



# CLARA BARTON OPEN SCHOOL

Fostering a  
Community  
of Active  
Learners in  
Minneapolis  
Minnesota

## Leadership Council Meeting Notes

Thursday, December 17, 2015

4:30PM – 6:30PM

Media Center

Prepared by Sara Stenzel

### Student Leadership Teams and Options Program (Jonas Beugen and Amber Damm)

Jonas met with the staff who led the Student Leadership Teams (SLTs), Uppers staff, and Uppers students to discuss the future of student leadership opportunities and Options at Barton. Jonas considered **three ideas** based on feedback from those discussions and an Uppers survey. The teaching teams need more time discuss these ideas.

- **Create an informal student advisory group among the Uppers students.** This would be an open group, in which anyone can participate. For example, Jonas might hold a “Lunch with the Principal” and invite any Uppers student to join and give ideas about student leadership. The details are to be determined.
- **Provide student leadership opportunities through after-school Community Education at Barton,** particularly the Dare 2 Be Real group. If the program were offered through Community Ed, it would not conflict with class time or morning meeting and busing would be provided. This idea is still in the early stages of development.
- **Offer an “Options Day”,** maybe as early as this spring. This could be a day where students go on field trips or take a mini-course on topics that interest them. Parents, staff and students have expressed concern that Barton no longer offers an Options program and strongly believe Options are one way to provide open, progressive ed experiences. **An Options Day or Options program would require a tremendous amount of parent support and volunteering;** in the past, a part-time staff person, who is no longer working at Barton, coordinated the entire program.

Here is some background about the discussion of SLTs, taken from the September 3, 2015 Council notes: “Over the last few years, Uppers students have had an opportunity to serve on one of five Student Leadership Teams (SLTs) which were student-centered, service-oriented groups that fit well with the open philosophy: Clean and Green, Backpack Tutors, Dare2BeReal, Tech Squad, and Student Ambassadors. Please refer to this DRAFT document for proposed changes to the SLT names: [http://barton.mpls.k12.mn.us/uploads/leadership\\_development\\_diagram\\_draft\\_sept2015.pdf](http://barton.mpls.k12.mn.us/uploads/leadership_development_diagram_draft_sept2015.pdf)

Jonas and Holly met with the SLT staff advisors and Uppers teachers to discuss the structure of the Student Leadership Teams. The consensus was that the student groups were great but the structure was problematic. The SLT meetings took place one time each week and took student leaders away from

their homeroom morning meetings, an important time each day. In addition, the Barton community would like all students to be leaders, including K-6 students.”

Although staff agrees that they want lots of leadership opportunities for students, there is no consensus about how to implement opportunities that are meaningful and yet won't conflict with morning meeting and classroom learning. Jonas recently met with Uppers students in their homerooms to hear their ideas. In order to get more student input, a survey was created for Uppers students. 152/170 Uppers responded to a survey and expressed a variety of opinions about whether students desired SLTs, a more formal Student Council (as Barton had about 3+ years ago), and/or Options. Students expressed the most interest in the Dare 2 Be Real SLT. Over half of the students said they might be interested in an informal advisory group. When students were asked to choose which program should be re-implemented--SLTs, Student Council, or Options--almost half of the students chose Options as the most important.

### **Statement of Support for Our Community (Jonas)**

In response to recent national events and concern about increased intolerance and Islamophobia in our nation, Barton parents initiated a discussion on the Barton Parent Facebook page about how best to show support for Muslim families in our community. There has not been an incident at Barton, rather this is an opportunity for the Barton community to show its support for all families. Council co-chair, Julia Mullin and Council member Diana Saez wrote a letter to the Barton community on behalf of the Barton Leadership Council. The Muslim community members and Council members in attendance expressed their thanks and supported sending this letter to the Barton community. **The Council approved distribution of the letter before winter break with continued follow-up and support after break.** To see the letter, please go to the Barton Website: <http://barton.mpls.k12.mn.us/index>

Jonas shared the letter with Associate Superintendent Lucilla Yira, who has shared it with other people in MPS to use as a model of support. This letter is posted on the Barton website, will be sent out in an email to parents and as a paper copy in backpacks, and will be sent via robo-call to parents in our community.

The Council discussed the importance of creating a kid-friendly version of this same message for the students at Barton. Ideally, parents will be discussing the letter at home with their children, but there should also be ongoing opportunities for kids to ask questions and have discussions with their teachers and classmates at school. Barton's responsive classroom values and use of morning meetings allow ongoing opportunities for these discussions about cultural differences, acceptance, tolerance and support.

Years ago, Barton teachers used books from a literacy project called, Families All Matter. The project included diverse and inclusive books about different types of families and people that were read to elementary students. Some teachers still use these books but there was a small discussion about the possibility of making it more widespread at Barton. Kori Hennessey has experience with and training for this program. Please go this website for more information: <http://www.amazeworks.org/solutions/presentations.html>

### **Babysitting at Council Meetings (Kori Hennessey)**

If you have an Uppers student, or know of one, who is interested in babysitting for Council meetings, please let Kori know ([korihennessy@gmail.com](mailto:korihennessy@gmail.com)). Babysitters are scheduled once per month for two hours during the Council meeting and are paid \$10/hour. It is important that you also contact Kori to let her know if you are bringing children to the meeting so that Kori can schedule enough babysitters.

### **Principal Update (Jonas)**

Due to lack of time, the update will be postponed until the January meeting.

### **Parent Help with the Recycling Program (Reduce Our Trash-ROT) (Jonas, Sheila Eldred, Sue Buettgen)**

Barton currently has a system where food waste/trash is divided into three separate containers: Recycling, Organics, and Trash. Students are having a difficult time sorting their trash into the appropriate containers. This confusion results in a messy recycling station and bags which are not correctly sorted for further recycling or composting. There is a need for adults and students to model the behavior. Find more information on ROT at Barton: <http://barton.mpls.k12.mn.us/rot>

In the past, parent volunteers coordinated the program and visited classrooms to remind students about the ROT program. Barton was the first school in MPS to create a ROT system and there is a strong desire to continue the program at Barton. Sheila Eldred will meet with Jonas to discuss different ideas about how best to re-introduce the program to the younger students. One of the Barton Robotics teams put together a video demonstrating the ROT program. There is a possibility of using that to help students. In addition, Rob Walstead offered to film another video if desired. Finally, parent Pam Hockenberry and her 6<sup>th</sup> grade Girl Scout Troop created new posters (with new pictures of lunchroom packaging) to help guide the students. These posters will be in place in January.

### **Hand-out: Technology and Progressive Ed (from *Loving Learning*); for discussion at next meeting (Jonas)**

Jonas distributed a chapter from the book Loving Learning for discussion at the January Council meeting. This particular chapter addresses how the use of technology in progressive ed classrooms. Jonas would like the Council to consider how technology affects progressive ed at Barton as MPS begins to implement its technology plan for the district. Please read the article and be prepared to have a dialog at the January meeting.

MPS plans to provide a laptop to every MPS student in grades 3-12 by 2020. A certain percentage of resources will be allocated to some schools for the 2016-17 school year. Jonas would like to submit a proposal for Barton to get funded for this program for the 2016-17 school year. The 5/6 and 7/8 teams are supportive of this plan, as Barton's laptops, computers, and iPads are outdated, limited in number, and in frequent use for testing, assessments, etc. The staff professional development day on 1/19/16 will include a discussion of this technology proposal.

### **NEXT MEETING: Thursday, January 21, 2016, 4:30-6:30pm in the Barton Media Center**