

CRLS Council Meeting, June 12, 2012

Attendance: Jessica Daniels, Damon Smith, Greta Hardina, Fran Cronin, Donna Eriksond, Lauren Gibbs, Gail Stubbs, Mary White, Shameen Akhtar, Lynn Cadwallader, Victoria Harris, Adam Manacher, Emily Dexter, Mike Frutkoff, Ross Benson, Laurie Sheffield, Lace Campbell, Natassa Mason, Pamela Massey, Amy Stein

The meeting was called to order. Introductions were made.

Jessica began by recognizing that the CRLS leadership did a great job on the recent graduation ceremony in the aftermath of last week's tragedy. Jessica asked Principal Smith if there was a role for the School Council to aid CRLS efforts this summer for continuing outreach to students and families. He said he would know better after admin meeting next week.

No report from CSAG.

Class Ranking

Lynn Cadwallader presented information she discovered while researching the issue of class ranking. She looked at the National Association to gauge its importance for college admission and found it was ranked very low. The town of Hingham conducted research study a few years ago and decided to eliminate class ranking. One concern is that class rank is frequently misused and can eliminate a student from college admission as many colleges will only take applicants from the top 10 to 20 to 50%. Lynn passed around copies of articles and statistics. Hingham contacted 30 to 40 colleges who said it wasn't required. Mary White found that the student's GPA is intertwined w/class ranking.

In terms of selecting the valedictorian and salutatorian, it was suggested that other interested students be tapped to present at the graduation ceremony. Laurie mentioned that Brookline High School reviews written speeches submitted by seniors and selects speakers based on their submission.

Emily asked who can make the decision about whether class ranking stays or goes. Damon said he needs to further investigate what CRLS reports out. Principal Smith feels graduation speakers and class ranking are two separate issues. Lynn asked if it class ranking belonged on Naviance. Jessica suggested this issue be added for topics for next year's council.

Violence

Jessica asked what the council might do in the wake of the shootings of Charlene Holmes and Taniale. Donna Erikson commented on the police update. The school has been offering counseling to students and tomorrow night there will be counseling for parents. It does not appear that this was a neighborhood rivalry incident, but as the case remains open, rumors circulate. The concern is how will high school students get info and support

in the summer? How can we support healing through out the summer? How can CRLS reach youth and community agencies, churches, work places, etc. Greta has organized a support session tomorrow evening, 5 to 7pm for both families and children to attend.

Mike suggested that the school contact the Mayor's summer youth program - as 900 Cambridge teens take part in this every summer. Parents are worried that their kids might be in the wrong place at the wrong time this summer.

Their sense of security has been taken from them. A number of individuals may act in a way to "prepare" for more trouble. So, it's key to heal and promote a return to normalcy. Shameen reported that the student council was planning assemblies and workshops for next school year to address concerns about violence and resolving conflict.

Update on previous topics

The handbook will be done by Adam and Jessica this summer.

Open house and conferences will be addressed in September's meeting.

Jessica asked for suggestions for topics for the School Council to focus on next year. She apologized for forgetting to have the minutes voted on at the beginning of our meetings. She hoped next year the new co-chair will remember this task.

We reviewed topics and activities from the past 2 years: Sponsor a film (*Bully* and *Misrepresentation*), discipline and suspension policies, update from Chandra and Mental Health Subcommittee.

- Consider violence awareness, resolving conflict issues (neighborhood rivalry)
- Should the school council become more involved with budget and finances
- Revisit the school council's mission – now that Greta has done such a great job w/outreach
- Parent University - series of workshops to educate/involve parents
- Principal meet with parent body
- New incoming family get matched w/current-experienced family
- Restructure College Fair –outreach for special needs
- Block scheduling communication - parents need to understand and be prepared for the accelerated timeline of block scheduling (ie students need to drop/enroll classes in first two weeks, first progress report is end of Sept)
- Getting more parents in the door
- Welcoming new families – your first child
- Block schedule assessment - pros/cons
- End of year check out - when seniors last day of class is over two weeks before the end of school, what happens to the sophomores/juniors in class
- Options for personalizing senior year – communication about special projects, opportunities
- Parent University

- Understanding the Neighborhoods
- Invite teacher to present at a forum to share their personal talents
- Look at other divisions that keep kids apart
- Review school improvement and recommend
- Meeting the needs of kids at risk- what the school does
- School discipline policies
- How are parents recruited for committees: FOCA, FoCRLS, etc -create a parent group to support Greta (similar to room parents in the elementary schools working w/parent liaison)
- Re-Accreditation Process

Jessica thanked everyone for coming, tonight and throughout the year. Special thanks to Greta Hardina, Ross Benson, Mike Frutkoff and Patricia Bradshaw. Members thanked Jessica for her leadership and guidance as co-chair, and Amy for her support as secretary.

It was suggested that the night of the meeting gets changed from Tuesday night, as it is the same time and day as Cambridge School Committee - maybe to Wednesdays?

School Council Officers for 2012-13

Congratulations to Adam Manacher, Co-chair, and Fran Cronin, Secretary. Adam, Jessica and Principal Smith will meet this summer to review/plan for School Council.

Meeting adjourned