

***School Leadership Team  
Edward R. Murrow High School  
Brooklyn, New York 11230***

***Allen Barge, Principal***

***Charlene Tuff, Chairperson***

**SLT Zoom Meeting - Minutes  
March 16, 2021**

Present: Lillian Baer-Sharoff, Allen Barge, Teba Besada, Patricia Conover, Angela Gramegna, Milissa Harmon, RoseMary Iervasi, Velma McKenzie, Selina Ng, Malky Nissenbaum, Jennifer Reinhart, Onaya Smith, Charlene Tuff  
Excused: Christine Farrell, Christine Pisano  
Absent: Benjamin Watson  
Guests: Rosalind DeInnocentiis, Parent Coordinator, Kathleen Fink, Alyssa Katz, Ben Gabelle, Rachel Gabelle, Renata Gomes, Diane McGarvey, Amy Sananman, (Parents)

The meeting opened at 4:00 P.M. Mr. Barge welcomed the Team and guests and thanked them for attending. The minutes from the February 25, 2021 meeting were read and approved.

The following Sub-Committees reported:

- **Safety:** (Chairperson, Ms. Susana Giberga, A.P. Security.) A safety meeting was held on March 9, 2021. Twice a year safety meetings are open to parents and staff. Staff and blended learning students will return to the building on March 22, 2021. Staff are given the option to return to the building prior to that, March 18 or 19 and notify administration what time they will be coming in. Students and staff will return by cohort and must complete a health screening form prior to entering the building. Medical accommodations are granted until June 2021. Starting March 22 all students in building will be assigned to rooms that have access to devices. Teachers will be in classrooms teaching remotely. Teachers ensure that their instruction delivery platform's settings are set to avoid bombings. Google Meets have changed their protocol for this reason. Mr. Ciro Scardina has been instrumental in trouble shooting. Ms. Giberga is responsible for distributing devices to students. Many students have moved and the attendance office is working to locate them and see if they need additional support. There are 224 students with open 407's.
- **Attendance/Attendance Summary:** (Chairperson, Joseph Williams, A.P. Pupil Personnel.) An attendance meeting was held on March 9, 2021. Ms. Baer-Sharoff shared with the team the main points. There are 224 open 407 cases and 325 closed 407 cases. A main concern is how attendance will be taken on March 22 when blended students return to school. If students do not submit a consent to be tested form by March 26<sup>th</sup>, they will be changed to remote learning. 20% of staff and students will be tested weekly for Covid. Ms. Myra Krady, Attendance Office, has been working diligently to get out over 110 tax letters to parents while processing working papers for students.
- **Parent Teacher Association (PTA):** (Milissa Harmon, President). A virtual meeting was held on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 and over 151 parents attended. Many parents voiced their concerns about school opening.
- **Student Alliance (SA):** The Club Coordinator is asking clubs to register for the Club Directory. Upcoming events: Pennies for Patients; Youth in the Millennium (March 24, 2021); Virtual Escape room in 3 different websites; and Virtual Scavenger Hunt. Mr. Barge discussed graduation plans. We will be able to hold outdoor ceremony which may take place on Midwood field. We are awaiting guidance since we may have to stagger ceremonies over a 2-3 day period. We will have to coordinate with Midwood High School for the field. We are waiting for guidance on PSAL sports too. The number of people allowed to participate in gatherings is unknown so we have to wait for guidance from the State then the City.

**Agenda Items/Miscellaneous:**

Re-Opening for Blended Students and Staff: We are communicating with blended learning students and getting consent forms from families. Each week twenty (20%) percent of staff will be tested for Covid. Messages were sent out and we are still waiting for half of the blended students to submit permission forms. The deadline is March 26 or they will be removed from blended learning and placed into remote learning. Guidance Counselors have been in communication with those who have not submitted their consent forms. Ms. Rosie is sending out reminders about Parent/Teacher conferences. Also being distributed is the schedule for cohorts A\*B\*C. All schedules are subject to change pending return of permission forms and number of students returning to building. Students will return on designated days and be assigned rooms where they will work remotely. We are mapping out different in person activities, i.e., tutoring. Mr. Barge may do in person teaching. With spring approaching, physical education classes may be held outside using social distancing. PPE 'goody bags' will be distributed. School never made it to cohort C since the building closed after three (3) days. We are making sure everything is safe for the return to the building. Pat Conover, cafeteria manager, informed the leadership team that students will not be allowed in the cafeteria. Lunches will be brought to the students at their location in the building. Pat and the cafeteria staff are amazing and served thousands of families throughout the pandemic.

Parents were concerned if there is enough bandwidth in the building when students return to school? This Thursday into Friday we are getting WIFI upgrade. Students using school computers will have faster service.

The guests who attended the meeting were concerned parents who formed a 'private group' and submitted this statement:

"We gathered as a group after the last PTA meeting with the intent of supporting Mr. Barge and the school administration in making the school fall reopening a successful one, which we define as students in their classrooms with their teachers in person. We know that there are many obstacles to make that happen and we want to use the power we have as parents and professionals with a diverse set of skills to support our school community in realizing this vision."

Their goals and resources to assist the school include: facilitating a meaningful return; not waiting to plan for the fall opening; using powerful, professional people and parents to make fall opening successful; integrating resources into existing committees to help remove obstacles; overcoming challenges by messaging the Mayor; having more transparency in communication and having parents work in pro-active ways; meeting again with Principal next Monday to create a path for concrete grounds.

Many points on fall 2021 must first be negotiated with the different unions, CSA, UFT, DC27; we still do not have a calendar for the 2021/2022 school year. There are concerns about adequate staffing and ventilation. Many classrooms do not have windows or HEPA filters. Gyms and music rooms are not ready like pre-pandemic. Our goal is to adhere to the CDC guidelines to ensure safety.

Parent feedback: There are many constituents involved in the opening. Some parents believe that schools will be returning to pre-pandemic conditions. The transition is not that easy. Out of the 1.1 millions students, 55,000 high school students are coming back and most are not returning 5 days a week. The goal of the UFT, as per Michael Mulgrew, is to have in-person learning as safely as possible. Children must consent to Covid testing.

Ms. Sananman stated: Our goal is in person learning five (5) days a week in classroom. This is for the fall. We need to have a plan for various scenarios and form into committees to plan. We can't just rely on the vaccine.

There will be a reinvention of education. Nine billion dollars for Covid relief will be put into schools to update filtration system in order to use core classrooms. Several outside engineers inspected our building three (3) different times to check our filtration systems. Our rooms were deemed safe.

Ms. Fink expressed her concerns that nothing is being prepared for fall opening. The 'private group' wants to help with exposure, funds and anything else to make this happen. There are rumors of a 'buy-out' which may help senior teachers who may have accommodations. She suggested sabbaticals for staff who are unable to return due to medial accommodations.

Ms. Tuff is not dismissing parents' offer but stated that there are channels that must be followed. The school was built to hold 2,500 students and there are 3,600+ students on register. All suggestions need clearance and there are issues that need to be addressed. We do not know how many staff members will be returning until September. Other schools may not have the same number of staff on medical accommodations as Murrow. Much information that comes out is geared towards grades K-8 students. Our guidance comes from Central. Medical accommodations end in June 2021. There is no information about September as of yet.

Ms. Nissenbaum: Most people will be vaccinated and we may be able to have a safe return in September. Mayor should give more say to schools and planning. We can't give students programs the way we would like to. I suggest making smaller classes five (5) days a week and have three (3) feet distance instead of six (6) to still keep everyone safe.

Mr. Barge: Staffing is the issue due to the large number of medical accommodations that were granted. We need to make adjustments to schedules and see how other states are doing things. We will be in a completely different situation in September. Most larger schools are on more than one session. To get students in more days a week we will have to look into multi-sessions. We are being told to be vaccinated and must do what is best for our health. Mr. Barge thanked everyone for their concerns and feels that same frustrations that the obstacles present. The number of teachers granted accommodations varies by department. This presents a challenge. Mr. Barge apologized for lack of communication and will improve communication. He will attend the Monday night follow-up meeting with 'private group' of parents accompanied by the PTA president and the Parent Coordinator.

Ms. Reinhart: Suggested from the 'private group' to collect data from different schools and see how they are run; see what they are doing better. Present something in writing so we can see what they are doing and get ideas to help us. Try to address the challenges and find solutions to work efficiently.

When will Murrow start planning for fall opening and what is the plan? How are we addressing fall opening? Ms. Tuff explained it all depends on Central and the calendar. Once this is released, we can start planning. Possibly 25%-30% of faculty may still require medical accommodations in the fall. UFT does not have authority to grant medical accommodations.

Mr. Barge confirmed that DOE central grants accommodations. Although he did not have the data in front of him, Mr. Barge stated that approximately 40% of staff have been granted medical accommodations.

Ms. McKenzie feels we will be in a better place than we were last year. There is a growing movement of parents who want kids in school and can do something about school. We hear parents and understand. Children have been out of school for a year. We worry about the next great exodus of students leaving the public school system. We need better communication.

Ms. Harmon (PTA) suggested that the 'private group' bring their concerns to the PTA. If you know how other schools are doing things, give us their information and we will bring it to administration. The PTA is bound by the DOE and Chancellor's regulations. We can generate power and leverage through the PTA. Ms. Harmon will reach out to Mark Treyger to attend the next PTA meeting. Mr. Treyger is a Murrow graduate and current Councilman.

The 'private group' is not restricted by any regulations and needs to reach out in a respectful manner. Ideas made by the DOE are made across the board, not to individual schools. Other schools may have more in-house staff. The PTA has power. The PTA is bound by guidelines. The PTA understands your concerns. The 'private group' would like to be put on the PTA agenda for the next meeting and request the possibility of becoming either a 'sub-group' or sub-committee' of the PTA. Ms. Harmon will check the ByLaws.

Ms. Rosie stated that the PTA is full of resources. She stated that groups should unite and work together. PTA represents everyone so the 'private group' should reach out to them.

ERM is transitioning to a new website which is expected to launch in the spring.

School Leadership Team Elections: Due to the pandemic, elections were not held for the 2020/21 school year. Elections will be scheduled for the 2021-2022 school year. SLT will accept nominations. UFT, DC37, CSA, and Parent positions are all two (2) year terms and UFT Chapter Leader is a three (3) year position. There will be one (1) spot held open for an incoming freshman parent.

Respectfully submitted,

*Linda J. Antzoulis*