

Lilja School Council Meeting: March 28, 2018

Present:

Jessica Brainerd
Anne Carothers
Kristy Fredericks
Sepi Golestani
Elise Gorseth
Eric Hochberg
Tim O'Hara
Sheetal Parikh
Heather Starkel
Steven Untersee

Minutes

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Minutes from January 24, 2018 were reviewed and approved.

Selection of Recorder:

Steve Untersee volunteered to take minutes for the meeting.

Updates:

Kennedy initiative has passed! (around 5 to 1).

Positions have been approved about enrollment additions: new 1st grade, special education and support staff, 0.5 ELL (K cohort will be moving on to first grade). Eventually will have a full contingent. Two part-time because needs are in the morning, not so much in the afternoon.

Furniture to go with 2 new classrooms (special ed from town budget, other from Lilja).

Other budget items pared back: extra tech and supplies reduced, no bathroom stall improvements.

Playground is moving along. Ms. Carothers checked back with 3rd and 4th graders about new option that included elements that both factions had favored (previous versions were one or the other). They were unanimously in favor of new option. Goal is to have this down by swingsets without interfering with field and backstop. Due to location of town line, will need to involve town planning committee. Will also check about fence in between playgrounds (it will disappear, but not sure when at this point). Company that will be doing the work has been very flexible and responsive.

Initiatives – Profile of a Graduate: compiled profile and is still in process of being put together.

Literacy: Teachers have been working with consultants during the school day. Teachers are working on how to support students (giving voice and choice, focus on what is meaningful) and deepen level of rigor. Each team at each grade at each school are doing similar work, but of course vary somewhat to fine tune to needs of their class. This professional work has demanded a lot of teachers, but has been very meaningful and exciting (students are excited about what they're doing too). Teachers at Lilja (and across district) should be commended. There has been a great deal of thoughtfulness and hard work to redesign teaching while implementing it, involving a lot of deep thinking while doing all that is needed day to day. Literacy support

will continue (multi-year plan, and we are in the second year of it). Teachers are looking grade by grade what they already have accomplished and what next steps could be.

New math curriculum as well, and district has asked faculty to work more on project-based learning. A lot of these tasks involve a lot of teacher effort to get units in place, and then students do cognitive work that keep it going. Student autonomy helps to make it possible for teachers to start more than one initiative at the same time.

Project-based Learning updates:

4th graders were on cable (Pegasus channel) to present about natural disasters, as the culmination of their project-based learning science unit. They did it as a mock news broadcast. (Ms. Carothers will tweet about it, maybe a clip will be at all-school assembly).

Younger grades: in many grades teachers are intertwining literacy work with science – working to go deep and do it well. These STEM-based projects ask students to collaborate and work as a team, while still getting understanding of content.

It is an exciting, if challenging time -- lots of great new ideas.