

Citywide Family Council Meeting

January 24, 2018

Cardinal O'Connell Early Childhood Center
21 Carter Street, Lowell, MA

Whole Group

1.24.19

Objectives:

1. Update on Lowell Superintendent Search
2. Introduce Leadership Team members and update Citywide Family Council on their work
3. Discuss and choose Lowell Public School communication priorities of interest

Welcome and Purpose

1. Introduction of facilitators
2. Review group norms and ask for feedback/revisions

Whole Group

1.24.19

Update on Superintendent Search:

1. Interim Superintendent Jeannine Durkin invites attendees to the School Committee's Personnel Subcommittee meeting regarding the search for a Superintendent of Schools on Monday, January 28 at 6:30 at the Butler Middle School
 - a. The forum is intended to be an opportunity for conversation about the Superintendent hiring process, as well as, information about how community members can become involved with the hiring process (a parent panel)
 - b. Superintendent Durkin encourages wide participation

Citywide Family Council Bylaws:

1. Leslie reviews existing Citywide Family Council bylaws
 - a. Invitation for families to revise bylaws in order to best facilitate the work of the CFC
 - b. **Action Item**: Request feedback from families before Feb. meeting

Whole Group

1.24.19

English Learner Program Coordinator of LPS - Dr. Phala Chea:

1. LPS is creating an English Learner Parent Advisory Council comprised of parents whose children are English Language Learners (ELL)
 - a. Purpose of the English Learner Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC) is to help focus administration to meet needs of ELL students, as well as guide instruction
2. Dr. Chea hopes to begin meeting soon, but would like to base timeline of family availability
 - a. Any families are welcome
3. **Action Item:** Dr. Chea requests assistance from CFC members with recruitment. Forms are available in a variety of languages for members to distribute to families who may be interested in joining the English Learner Advisory Council

Whole Group

1.24.19

Introduce Citywide Family Council Leadership Group:

1. Review how and when priorities were set at earlier CFC meetings
 - a. How do we get together and resolve these issues?
 - b. What are your top issues pertaining to your area of communication interest?
 - c. Brainstorm where resources may already exist

2. Overview of “Communication” priorities and breakout instructions with special attention to discussion questions:
 - What communication issue speaks to you the most?
 - What changes could we, as family and community members, make?
 - Who else would we need to work with on this issue?
 - What do we have to offer to this process? (for example: knowledge, time, different perspectives, connections, etc.)

Break-Out Groups

1.24.19

Communication Issues around Before/After School Programs and In-School Opportunities:

1. Where does this information already live?
2. Who updates it?

Existing Resources of Before/After School Programs and In-School Opportunities:

1. Community organizations such as CTI, YMCA, summer programs
2. John Overton, webmaster

Rebecca Duda, Director of Family Resource Center,

Carolyn Rocheleau, Coordinator of Special Programs (calendar of events)

Shamir has document with info on after/before care, CFC can update

Break-Out Groups

1.24.19

Communication Issues around Before/After School Programs and In-School Opportunities:

3. What info do different families need?
(Newcomer vs. preschool vs. high school, etc.?)
4. When is certain information most relevant
(timeline)?
5. How can LPS and CFC work to
connect/intertwine sources of communication?
Create a “network of knowledge”

Improving Communication of Before/After School Programs and In-School Opportunities:

3. See “Parent University” notes. Families would love to hear more “good” info
4. Childcare vouchers, early spring for summer programs, late summer for before/after school
5. Supt. Durkin will provide relevant personnel to CFC meetings to address topics and questions if she knows what the topics are beforehand.

CFC can help keep info relevant to parent needs AND members can attend and amplify events/fairs

Apps such as Blackboard and social media platforms

Break-Out Groups

1.24.19

“Parent University” Questions:

1. What info do different families need?
(Newcomer vs. preschool vs. high school, etc.?)
2. When is certain information most relevant
(timeline)?
3. How is information shared most effectively?

A “Parent University” could...:

1. Families need orientation information AND ongoing information, see later slide for extended list.
2. Spring programs for enrollment and summer programs, summer programs for school readiness, individual needs, fall programs for curriculum and communication, winter programs for other topics
3. Create one hub of information, a CFC/Parent University social media account. Also communicate with existing orgs to cast a wider marketing net

Break-Out Groups

1.24.19

“Parent University” Questions, continued:

4. Who can assist us with these efforts?

A “Parent University” could...:

4. Many efforts to educate and include families exist in Lowell.

College marketing students to help with launch of larger efforts

Jeannine Durkin offered personnel to discuss relevant topics with some lead time

Lisa Van Thiel and Early Childhood Parent Advisory Council have materials/resources relevant to orientation and Kindergarten

Rebecca Duda at Family Resource Center

Parent volunteers working social media/outreach

Break-Out Groups

1.24.19

Parent University - Orientation Topics

- School assignment/enrollment
- What and how LPS communicates
- Expressing concerns and communicating with teachers, staff and admin
- Preparing for snow days, early release/transportation
- Before and after care options

Parent University - Ongoing Topics

- Curriculum nights (especially explaining new math)
- Literacy and academics at home
- Parenting skills (at various stages, connect with existing EEC programming)
- Understanding report cards
- Current events/topics of public education such as funding and
- Individualized interest Q&As (ADHD, mental health, education of ELL)
- Understanding MCAS and prep for MCAS

Break-Out Groups

1.24.19

Communicating LPS Organizational Structure

1. Where does this information already live?
2. What does the CFC want to share?

Next steps for Organizational Structure Chart

1. On LPS and individual school websites, contact webmasters to elevate info at appropriate times
 - a. Jeannine Durkin willing to share internal organizational chart
2. Create FAQ sheet with common Qs and where/who to find answers. The organizational chart could be like a “Parent University ‘to go’”.

Beth Tripathi taking the lead on chart

Important Dates

Mon Jan 28, 2019 6:30pm - Personnel Subcommittee meeting for feedback on Superintendent search;

Butler Middle School Auditorium, 1140 Gorham St, Lowell, MA 01852

Thurs Feb 7, 2019 5:30pm - Citywide Family Council Leadership Meeting, Family Resource Center

151 Merrimack St, Lowell, MA 01852

Wed Feb 13, 2019 6:30pm - School Committee Meeting - Brief presentation on Citywide Family Council

Council Chamber at City Hall, 375 Merrimack Street, Lowell, MA 01852

Tues Feb 26, 2019 5:30pm - Next full Citywide Family Council Meeting

Location and agenda TBD