



Northside College Preparatory High School

5501 N. Kedzie Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60625

Telephone 773.534.3954 Fax 773.534.3964

John Ceisel
Chair

Vicki McMannon
Vice Chair

Cathy Quigley
Secretary

Local School Council Minutes May 10, 2011

Commencement

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m. by John Ceisel.

Present: John Ceisel, Vicki McMannon, Barry Rodgers, Crystal Melto, Gail Myers Jaffe, Cathy Quigley, Nicole Flores, Vicky Andrews, Cesar Monarrez

Absent: Kathleen Andrade, Diane Monnich, Meredith O'Connor, Robert Albritton

Guests: Dr. Murphy (assistant principal), Mr. McVane (parent), Mr. Pineda (parent), Mrs. Rojek (parent)

Communications

Mr. Ceisel announced that Tim Devine (social studies teacher at Northside) has been selected to be the next principal at Walter Payton. Mr. McVane talked about the principal selection process at Walter Payton which took place over the past year. In addition to the LSC, personnel from the CPS central office also exercised some oversight during the proceedings. Mr. McVane praised the cooperation between Northside and Payton during this period, sharing information about Mr. Devine in particular and about the principal selection process in general.

Approval of Agenda

To approve the standard agenda for tonight's meeting (**see Motion #1**)

Approval of Minutes

To approve the minutes from the previous month's meeting on April 12, 2011 (**see Motion #2**)

Student's Report

- Students underwent the 2nd week of AP testing, ending this week with Cubby Walk; everyone is hoping for good weather and a Cubs win.
- Spring sports results: the track team competed at city: the men's team placed 4th; varsity women's water polo earned 2nd place at city; varsity women's soccer is competing currently.
- International Day and International Night, showcasing cultural dances, will take place on May 18th and May 20th, respectively.
- The Northside National Honor Society will induct new members on May 24th.
- Junior Book Awards, for which universities donate books with desired attributes of student recipients, will be presented on May 27th.
- The Music Advocacy and Awards Dinner, honoring students in the advanced music ensembles (chamber strings, jazz band, and chorus), will be held on June 1st, hosted by Mrs. Martinez, Mr. Lill, and Mr. Park.
- Varsity baseball clinched the conference championship on Friday.

Principal's Report

- Construction of the tile mosaic for the Celestial Garden is well under way.
- There will be no budget until the new CPS chief (Jean-Claude Brizard) takes over. Mr. Brizard is bringing several new people into the system; this will occur sometime in May – new people, new ideas, new opportunities.
- Selective enrollment principals have met with each other and plan to meet with the new CEO.
- There was an Arbor Day celebration at Northside at which 70 trees were planted. Mayor Daley, corporate sponsors, and environmentalists were in attendance.
- Mr. Yanek was named CTE Exemplary Teacher of the Year; he spearheaded several initiatives, including the Exploring Computers class running next year at Northside; he is president of the Illinois chapter of the Computer Science Teachers Association.
- The parking lot plan has been implemented as of Monday. It has been successful so far, with some adjustments so that teachers can enter the parking lot. After school, the exit process has been very quick: cones were picked up on the first couple of days by 3:30. The next step is the procurement of parent volunteers.
- Northside's sports teams are all doing well; the spring season is winding down.
- Alexandra Rojek was named to the Academic All-State Team.
- The Northside-EPA partnership is going well: Mrs. LeFaire (parent of Northside senior Petrina) works with the EPA and was a principal for a day. The partnership was forged with Ms. Volesky's environmental science classes: experts come in to talk about various topics and organize field trips.
- Information regarding the one-to-one computing program will be updated under new business. In the meantime, the delivery of 135 laptops, and 175 personal computers, 85 monitors, and other hardware has been confirmed for this week. This provides an opportunity to equip the language lab. The efforts of Mrs. Andrews and Mr. Benincasa facilitated this acquisition.
- CNA Insurance and Underwriters Laboratories donated these used machines and other equipment to Northside and provided delivery as well. Karen Gordon is our technology consultant; she is the former co-chair of the 50 for the Future program sponsored by the Illinois Technology Foundation.
- The principal discretion process (in response to a question by Mr. Ceisel) is one means of improving the acceptance process and preserving the core missions of the schools. Principals made recommendations to a blue ribbon commission and to the new CEO; there was consensus and cooperation among the principals. Principal discretion is a vigorous process, requiring affidavits and approval by a CPS board. This helps to fill a gap in the incoming freshman class with students exhibiting exceptional abilities, hardship, and diversity. The process was used by all of the selective enrollment principals this year; many exercised the option of choosing the maximum number of 5% of last year's incoming freshman class. Principals were faced with a choice between participating in a second round of acceptances and principal discretion, offering more direct choices. The process can include siblings if the applicant qualifies on the approved principal discretion criteria, but "sibling" is not a principal discretion criterion.
- At Northside, 13 students were chosen via principal's discretion. Currently the total enrollment is 289, possibly decreasing to 285. Mr. Rodgers opted to select this increased number of students because principal discretion provides more control over choices as compared with second round acceptances. This gives the principal a better opportunity to choose students who will succeed at Northside.
- The SIPAAA season is in full swing. A committee is putting together a draft report with teachers and some LSC members. The process will be extended into June or July because we have not received a budget from CPS.
- In response to a parent question: Teachers may not know at the end of this school year whether or not they have a job at Northside next year.
- The July LSC meeting is intended to be an organizational meeting at which the council elects officers and schedules meetings for the following school year – more significant business may need to be conducted at this meeting, depending on when budget information is forthcoming from CPS.

Public comment

- A parent informed the LSC about a formal event taking place on Tuesday, May 17th: the National Latin Society induction.

- A parent wondered about the impact of the extended day suggested for next year, as reported in the media. Mr. Rodgers indicated that this was more likely to affect elementary schools than high schools: high school teachers have a lunch period and a break, while elementary school teachers typically work all day and have their lunch scheduled at the end of the day.
- A parent wondered why teachers are cut when the budget needs to be reduced, as opposed to taking alternative cost-cutting measures.
- Criteria for cuts include tenure and programmatic needs; performance is not a factor, but that may change in the future as a result of pending legislation; teacher performance is very difficult to measure empirically and objectively, consistently and well.
- There was a discussion about why Northside is considered to be the number one school in the state of Illinois: this ranking is based on numeric metrics such as PSAE and ACT scores, but also on qualitative characteristics, including the cooperation and success of students and teachers inside and outside of school.

Teachers' Report

- The *Hoofbeat* and sponsor Dianne Malueg were honored at the McCormick Foundation High School Media Awards.
- The French Honor Society induction ceremony was held one week ago, coordinated by Ms. Huestis and Ms. Navarrete.
- The "You Rock" Award was passed to Marcos Alcozer from the library staff for his work with soil actualizers and the food garden, as well as ongoing technology assistance.
- In the ICTM state math contest, Northside finished 5th in the state (by one point). David Jaffe won 1st place in algebra 2. Fermi Ma and David Jaffe won 1st place in the junior-senior 2-person contest.
- The faculty and staff felt much appreciated during the faculty and staff appreciation week.

Committee Reports

- Finance committee

The committee was hoping to propose a new fee structure for the upcoming school year; this has been postponed until June.

- Friends of Northside

The Cubby Walk fundraiser is well under way; the event will take place on Friday. Currently we are down slightly in revenue, and also in the number of students who are going. There are sports and other events conflicting with the date; the committee will possibly consider an earlier date in the future so that more athletes and students participating in other school activities can go to the game. (This was not possible this year due to the limited number of dates offered by the Cubs.)

- The Northside Parent Network

- The committee met last Thursday and discussed upcoming events and the lack of volunteers, asking parents to put the word out and "grab their friends." Some concerns have been expressed about the software being used to invite volunteers; other factors influencing the lack of volunteers include the realities that more people are working and everyone has too many other time commitments.
- The committee's next meeting is June 17th, the final meeting of the year for the Northside Parent Network.

- Community Relations

- The committee met on Tuesday, May 3rd, and discussed how to communicate more effectively to the outside community, going to different aldermen in the area, asking them to put notices in newsletters to promote events like concerts, with the goal of improving the school's relationship with the community.

- There is a bulletin board / parent center in the main foyer in front of the security desk; the committee is still seeking a place for parents to post minutes and distribute forms. They are also looking for a board that can be posted somewhere in the school building.
- The next Community Relations committee meeting has not yet been scheduled.

➤ Principal Selection and Evaluation Committee

Mr. Ceisel has solicited feedback regarding the principal evaluation process via e-mail. The e-mail includes comments by Mrs. McMannon and Mrs. Andrews, and a summary by Mr. Ceisel.

Old Business

Mr. Ceisel has been in discussions with representatives from selective enrollment schools to formulate a plan to provide a stable environment to teachers and students, and to present this message to the new CEO. The group seeks to maintain focus on academic excellence, establish student and family-centric schools, facilitate diversity, and generally improve the admissions process.

New Business

- Mr. Rodgers asked Mrs. Andrews to provide an information update on the one-to-one computing program, including positive results for the second year. He would like to continue this program so that Northside is a leader in this field, and to build upon our successes.
- Mrs. Andrews and others have been trying to secure grants and donations to make the program work, but so far we have only been able to supply a small cohort of students each year. There have been two cohorts so far, requiring an adjusted curriculum and computer equipment maintenance. The majority of teachers and staff believe in the importance of the program.
- Next year the one-to-one committee would like to support a third and final cohort which would be with new computers through an opt-in, fee-based system: the fee would be \$250 per year, plus the financing of a limited number of need-based scholarships. Students would receive the hardware, with a 4-year warranty, \$800 worth of software, and onsite tech support. The committee has discussed this plan with the Finance Committee and Friends of Northside, and all are in support of this program.
- Mrs. Andrews requested a motion to approve an optional fee for an opt-in cohort and see what kind of response is received from parents. The program would only be available to incoming freshman students, limited to two sections. (Last year, 90 students applied and 52 students were accepted, but many students did not qualify because they either had earned prior credits or were taking a language other than Spanish, for example.)
- To approve an optional \$250 fee to participate in next year's one-to one cohort (amended motion subsequently proposed)
- Discussion
 - 10-15% of the students in the cohort would receive scholarships, but most of the students will have parents who can afford to pay the fee, creating a program that is not equally accessible to all students. (However, the alternative is simply letting the program die.) Smaller grants are being applied for in hopes of addressing the achievement gap between suburban and urban schools through this program.
 - A one-year curricular program is being proposed, along with a 4-year computer program. The goal at this point is to gauge parent interest.
 - Mr. Ceisel brought up equity issues: a letter would not be sent to everyone in the incoming freshman class because students coming in with credits will not be eligible. There is an issue of timing: free and reduced lunch qualification is not identified until October.
- Revised Motion:

To authorize solicitation of interest in a program with a fee currently estimated at \$250 for an opt-in tablet program for incoming freshman students (see **Motion #3**)
- There was continued discussion about equity issues as well as timing: Mrs. Andrews will not be available after June 17th, so the letters would have to go out fairly soon; the Finance Committee can meet after responses have been received.
- Mr. Benincasa continues to apply for smaller grants.
- An informal vote by show of hands indicates widespread support among LSC members.

Upcoming Meetings

- Finance Committee: May 25th
- Friends of Northside: May 16th
- Parent Network: June 17th
- Principal Selection and Evaluation: Mr. Ceisel will meet with Mr. Rodgers
- LSC: June 14th

Agenda

To approve the standard agenda for next month's meeting (see **Motion #4**)

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. (see **Motion #5**).

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the LSC will be on Tuesday, June 14th, at 7:00 p.m. in the faculty lunchroom. Public participation is welcome.

Motion #: 1
Motion made by: Vicki McMannon
Seconded by: Gail Myers Jaffe
Motion: To approve the standard agenda for tonight's meeting

Record of Votes on Motion

Council Members	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
John Ceisel (parent)	X			
Vicki McMannon (parent)	X			
Kathleen Andrade (parent)				X
Gail Myers Jaffe (parent)	X			
Crystal Melto (parent)	X			
Cathy Quigley (parent)	X			
Diane Monnich (community)				X
Meredith O'Connor (community)				X
Robert Albritton (teacher)				X
Nicole Flores (teacher)	X			
Barry Rodgers (principal)	X			
Cesar Monarrez (student)	X			
Vicky Andrews (staff)	X			
Total	9	0	0	4

Motion #: 2
Motion made by: Gail Myers Jaffe
Seconded by: Vicki McMannon
Motion: To approve the minutes from last month's meeting (April 12, 2011)

Record of Votes on Motion

Council Members	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
John Ceisel (parent)	X			
Vicki McMannon (parent)	X			
Kathleen Andrade (parent)				X
Gail Myers Jaffe (parent)	X			
Crystal Melto (parent)	X			
Cathy Quigley (parent)	X			
Diane Monnich (community)				X
Meredith O'Connor (community)				X
Robert Albritton (teacher)				X
Nicole Flores (teacher)	X			
Barry Rodgers (principal)	X			
Cesar Monarrez (student)	X			
Vicky Andrews (staff)	X			
Total	9	0	0	4

Motion #: 3
Motion made by: John Ceisel
Seconded by: Vicki McMannon
Motion: To authorize solicitation of interest in a program with a fee currently estimated at \$250 for an opt-in tablet program for incoming freshman students (revised motion)

Record of Votes on Motion

Council Members	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
John Ceisel (parent)	X			
Vicki McMannon (parent)	X			
Kathleen Andrade (parent)				X
Gail Myers Jaffe (parent)	X			
Crystal Melto (parent)	X			
Cathy Quigley (parent)	X			
Diane Monnich (community)				X
Meredith O'Connor (community)				X
Robert Albritton (teacher)				X
Nicole Flores (teacher)	X			
Barry Rodgers (principal)	X			
Cesar Monarrez (student)	X			
Vicky Andrews (staff)	X			
Total	9	0	0	4

Motion #: 4
Motion made by: Vicki McMannon
Seconded by: Nicole Flores
Motion: To approve the standard agenda for next month's LSC meeting on June 14th

Record of Votes on Motion

Council Members	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
John Ceisel (parent)	X			
Vicki McMannon (parent)	X			
Kathleen Andrade (parent)				X
Gail Myers Jaffe (parent)	X			
Crystal Melto (parent)	X			
Cathy Quigley (parent)	X			
Diane Monnich (community)				X
Meredith O'Connor (community)				X
Robert Albritton (teacher)				X
Nicole Flores (teacher)	X			
Barry Rodgers (principal)	X			
Cesar Monarrez (student)	X			
Vicky Andrews (staff)	X			
Total	9	0	0	4

Motion #: 5
Motion made by: Gail Myers Jaffe
Seconded by: Nicole Flores
Motion: To adjourn the LSC meeting

Record of Votes on Motion

Council Members	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
John Ceisel (parent)	X			
Vicki McMannon (parent)	X			
Kathleen Andrade (parent)				X
Gail Myers Jaffe (parent)	X			
Crystal Melto (parent)	X			
Cathy Quigley (parent)	X			
Diane Monnich (community)				X
Meredith O'Connor (community)				X
Robert Albritton (teacher)				X
Nicole Flores (teacher)	X			
Barry Rodgers (principal)	X			
Cesar Monarrez (student)	X			
Vicky Andrews (staff)	X			
Total	9	0	0	4