**NNHS SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, January 7, 2019, 6:30-8:00, NNHS Room 103**

**Attendees:**

Sally Brickell, Derek Krantz, Nathan Persampieri, Amy Xue, Jeanne White, Nancy Decoteau, Jessie Gilmartin, Valerie Pontiff, Alex Katz, Debbie Dashoff, Star Lew, Zoe Kronberg, Jason Antonellis, Kathryn Teissier Du Cros, Henry Turner, Karen Cutone

**Not in Attendance:**

Agi Sardi, Dani Johnson, Marcia Tabenken, Rachel McCarthy, Boden Pollack

**Acceptance of December 17, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

**PTSO Update:**

Sally Brickell updated us on the PTSO activities including the final planning for the Just Think: Teens Making Smart Choices Expo that will happen tomorrow, January 8th at Newton North. There will be community resources for teens and families as well as demos and give aways and a presentation by Jody Cohen on vaping. Parents and Teens are encouraged to attend. This event is held the same night as Sophomore Parent Night which could bring in greater crowds but create an issue for families bringing other children.

Sally also mentioned that the PTSO has distributed $17k to teachers and administrators this year for grants and projects. The PTSO is also working on an event called Making the Most of your High School Years and is starting to plan for Celebration. They are holding a Celebration 101 planning meeting.

**Principal Update:**

Principal Tuner gave a quick update on three topics:

\*High School Schedule Committee will be recommending a schedule by the end of January to super intendent for consideration. Changes in the school schedule is a decision of the Super Intendent and is not voted on by the school committee. Changes in the start and end time of school is a School Committee decision to be voted on in the spring. Any changes to the school schedule will not be implemented until Fall 2020.

\*Sophomore students will be receiving their chromebooks this week as part of the expanded 1:1 pilot that we discussed at prior meetings.

\*New computer based MCAS is creating a challenge related to time – new test is 2.5hrs. vs. 1.5 hrs. which would require juniors and seniors to miss an entire day of school. NN may need to pilot new programs for juniors and seniors during that time so they do not lose an entire day.

Principal Turner then asked Zoe Kronberg to introduce Elvin Cardona, NNHS Metco counselor and Engagement Specialist. Mr. Cardona spoke about his work at NNHS in support students of color and their white allies. He discussed the various initiatives underway at NNHS with a focus on racial healing and reconciliation and what that would look like at NN. How can we implement changes at a structural level to make all disadvantaged students feel comfortable here.

Principal Turner then gave an update on School Goals and NN needs going into second half of year and next year. This was an update to the presentation that Principal Turner gave at our first meeting of the school year using the bubble map diagram. We have made progress on all fronts during the first half of the year and will focus on the area of the diagram dedicated to active and engaged learning that fosters skills development for all students. This will be important especially given the potential global implementation of 1:1 and a change in school schedule. NN wants to make its mission statement real and visible for students – foster deep and engaged learning, transferable skills and the ability to learn. A new high school schedule in and of itself will not hurt or help students but what we do during the time will. The same goes for the utilization of technology in the classroom. What are the skills students should be developing going forward?

**New High School Schedule Follow up Discussion:**

Since the members have had some time to review the proposed schedule alternatives presented at our last meeting, we discussed the member’s thoughts on the proposals.

It was not clear to everyone that the proposed schedules and proposed start time initiatives are two separate questions. Much of the discussion revolved around two points:

1. **Flex Block** - How will flex block be used? What is the structure of Flex block and how will the use of flex block be monitored? Flex block is large component of the proposed schedules and needs more clarity. Some of the student members said they like flex block but may not need it every day. Some don’t want to compromise rigor at NN to have flex time in the middle of the day while others liked that it offered an opportunity for community building and a time to breath during the day. As a group we thought there needs to be some work to better define flex block before a change is made to the school schedule.
2. **Overall Time at School** - All proposed schedules involve a loss of school time coupled with an increase in flexible learning time. How will Newton maintain its current excellence and rigor with less structured learning time? Is the new schedule more of a balance of social/emotional learning or rigor? What is the end goal of the changes and is there any research to back up the proposed changes?

Some of the questions posed by members were:

Is daily meeting more beneficial for certain subjects?

What is the impact on Metco students?

What is the impact on clubs?

What is the impact on homework?

One of the teachers recommended a comparison of the current schedule with the one that will ultimately be chosen to highlight the impact on all of the issues before the new schedule is implemented. It will be worthwhile to pilot the new schedule before it is rolled out. We should have the final schedule that will be presented to the super intendent by the end of January.

Amy Xue, one of our student reps, is writing an article for the Newtonite about the proposed schedule and would like to interview members on their thoughts.