

J. Graham Brown School
SBDM Meeting Minutes
August 18, 2015

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

Guests in attendance: Karen Demaree, Kevin Burden, Adam Stivers, Heather Harrell, and Dana Zausch.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m.

Dr. Parsons distributed the agenda. The council reviewed the agenda and Ms. Chesman moved to add a discussion of open space and play space to new items on the agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Luijk. The amendment to the agenda was approved. Ms. Pitmon moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Luijk. The agenda was approved.

Dr. Parsons distributed copies of the minutes from the July 21, 2015 meeting. Ms. Byron moved to approve the minutes without changes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilson. The minutes were approved.

Dr. Parsons welcomed those visiting the council meeting and allowed all members and visitors to introduce themselves.

Dr. Parsons gave a good news report. Items noted in the report:

- First girls' soccer game to be played on August 19, 2015 against Iroquois High School at Iroquois.
- Parents have offered positive comments on the weekly emails being sent out from Dr. Parsons. Dr. Parsons requested that members of the council think about some ideas regarding improving communication from the parents to the school.
- PTSA expects to exceed the prior year's membership. Early membership drives at registrations and the meet and greet resulted in 326 members and many parent volunteers. While staff memberships are currently low, the PTSA was working on plans to increase staff memberships.
- Nine parents have already signed up for SBDM committees.

Dr. Parsons invited public comments. There were none.

Dr. Parsons mentioned that the school has received preliminary results of the Unbridled Learning system. Information can be shared with any school leaders after signing a non-disclosure form.

Dr. Parsons gave a report on the opening of school. The first days went well. Joseph Wynn, 10th grader and school mascot, was at the meet and greet in costume to welcome students. Brown has an enrollment of 701 students, exceeding projections. All staff received handbooks for the first

time; the main office staff worked hard to prepare them. Next year's handbook will be more comprehensive. Teacher training was provided to accurately align grading practices and teacher gradebooks with district grading policies. On September 15, 2015, administrators will review and give feedback to teachers on their gradebooks. The Courier-Journal was at school on the opening day, and pictures from Brown can be viewed on the Courier-Journal's website.

Ms. Jones and Ms. Byron reported on the work of the Working Conditions Task Force. In the school, there has been a feeling of decreased morale. In 2014-15, the administrators chose six areas of focus, based on the TELL survey, to address. All six areas showed improvement. For 2015-16, Ms. Jones and Dr. Parsons met to analyze the survey data and identify five areas. The five areas they have identified are communication between teachers and administrators, shared vision, teacher leadership, differentiated professional development that is aligned with the CSIP, and recognition of staff. The teachers worked in three groups to brainstorm possible strategies to address these areas, and the task force will meet with administrators on August 20, 2015 to discuss next steps. Teachers have stated they feel progress in morale is being made by the inclusion of teachers in the process and the conversations they are having.

Dr. Parsons reported that the alumni association has taken the lead to address safety concerns related to the public streets around the school. The alumni association's communication with the city has resulted in tree trimming and more visible signage and traffic markings on the street. Other concerns being pursued are the timing of traffic lights for increased safety for pedestrians, extension of the school zone onto Muhammed Ali, possible speed bumps and barriers, and additional signage. These items will additionally be discussed on the PTSA meeting on August 18, 2015. The council discussed the multiple vehicle accidents that have occurred around the school and the potential dangers they present. Eleven accidents have been documented in the past five months.

The council reviewed the Lower School Language Arts Policy (1999). The council noted that the policy was not a required policy. The council discussed the concern of parental notification of reading materials and how age appropriate materials will be selected without the policy. However, through PLCs, grades K-2 have adopted common systems and routines for reading workshops and the policy is no longer practiced. Ms. Chesman moved to abolish the policy. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pitmon. The policy was abolished.

Mr. Wilson gave a report from the Safety/School Climate Committee. The new drop off procedures for grades K-2 have received praise from parents and teachers. Students are now in a calming environment before being picked up by the teachers. Student pick-up and escort to class by teachers is smooth and efficient, and fewer parents are staying in the building. The council expressed concerns that not all parents are clear about the procedures and may need more explanation. The council suggested that a written statement of the procedures be sent home with students in those grades, a potential video explanation on Facebook, and that parents can help spread the word to parents who may need clarification. Future considerations for the plan may include older students acting as safety escorts for the younger students. It was noted that Mr. Wilson was a former safety patrol student. The council requested photographic evidence be provided.

Mr. Wilson reported on the updated School Safety Plan.

- Changes have been made in the lockdown procedures.
- The staff has been trained in safety procedures, and three safety drills (fire, severe weather, and earthquake) have already been conducted. Lockdown and a second fire drill will be conducted in the coming days.
- Procedures and maps have been posted in each classroom.
- Discussions with the YMCA are in progress to move Brown's alternative site location to their facility, as our current location, the convention center, will not be available when they begin renovations. The council discussed possible benefits to having the YMCA as the alternate site.
- The new Safety Plan will take effect October 1, 2015.

Ms. Byron moved to approve the safety plan. The motion was seconded by Mr. Graber. The plan was approved.

The council discussed the possibility of a designated open space/play space. The council discussed the possible areas for such space and the needed work, money, and bureaucracy that may need to be addressed in establishing such a space. Suggestions for this included Martha Ellison Peace Park, green space behind the YMCA, or creating a green space on the school roof. The council appointed a task force to be chaired by Ms. Chesman, with Ms. Harrell and Ms. Zausch serving as co-vice chairs. They were invited to attend a meeting regarding donations and corporate sponsorships on August 19, 2015.

Dr. Parsons asked all council members to verify their required paperwork: email notification, proof of receipt for "Your Duty Under the Law" and "Managing Public Records," training verification, and background checks.

Ms. Thornton moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Ms. Bricking. The meeting adjourned at 5:44 p.m.