Briarlake Elementary School  
School Council Meeting

August 18, 2016  
Briarlake Media Center 1 p.m.

Members Present: Chair, Deborah Martin-Gerstle; Vice Chair, Anjevon Smith; Secretary, Ellyn Cochran; Teacher Representatives, Ms. Wise and Ms. Law; Principal, Jamela Lewis; Academic Achievement Co-Chairs, Tony Pan and Jin Choy

Not Present: Jared Cobb, parent representative

Meeting was attended by non-voting members from the community: Ava Lynn Mendoza, Mauro Fontes, Jen Petrich, Jan Goodloe, Sonya Tinsley Hook, and Awaz Kirkuki

1. Call to Order -   
   Called to order by Debbie Martin-Gerstle at 1:06
2. Inspiration provided by Jamela Lewis
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Approval of Agenda

**Motion made by Ms. Wise to approve agenda; Ms. Law seconded.**

**All in favor, Agenda approved.**

1. Approval of Minutes

**Motion made by Debbie Martin-Gerstle to approve agenda: Ms. Law seconded  
All in favor, Minutes approved**

1. Motion to approve officers for this year:

Chair – Debbie Martin-Gerstle

Vice Chair – Anjevon Smith

Secretary – Ellyn Cochran

Academic Achievement Co-Chairs - Tony Pan and Jin Choy.

**Motion made by Ms. Law to approve the proposed officers for this year: Ms. Wise seconded**

**All in favor, Motion approved.**

1. Principals Report (See attachments)
   1. Attendance and Safety –
      1. Enrolment is down – from 388 down from 401 at the end of last year.
      2. Safety – Working through our safe school plans. We met with teachers on their roles. We had the first two required fire drills. The fire bell is sticking and there is a work order out for that. Working on ensuring full wheel chair access
      3. Our safety score was 102% out of 100%
   2. Staff Updates
      1. Almost at 100 percent
      2. Still have to fill positions for paras in Special Education (3 positions). They have given notice but are still here.
   3. GA Milestone sores
      1. Referenced handout on the state ranking (noticed that date should read 2016)
      2. Goal is for Briarlake to be in the top 100 (232 in the state this year)
      3. This year in this cluster we were second to Oak Grove Elementary
      4. Celebrate:
         1. We are second in our cluster
         2. Out of 1233, we are in the top quarter
      5. Analysis and Recommendations:
         1. Recommitting to a standard of excellence in every classroom. Consistency across the classrooms. Grade level teachers will collaborate with each other.
         2. Planning time in advance - this is the reason for the extended planning time. Traditional planning time was during the specials period. Only allowed about 30 minutes for actual planning. Now put specials planning back to back to allow for a two period planning period. Goal is to allow more planning time with substitute teacher coverage
         3. KUD – Know Understand Do – Practiced over the summer with teachers and would like to bring this forward next year. Process of unpacking standards to understand them at a deeper level.
   4. MAP Testing –Review of dates and criterion for gifted
      1. Referenced materials sent home to families
      2. Ms. Stansfield engaged in the training and set up a schedule for training the teachers. Next week is the scheduled practice test of the MAP testing.
      3. MAP is the new STAR and will be administered 3 times a year.
      4. The first/Fall MAP test determines gifted eligibility. (this replaces the ITBS). A student must achieve a 90% in either reading or math to receive further gifted testing. Once additional testing occurs, scores are good for 2 years.
2. Unfinished Business
   1. Gifted Certification – Teachers/Advance content
      1. New staff needs to be gifted certified – 4 teachers need to receive this training, K, 4th, and (2) 5th grade. They will receive compensation for the gifted training curriculum attendance
      2. Advanced Content – Right now, the school is still doing the “pull out” method for Gifted students. We need curriculum to do Advanced Content. Teachers are focusing on STEM and PBL (project based learning) to ensure more advanced content is being taught. Next year, we will be doing Compacting in Math. So, math will be taught with an Advanced Content curriculum.
   2. STEM Certification –
      1. Briarlake met with DeKalb district STEM Coordinator, Hannah Maharaj, and GA DOE. – the District is leaning towards Advanced Ed certification. Alignment with Advanced Ed is more rigorous and will allow us to easily be STEM certified through Department of Education standards as well. It is also an International certification process.
      2. Suggested timeline - spring of this year we will be visited by Advanced Ed and possibly become STEM certified.
      3. Partners: Briarlake Forest and the Carlos Museum at Emory University are our main partners. DeKalb county has partnered with the zoo for second grade. Exploring how to get continued support from Fernbank Science Center.
      4. Bioscience is our main area of expertise. This encompasses our gardens, aquaponics, and recycling programs already present at Briarlake.
      5. STEM Lab is really a “Maker Space” This innovation room will be in the current computer lab.
      6. Looking to buy new computers. Considering MAC Air to allow more portability within the lab. $30,000 cost for the 30 MAC Air (various sizes based on student grades) would be covered by the Briarlake Foundation, if approved.
         1. Will be looking at ways to figure out how to get DeKalb county support by purchasing through the district.
      7. Exploring the use of lofts in these classrooms.
3. New business
   1. Six Flags Reading – Ms. Wise – The window opens in mid-October. Hoping to get 100 percent of our students to participate. Will explore family passes or transferring tickets for families needing financial assistance. Discussed possibility of a “Briarlake Day.”
   2. Junior Beta – Leadership group for our 5th graders and our academic honor society. Criteria – how does this change without ITBS testing (usually weighs in to eligibility). Consider and discuss new criteria at future meeting.
   3. SST (Student Support Team) – is moving to instruction team. Due to this change. Counselor (Ms. Thomas) will oversee student support, leadership, development – This includes awards day, safety patrol, school bullying climate, and leadership (Junior Beta).
   4. Academic Challenges – Jin and Tony are Co-Chairs
      1. 44 Total students did Summer Academic Challenge (5 books and 9 hours of math over the summer).
      2. Next Challenge: Paired with international night. Will focus on how STEM is being used to support a country, help its people or environment.
   5. Academic Competitions – Jin and Tony are Co-Chairs
      1. New Math Club – Proposed idea on how to create a math club. Specifics to be set with teacher (Ms. Rosebery) and an assistant parent coach.
   6. Aftercare – There have been parent suggestions to ensure that we build on our aftercare program to support STEM and ensure that this is a program that attracts families to our school. Recognize the need to be able to support the program director and tie this program to academic decision making. A committee will be formed to discuss options. Suggestions included:
      1. Allowing enrichment for kids not only in regular aftercare (allows for more options)
      2. Making tutoring available as enrichment
      3. Connecting enrichment and daily activities to build on STEM focus.
   7. Testing Gifted in Kindergarten – Yes. MAP testing is being conducted in Kindergarten. So, they will also be screened for Gifted.
4. Adjourn at 2:24