



Burley Local School Council Meeting Minutes November 20, 2019

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:09 pm.

Roll Call:

Present: Stephen Soltanzadeh, Catherine Plocher, Mary Renouard, Amy Walsh, Bob Blitstein, Teresa Merritt, Carolyn Skibba, Blanca Fernandez

Absent: Laurie Barry, Liz Wiedegreen

Approval of Minutes:

The Council reviewed the September 2019 LSC minutes. Bob Blitstein motioned to approve the minutes. Blanca Fernandez seconded. All voted in favor.

Technology Report:

Ms. Skibba announced Burley has received a 3-year renewal to be an Apple Distinguished School. This is an honor granted based on an application process. Burley receives no financial or material gains, it's purely an honor to be recognized as one of the most technologically innovative schools in the country.

Ms. Skibba and the technology team will be announcing parent workshops and parent creativity challenges in December.

Principal's Report:

The PTA hosted another successful Book Bash. This is an annual gathering where authors come to Burley to meet our student authors. One of the authors, Brad Herzog, has written a couple books on the Chicago Cubs, so the Cubs brought the World Series trophy by for the day as a surprise to accompany the read aloud and author visit.

Cross Country had their end of the season party. Numerous Burley students participated in the City Championship. Bryan Malkowski came in 2nd place in the entire City of Chicago!

Girls volleyball wrapped up for the season. Special shout out to the new coaches this year - Liz Hibbler and Jay Moon. Both teams advanced to the play-offs.

Basketball season is beginning.



FOB hosted a fundraising event called Take the Turf. The Blackhawks provided the turf events and brought 8-9 people to run drill stations for the winning class. Ms. Cowan's class won - the winner is recognized for classroom participation not total money raised - any amount is appreciated.

Teachers As Readers is moving along following the CIWP reading plan.

8th grade will have their Science Fair in December 17th morning and 7th grade will have theirs in the Spring.

Model UN is competing Friday, December 22nd at the Chicago History Museum.

The book fair is running all this week.

CTU has voted on strike makeup days for the 2019 - 2020 school year:

November 27

January 2 & 3

June 17 & 18

The middle school has their Facing History colloquium Friday, December 6th.

Holiday Hoopla assemblies December 19.

The middle school dance is Friday, December 20th afternoon.

On Friday, November 22 teachers will be participating in Math Lesson Study (\$11,000 grant) where teachers professionally develop, plan together, implement and critique math lessons within each other's classrooms and curriculum.

Financial Report

In September Burley received \$79,000 from our 10th day increased enrollment per pupil funding.

Requested proposals:

Ms. Plocher hired a paraprofessional over the year to cover other paraprofessional's leaves. She requested a \$9,000 transfer from \$79,000 to open the position to retain the paraprofessional in between the leaves to maintain the employee on staff.



Ms. Plocher requested to transfer \$1,200 from miscellaneous line for a new color printer and toner for the office. The past printer wore out from old age.

Ms. Plocher requested to transfer \$5,000 for extended day pay for our clerk position.

Teresa Merritt motioned to approve the transfers. Mary Renouard seconded. All voted in favor. Transfers approved.

Ms. Plocher requested to transfer \$2,000 out of technology into internal account line for Burley's Newsela subscription, which provides high quality nonfiction information for kids at five different reading levels. It's a great resource for students and teachers to learn about current events, historical topics, pros/cons on issues.

Carolyn Skibba motioned to approve the transfer. Amy Walsh seconded. All voted in favor. Transfer approved.

Chair Report:

The Chairman reminded the LSC there is still a vacancy on LSC. We are looking for a non-parent, community representative. Please spread the word and stop by the office or reach out to the PSC Chair to apply.

The CIWP will be on next month's agenda.

The deadline for the principal contract renewal, which involves a review, is February 1, 2020. We plan on having a special meeting in January to start working on that in addition to the regular LSC monthly meeting.

The regular annual principal evaluation is due in May.

Public Comment

There was a lot of commentary from the public about the proposed, then cancelled, meeting with CPS regarding overcrowding issues and controlled enrollment at Burley.

The LSC Chair and Ms. Plocher said Jim Dispensa from CPS - as the district representative soliciting feedback from a few schools - was scheduled to present to the Burley LSC and community a proposed controlled enrollment policy, but the presentation has been cancelled. The district is aware Burley has a space issue along with other



schools and they haven't come to any decisions nor solutions on a resolution. No policy has been determined or finalized.

CPS leadership communicates with Ms. Plocher and the district values community feedback.

Ms. Plocher said Mr. Dispensa has not rescheduled to come back and address Burley's LSC.

Ms. Plocher assured that no changes would take place for the next school year in terms of enrollment. The 2020-2021 school year will not change.

One community member went to the school board meeting earlier in the day to present to them on Burley's overcrowding issue. She said she communicated to the Board that they need to find a long term solution to keep the community together and unified. She hopes CPS hears the community and can find common ground. She feels there's a very collegial way to work together without shifting to controlled enrollment. This community member noted that Sauganash had eight parents present at the school board meeting. She feels the key is to have 2 - 3 people at each meeting to make sure CPS hears from Burley parents. It's an opportunity for Burley to be heard and get the community together to strategize, but also the message needs to be positive, not negative, we should come up with a workable solution.

There were some questions and comments about the recent LSC meeting at Audubon that Mr. Dispensa presented at. Ms. Plocher said he formally presented there and is likely working with them to see how their community responds but couldn't comment on their LSC meeting due to not being in attendance.

A community member remarked that Burley's success is what is necessary to keep enrollment high and people in the city, there's lots of risk when things are needlessly disruptive. He also suggested sending around a survey to the community to learn how they would respond if CPS did controlled enrollment.

Based on a public comment, the LSC Chair thought it might be a good idea to touch base with other impacted LSC's as part of our information gathering.

The general consensus amongst the LSC and community members was it's important to be ahead of it; there's a tactful way to express concerns and views towards solutions with CPS.



A community member asked what controlled enrollment might look like and wanted to be sure it's a long term solution and not just fixing a problem for two years. Ms. Plocher said we don't know what controlled enrollment would look like at this point. The district is batting around ideas, looking at different solutions. A community member mentioned the 2004 policy is on the CPS site, but Ms. Plocher reminded everyone it could be changed and the 2004 policy on the books could be outdated. Ms. Plocher said we will always advocate for our community. There are lots of policy makers at the district and a change would involve many people.

Ms. Plocher has not heard anything about a policy going for approval in January.

One community member shared that he bought his house a block away in 2018 for his children to attend Burley and shared the multitude of problems controlled enrollment would have on the community. So many are paying massive property taxes, what if people abruptly moved out of Burley - how would that impact property values? He wanted to be heard that CPS has to be held accountable and follow their own rules.

Ms. Plocher has been at Burley 10 years and enrollment has been gradually increasing; there wasn't a huge influx, it was gradual. Ms. Plocher has been engaging with CPS for a number of years now; they are aware of the space issue and she's been encouraging them to help us find a solution.

Ms. Skibba remarked she's been at Burley since 1999 and has seen Burley grow steadily. When she started there were 360 students many of whom were bused in.

State Representative Ann Williams was one of the audience members and also shared her contact information to the audience. Her district includes both Burley and Audobon. She's shared that she is familiar with the overcrowding issues, she hasn't gotten direction from CPS. She would like to be a resource and included in the mix and advocate alongside us.

Closing of meeting

At 7:07 Teresa Merritt motioned to adjourn the meeting. Amy Walsh seconded. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting

Next meeting is Wednesday, December 18 at 6pm.