

**School Council Meeting Minutes**  
**May 16, 2014**  
**7:45 a.m.-8:45 a.m.**

Members in attendance:	<p>Lisa Desjarlais: Pelham School principal  Suzanne Quinlan: Classroom teacher, grade 5  Debbie Jacque: Classroom teacher, kindergarten  Virginia Servos: Teacher  Sarah Frenette: Pelham School parent</p>
School Survey	<p>The council reviewed the 2014 Amherst survey and previous Pelham surveys in advance of the meeting. Most in attendance preferred the Pelham specific survey, feeling that it was best aligned with the needs and priorities of the school.</p> <p>The council made suggestions to improve the Amherst survey:  Add social emotional learning and PBIS, arts and arts integration, preschool, specialists, academics and differentiation, homework club, before school and afterschool, and an answer choice of “don’t know” for many of the questions. In addition, we suggested that we break apart the communication questions to include communications from teachers, website, Pelham Press, etc...</p> <p>The council is glad to see an option to answer the survey more than once if a family has more than one child in the school, noting that different children have different experiences in any school.</p> <p>Questions from the PTO are expected and will be added.</p> <p>Questions 20, 22, 23 and 24 presume that parents are not involved. The wording will be changed to “does or do” not “how much”.</p> <p>Lisa Desjarlais will make revisions to the survey and send a draft to the council next week for feedback.</p>
School Improvement Plan	<p>The council had an opportunity to better understand the role of the School Council. All members on the advisory council have an opportunity to share their thoughts about topics related to the school. The principal considers all of the input offered and then makes a decision about how the school will proceed.</p> <p>We began by reviewing two items related to the School Improvement Plan brought to the Council by Mike Hayes. The first concerned the number of individual items on the plan and the second related to mathematics assessment. We discussed each concern during the meeting and each participant had an opportunity to contribute to the discussion.</p> <p><b>#1) The number of individual items on the school improvement plan.</b></p> <p>Debbie Jacque- Years ago Pelham School had multi-year plans that prioritized one or two goals or areas of focus. The problem was that the structure lacked the ability to respond to new initiatives, mandates and needs. Debbie feels that the current structure allows the school to respond and direct attention as necessary. She is impressed with the current plan,</p>

would welcome streamlining where appropriate, but does not want to see any narrowing of the plan.

Virginia Servos- Virginia is new to the group and feels that she lacks the experience to respond.

Suzanne Quinlan- The current goals are excellent and are not overwhelming to her as a teacher.

Sarah Frenette- The current structure is the result of collaborative efforts of teachers, administrators, parents and community members. It is flexible and allows the school to be responsive to needs, mandates and initiatives.

Decision making:

Lisa Desjarlais agrees that streamlining makes sense, where appropriate.

She also recognizes that schools are complex and their improvement plans are multifaceted. It is important to her that the plan includes goals related to curriculum, climate and family engagement. She compared the Pelham SIP to other plans and found that Pelham's plan was clearer and more streamlined than some. She is comfortable keeping multiple indicators and goals in the plan.

**#2- Does the school need an additional tool or system to collect data about student performance and ability in mathematics? Does the Council feel that we need an additional data point in math?**

Debbie Jacque- We have lots of data now. All of the necessary pieces are in place to support students in the classroom. Parents did not express concern at the most recent conferences and are pleased with the information about developmental and instructional needs and strengths.

Virginia Servos- A normed data point will not tell what the areas of strength and weakness are. Teachers want to hone in on particular skills and concepts. She finds that teachers are very aware of where students are in mathematics using the current assessments and data. Virginia wonders if there are ways in which teachers can improve communication with families about their current information instead of adding new sources of information.

Suzanne Quinlan- Suzanne wonders what the purpose of additional testing is. As a teacher, she knows the strengths and weaknesses of her students and she has systems in place to support and challenge all learners in mathematics. She believes that one assessment cannot give a full picture and the variety of information gathering mechanisms currently in place allow her to get the full picture.

Sarah Frenette- As a parent with two children in the school, I have participated in 6 years of conferences and conversations with teachers about mathematics performance and ability. I have always gotten a strong sense of teachers knowing the strengths and struggles of my children in math. I would not support additional testing at this time.

	<p>Decision making:  Lisa Desjarlais heard each voice, considered the diversity of opinions and made decisions about how to proceed. Lisa feels that teachers have access to multiple data points now. They have MCAS data, benchmark assessments, unit tests, AIMS web and ongoing informal data. She is not interested in an additional comparative or placement test at this time. The data does not demonstrate a need and she does not feel that it would be an appropriate use of time or resources. Lisa decided not to add an additional goal related to math assessment at this time.</p> <p><b>SIP review continued:</b>  1G- Lisa met with teachers to get more information about their curriculum. This goal is ongoing, but will be reworded. Teachers and administrators will continue to focus on data tools, progress monitoring and using data to inform instructional decision-making.</p> <p>Goal 2-</p> <p>Add Universal Design for Learning. Melissa, Leanne and Lisa participated in training this year. Lisa will work with Faye Brady to determine small and concrete action steps for next academic year, which will be added to the SIP.</p> <p>Technology will be included in Goal 2 as well.</p>
Future Agenda Items	School Improvement Plan- Goal 2
<b>Upcoming Meeting</b>	<b>Thursday, June 5, 2014- 7:45 am</b>

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Frenette