

## **School Council Meeting #7 Minutes: March 22, 2021**

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In attendance: John Smith, Timothy O'Mara, Nicole Kepnes, Donna Strouse, John Lin, John Soraghan, Anita Lotti, Michael Jaffe, Liza Birmingham, Sterling Williams, Amal Sharfi, Lilly Caplan, and Emily Waugh

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### **Start of Meeting Procedure**

1. Meeting called to order at 4:00 p.m.
2. All members were introduced.
3. The new members were introduced.

### **NEASC Review: Key Takeaways**

- The NEASC Accreditation visit included a full audit that occurs once every ten years. The audit was conducted virtually over a 2 ½ day period.
- Four priority areas were developed: the growth mindset, student sense of belonging and connection, school safety (both physical and emotional), and technology.
- Overall, the NEASC visit was very positive.
- The NEASC report will be available for review in three weeks, and a finalized report received in late Summer will be publicly published.

### **Plans and Schedules: Four Day Return to School**

- The new plan for returning to five days of in-person learning will occur over two transition periods. The first transition begins on April 5th, when the four-day in-person plan will be implemented. The second transition begins on April 28th, when the five-day in-person plan will be implemented.
- The four-day in-person schedule will use the same schedule as the hybrid model. Some room changes may be made.
- The five-day in-person schedule will use a four-day rotation schedule. On Wednesdays, band and chorus will occur during the morning until 10:00. Most students will come in at 10:00, with each class lasting around an hour. On half-day Wednesdays, each class will last around 40 minutes.
- Two lunch blocks will be used to minimize the number of students congregating at a time. The current lunch period will be split into a shortened DR period and a shortened lunch period. Juniors and Seniors will be allowed to sign out during the shortened DR period.
- Remote students will still have the option to stay fully remote.
- Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors will be allowed to use the parking lot.
- Informational sessions will be held over zoom and included in the newsletter to inform parents of these changes.
- A small group of teachers and staff have been working to support remote students who are new to the DS community.

### **2021-2022 School Improvement Plan**

- Some plans that couldn't be fully implemented due to Covid-19 will be continued in the 2021-2022 school year, including the new schedule, flex block, and advisory system.
- The advisory system will aim to increase student sense of belonging and will consist of around three teachers assigned to a flex block advisory group. Having several teachers will allow for more chances for students to form connections with teachers.
- The advisory system would also help to notice disconnected students and provide them with opportunities for connection.
- The antiracism, equity, and inclusion work will continue in the 2021-2022 school year to educate students about racism and how they can do their part to work against exclusion.
- A fourth goal is being considered to add to the improvement plan. Ideas for this goal include anti-racism work (a closer observation of bias, diversity, inclusion, and support for students/families of color at DS) and maintaining the positive aspects we have gained from Covid-19 (adaptability, technology, organizational methods).

### **Student Feedback**

- Although students are excited about many aspects of returning to more in-person days, there is concern about the potential increase in workload and having larger groups inside the building.
- There is concern about fully remote students having a more noticeably different learning experience than the in-person students now that the majority of students will be in-person for all classes.

Next Meeting: Monday, April 12th, 2021