

Victor Primary School

VPS Building Council Minutes

March 27, 2018

Primary Conference Room 101

3:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Jen Check

Notetaker: Jen Check

Members: Kristin Abbott, Leah Besaw, Merry Braithwaite, Wendy Chiasson, Josh Doyle, Kelly Gelinas, Matt Mulvaney, Julia Reeder, Chris Space, Colleen Saar

Guests: Leah Kedley, Michele Linse, Joanne Lowe, Jean Palzer

Minutes

#	Topic/Subject			
Opening				
1	Welcome	Facilitator		
2	Approve minutes	Facilitator		Members approved the minutes from March 8, 2018.
3	Review agenda	Facilitator		
Guest Presentation				None
4				
Old Business				
5	Goal Work: Expanding Enriching Opportunities			<p>Expanding Enriching Opportunities (not the program) - VPS Building Council will determine a process to glean insight about topics and strategies to promote further enrichment opportunities for all children, both inside and outside the classroom setting, then make recommendations and outline a plan to incorporate enhancements.</p> <p>Joanne Lowe shared information about the strings program at VPS, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is research that indicates learning how to play a bowed string instrument has positive connections in fostering brain development as well as developing social, emotional, and cognitive skills. Studies show how the whole brain is lit up when a person plays a stringed instrument. • Offered to children second and third grade children. • Typically, all third grade children are accepted. Second grade children are accepted based on number of spaces left open. Children who do not get into the program in second grade can always begin in third grade. • There are typically about 100-150 children in the program each year. Approximately 75% of the

				<p>children who take lessons are in third grade and 25% of children who take lessons are in second grade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are typically about 50 second grade children on the waiting list each year. Children are pulled from the waiting list when there are openings based on when the registration form came in and the child's availability/schedule during the day. ● In the past, the string teacher was a full time position. With budget cuts over the years, this position has been between a .5 and .75 position with the rest of the teachers schedule filled with general music classes. ● About 80% of children who begin lessons at VPS continue in older grades. ● If children begin in third grade instead of second grade, they do not end of being far behind as the program is not competitive and teachers work with children where they are at to move them forward in their development. ● Members wondered if there was a way for a child to get a loaner instrument or programs to subsidize the cost for a family that may not be able to pay for the cost to lease the instrument. If not, would a used instrument drive or some kind of connection with Eastman School of Music be an option? This will be researched. <p>Michele Linse shared information about enrichment opportunities offered through the library, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approximately 1,000-2,000 books are reshelved each week. Approximately 15,000 books are checked out each month. Children come down from the high school to volunteer and reshelve books. Some parents volunteer to do this as well. ● This year, Michele has offered 15 different kinds of enrichment classes. Some classes last five days while some spread out over two weeks. Examples include History Club, Book and Movie Clubs (Wrinkle in Time Book Club), Creative Writing, Storytelling. Offerings are shared with teachers through a newsletter and teachers sign children up for different opportunities. ● Michele has a flexible schedule which is extraordinary and one of the few who has this in New York State. This provides flexibility for her to support the needs of classroom teachers and children. She often creates offerings based on what she hears from children. ● Michele has offered some opportunities to children after the school day and during the summer through Victor Parks and Recreation. ● There can be significant cost involved that is personally paid for to provide opportunities for
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				<p>children to see movies based on books. Members talked about how we could perhaps look for partnerships with other organizations to purchase copyright for movies to show to children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Michele runs a book fair (separate from the one sponsored by PTSA) and uses the points to order books for classrooms.● Michele also offers lessons for whole classes (ex. Timeline of History of the Olympics, research lessons, etc.).● There is a Makerspace in the library. A Makerspace is a flexible play space. This is one of three play spaces in the library. It is in a corner of the library and has assorted arts and craft supplies that are safe for children to use. It is not structured and children have freedom to create on their own or with other children. Some children come to the Makerspace for indoor recess or WIN time. Many stay between 10 and 30 minutes. Doug Schmidt built a plug-and-play marble run for this space, as well as a wind tunnel (they try to keep this used as a science experiment and not a confetti cannon :)). A parent volunteer regularly comes in to reset the space, clean it out, and restock when needed.● Michele is considering looking at her schedule and making adjustments based on teacher schedules to increase opportunities for teachers to bring classes down to the library. <p>Members continued the conversation about enrichment opportunities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● A suggestion was made about adding a 5th day to the 4 day cycle to include enrichment. There was discussion about how this would have a massive impact on many different areas.● Members wondered if there was a way to extend enriching opportunities for all children, perhaps using mini-grants to support funding.● WIN Time - At building council last year, members focused their work on WIN time and made the decision that enrichment opportunities and string lessons could be offered outside of WIN time to increase opportunities for all children.● Members talked about how we can challenge kids every day. While there is differentiation built into instruction and there is an acceleration process available for children who may need it, is there more we can do to support children and enhance opportunities for them? Members talked about potential options for children during WIN time. Some teachers have tried to provide different levels of support and enrichment by partnering with other teachers in the past.
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members had a conversation about acceleration programs, homogeneous grouping, and tracking. As a district, Victor does not support a math acceleration program before sixth grade based on research that was done during the math program review. Other enrichment opportunities for children include Studio Days (Second Grade - Community Helpers/Careers; Third Grade - Harambee/World Cultures and Community), JA in a Day (Community members teach economics lessons to classes). We need to consider ways we could make small enhancements and consider ways to use our community resources to plan opportunities for children.
New Business				
8	Meeting Dates Reviewed			Our next meeting will be Thursday, April 19th from 7:45 - 9:00 a.m. in Room 101.
Closing				
10	Review assigned tasks	Minute Taker		More information will be gathered from Joanne about loaner instruments for children who would not be able to participate in the string program without it.
11	Set agenda and roles for next mtg.	Facilitator		Review Minutes Goal Work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrichment Opportunities
12	Parking Lot Attendant	Facilitator		
13	Roundtable	All		

Next Meeting Dates:

Thursday, April 19, 2018: 7:45 - 9:00 a.m. in Room 101

Thursday, May 10, 2018: 3:30 - 4:45 p.m. in Room 101

Thursday, May 31, 2018: 7:45 - 9:00 a.m. in Room 101