

Minutes of the Collaborative School Committee (CSC)

Polaris at Ebert Elementary

June 4, 2015

In attendance: Stephanie Nussbaumer and Leta Kalfas, co-chairpersons and parent representatives; Gail Axt, Catherine Forington and Angela Dire, faculty representatives; Michelle Higgins and Ruth Falchero, staff members; Marisa Hudson-Arney, parent representative; Anne Sterrett, incoming principal.

Handbook and Bylaws. Current CSC members informed newly elected members about the group's bylaws. The CSC approved new bylaws this past school year based on guidelines and training from Denver Public Schools. The incoming committee has the flexibility to appoint new representatives; however one of the requirements will be that the balance of the committee must include one more parent than every other group represented.

Recruitment of Parents for CSC. Ms. Kalfas will be leaving the CSC at the end of the school year, and the committee will need at least one and possibly two new parent members. No parents have volunteered for the position. Ms. Hudson-Arney suggested approaching candidates who had applied for an opening earlier in the year. Members agreed, and suggested that there could be more interest in serving on the committee when children return to school in the fall.

Discussion of Staffing Adjustments. Ms. Sterrett informed the committee about staffing needs for the upcoming 2015-16 school year. For consistency in meeting the school's health needs, she recommended that the part-time health tech position be increased to 28 hours per week. There is also the potential to hire one full-time and one part-time paraprofessional to replace current staff members who are leaving to take other employment. However, committee members agreed that hiring should be postponed until the fall for two reasons. First, the governor has signed a bill that will increase the minimum wage of paraprofessionals. School officials are still waiting to see how this move will affect school budgets. Ms. Sterrett will contact the DPS budget partner for Polaris for information. Also, current part-time paraprofessionals may want to increase their hours of work. Polaris employs four full-time paraprofessionals and five part-time paraprofessionals. In addition, another full-time paraprofessional works exclusively for the art program.

Thursday Folder. The committee discussed the possibility of cutting back on the amount of paper sent home in the Thursday folder. Rather than sending home flyers, information could be distributed in the weekly Polaris E-Post. However, committee members agreed that it would be best to send the information via links rather than documents - which would be unwieldy and inconvenient to download. Ms. Kalfas suggested that Polaris look to the Denver Discovery School as a model.

The next meeting of the CSC is scheduled for September.