Consultation Policy. The task force will provide the policy draft to the council for a first reading at the next meeting.

Dr. Parsons gave an update on the 2016-17 budget. She provided copies of the proposed ESS, PD, and K-8 Instructional Resources budgets. The PD Committee has made recommendations

for the PD budget that include allocating significant money for substitute teachers to allow teachers to engage in PD as teams to review data and student needs for planning and lesson development and to allow teachers to observe and meet with master teachers in other schools. The PD Committee also recommended money be allocated for registration fees for teacher AP trainings and \$1,100 for profession development books for staff. Dr. Parsons explained to the council that money can be moved within each budget (i.e., within ESS or within PD), but money cannot be moved between the different budgets. Mr. Graber moved to approve these budgets without revisions, and Ms. Billings seconded the motion. All three budgets were approved by consensus.

The council discussed proposed personnel changes to take effect for 2016-17. Dr. Parsons informed the council that the attendance clerk can be moved from 6.5 to 8.0 hours at no cost to the school. The council revisited the proposal to drop the position of day lead custodian and add the position of plant operator. This proposal will be at no cost to the school, and will even save Brown the need to pay overtime for snow removal. It was noted that approving this proposal soon will allow time for any current custodian at Brown who wishes to apply for the new position time to get training and certification to be a plant operator and apply in the summer. Dr. Parsons announced to the council that Ms. Priscilla Morgan, Counselor, has chosen to retire at the end of the school year. The council discussed a proposal to change this counseling position from elementary/secondary to elementary only. The savings, approximately \$11,000, will be used for supervision of students before and after school. The addition of the plant operator position would be recurrent and not need continual action from the council to keep each year, but the change in the counseling position would require an annual vote by the council to renew. The council discussed how changes in the custodial positions may be impacted by the change to a plant operator, and some members asked how the timing of the change would align with plant operating training and testing. Dr. Parsons stated she would find those training and testing dates for the council. Ms. Billings moved to approve to change the attendance clerk hours to 8.0 and the counseling position to elementary only. Ms. Jones seconded the motion. The council approved the changes by consensus and will revisit the proposal for a plant operator at the next meeting.

The council appointed a task force to examine potential restroom facility options for transgendered students. The task force will be led by Ms. Pam Willison. Ms. Chesman and Ms. Amy Bordogna will also be on the task force.

The council added a special-called meeting for Tuesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, at 4:30 PM. At this meeting, the council will review and approve the school budget, will review the proposal to add a plant operator, and will review all policies that are out of compliance.

Ms. Bricking moved to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Graber seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:04 PM.