



**Burley Local School Council Meeting Minutes**  
**March 17, 2021**

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm.

**Roll Call:**

**Present:** Catherine Plocher, Mary Renouard, Amy Walsh, Carolyn Skibba, Rob Moon, Teresa Merritt, Jessy Newman, Elliot Ransom, Katie Hall-Jasinski, Erin Stanfill, Bob Blitstein

**Approval of Minutes - January, 2021:**

The Council re-reviewed the January 2021 LSC minutes prior to the start of the meeting. Elliot Ransom shared information about our approach to the January minutes and issues with the addenda and whether or not to include signatures in all addenda. The council decided to approve the January 2021 minutes with the addenda and without signatures as this gives the most information as possible and promotes transparency. Amy Walsh motioned to approve the minutes and Jessy Newman seconded. All were in favor.

**Approval of Minutes - February, 2021:**

The Council also reviewed the February 2021 LSC minutes prior to the start of the meeting. Rob Moon reiterated our goal to go above and beyond in the spirit of transparency and members of the council agreed. Mary Renouard motioned to approve the minutes and Teresa Merritt seconded. All were in favor.

**Technology Report:**

- Ms. Skibba shared that they have been distributing new iPads to replace technology that has reached the end of its functional life.
- The team is working with CPS to work through simultaneous learning protocols, updates to iPads, and other technology-related issues.
- Ms. Skibba also shared that there have been new restrictions added to YouTube and that Burley educators are working to balance access while still fostering a sense of personal responsibility for students. Members of the LSC asked clarifying questions, which Ms. Skibba and Ms. Plocher addressed.



- Jessy Newman asked a question about whether and how teachers were sharing best practices and lessons learned related to simultaneous teaching and learning and Ms. Skibba and Ms. Plocher provided more information.

### **Principal's Report:**

**Updates.** Ms. Plocher began by sharing that the return to school has gone very well, with only a few bumps. They are focusing on engagement for all learners and working on bringing back pieces of traditions that are central to the Burley community. Ms. Plocher shared updates about new enrichment, afterschool, and health education opportunities, PTA merchandise and cookie updates, school pictures coming up (in May, for all students, that will be outside) along with parent-teacher conferences (virtually, like first quarter).

There have been a few frequently asked questions so Ms. Plocher provided answers and information updates, including:

- The third quarter overall return rate for hybrid in-person ended up being around 77% (approximately 420 students out of 550).
- The **average** class size is around 12 students in each class.
- The **max** class size is 15, which is what classrooms can hold with 6 feet of social distancing enforced.
- There has been some new state of Illinois guidance around 3 feet of social distancing as an option but CPS, and therefore Burley, are not moving in that direction at this point. This is not a school-based choice and Burley must follow what the district specifies.
- All CPS employees have been offered the vaccine.
- Approximately 75 students have transferred out of Burley since the beginning of the year.

Ms. Plocher then opened the discussion to questions from the Council:

- Katie Hall-Jasinski asked about lunch and Ms. Plocher shared that Burley has a different schedule for meals than CPS because Burley does not have a cooking kitchen. The menu is shared via weekly emails from Ms. Plocher.
- Katie Hall-Jasinski also asked about what will happen later this year (during June) regarding events for students such as field day, graduation, etc. Ms. Plocher shared information in response and described their planning efforts and focus at this point in the year.



- Amy Walsh requested clarification about the rule that students cannot talk during lunch. Ms. Plocher clarified that the rule is that, while masks are off, students should focus on eating but, as soon as they are done, they can put their masks back on and talk freely.
- Amy Walsh also asked about restrictions to the playground equipment which is currently off-limits during recess. Ms. Plocher explained the sanitizing protocols that would be required which would overburden the staff at Burley. Bob Blitstein agreed that it would be better to err on the side of increased safety and keep the playground equipment off-limits for the time being. Jessy Newman shared that there are organizations who have developed collaborative games to play that are socially distanced and do not require equipment and recommended the Playworks guidance from CPS.

**Financial Report.** Ms. Plocher provided an overview of the budget and shared the need to restock classrooms, especially the books that have been lost since the pandemic began and schools switched to remote learning. Ms. Plocher also requested to transfer \$12,000 from the computer education line and to put \$10,000 into the technology equipment line and \$2,000 to the technology supply line. Elliot Ransom motioned to approve and Jessy Newman seconded. All members were in favor.

### **Chair Report**

Elliot Ransom provided an update on the LSC meeting schedule for April: Because school is closed on April 21 for parent-teacher conferences, we are moving the April LSC meeting to Wednesday, April 14, 2021. The time will remain the same (6pm CT).

### **Public Comment**

Ms. Plocher shared via email a sign-up for public comment prior to the LSC meeting.

- John Fitzgerald was the first on the list but he was not present.
- Alderman Matt Martin shared updates from his office, including:
  - If residents have questions or concerns related to COVID-19, they should reach out to his office
  - If residents have questions or concerns related to reopening schools, they should reach out to his office
  - His office has established a Youth Council for 8th grade through seniors in highschool. The Council supports decision-making around how to spend infrastructure funds, for example. His office is also working to expand composting options at CPS schools.



- Jessy Newman asked if Burley composted and Ms. Plocher provided more information.
- Other attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and those were submitted via chat covering topics such as school reopening, for example.
- FT asked a question about the plan for acquiring new books for the school and awareness around student demographics and diversity, especially as it is represented through the literature and reflective of all students' lived experiences. Ms. Plocher described Burley's approach.
- Melissa Schroeder asked a question about the 3 feet social distancing guideline and Ms. Plocher provided more information about what was possible at Burley.
- There was a question about how many teachers had been vaccinated but Ms. Plocher was not able to answer that due to health confidentiality restrictions and lack of information shared with principals in general.
- Ryan Griffin shared his appreciation for all that Burley has done for the community and recognized the positive changes since reopening. Elliot Ransom agreed and acknowledged the positive energy.

### **Next Meeting**

Next meeting is Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at 6:00pm.

### **Close of Meeting**

Elliot Ransom motioned to adjourn the meeting. Katie Hall-Jasinski seconded and all were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:02pm.