

PRINCIPAL COFFEE NOTES
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2017, 8:30 AM
CABOT AT CARR SCHOOL CAFETERIA

• **ATTENDEES:**

- Eric Sprung, Sue Bottino, Heidi Lucas, Deidre O'Connor, Joanna Josephson, Agnes Pietrzyk, Dan O'Neill, Audra Siman, Nicky Chapman, Christopher Toole, Ginny Richmond, Karina Simonian, Alice Reynolds, Jacqueline Badeau, Joe Guarino, and Pratima Prasad

• **INTRODUCTION BY PRINCIPAL, ERIC SPRUNG**

- Tells attendees that he has 2 kids (one at Zervas, one at Oak Hill)
- Taught 3rd and 4th grade in Virginia
- Has been in Massachusetts for 12 years
- Previously was a principal in Burlington

• **TRANSITION UPDATE**

- Kids appear to be making a smooth transition
- Teachers have worked hard to acclimate the kids to the new space and to help them learn routines
- Eric Sprung (Principal) has gone into every class, read a story to the kids and answered questions from them
- Teachers have also adapted pretty well
- Hardest part of the transition has been the bus routines for the kids and staff
 - Implementing safety routines (drills, lockdowns, evacuation plans)
 - Spending time on working out all the logistics
 - Also trying to keep families better informed of what's going on from the school (one of the principal's goals)
 - Heidi Lucas (Teacher representative) agrees that bus routines still need tweaking
 - Biggest drawback is that teachers have less face time with parents
 - However, one big benefit of the buses was that teachers are able to get their day started earlier since the kids are at school earlier
 - Joe Guarino (Teacher representative) adds that kids are inside the building within 5 minutes of the bus arriving
 - Question in light of recent events in the news regarding 1st communication from staff to the parents on what should parents do if there is an emergency (Deidre O'Connor)
 - Eric Sprung (Principal) states that there is a safety committee
 - Reunification plan-kids would be at the middle school waiting for parents to pick them up
 - Eric Sprung (Principal) also notes that there is a shortage of walkie talkies and they are working to resolve that issue

- **GOALS FOR PRINCIPAL ERIC SPRUNG**

- Successful Transition

- A 3 year school improvement plan was written years ago and the School Council meets monthly in regards to meeting the goals of the plan

- Improvement of Communication between Teachers and Special Education Team

- Eric Sprung (Principal) sees this as needing some work
 - Want to link what Special Education Team is doing to what the teachers are doing in their classrooms
 - Will be an ongoing focus

- Transition to new Cabot

- Are we going to do a mural?
 - Setting routines for pick-up/drop-off
 - Routines in new building
 - Parents have asked about a new school logo
 - Traffic patterns
 - Eric wants to start these conversations now and set up a timeline for all of this

- **UPDATE ON NEW CABOT SCHOOL BUILDING**

- So far it's on track

- There is an update meeting tonight (update meetings are once a month)
 - Nothing surprising found during demo
 - Eric Sprung (Principal) believes that the new Cabot will open on time
 - Basing this off what he saw with Zervas and Angier
 - But there will be a punch list of a bunch of stuff that will still need to be done once we're in the new school

- **QUESTION ABOUT HOW CURRICULUM IS DECIDED (Dan O'Neill)**

- Eric Sprung (Principal) states that District makes those choices and they follow the MA state standards

- Joe Guarino & Heidi Lucas (Teacher Representatives) both state that although the District decides on the material, they can choose how they supplement

- Though District also makes recommendations about supplemental resources

- **PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE BUSES**

- Kids were getting to school too early and sitting on the bus for too long so school had to tweak the timing

- Joe Guarino (Teacher representative) has been working with the 5th grade safety on how to help kids going on and coming off the bus

- Kindergarten kids get out first
 - They rearranged door entrances for the different grades

- School Pass

- While they haven't had to call parents about this for the past 2 days, there are still challenges with School Pass
 - Nicky Chapman and Joanna Josephson (Co-presidents) will be putting out a simple user guide for School Pass for parents to make things clearer
- Questions/Comments from attendees about School Pass
 - Ginny Richmond: Adds that maybe Transportation Director, Regina Moody could be looped into this conversation to help out the next school to go through this
 - Horace Mann will be moving into Carr next
 - Pratima: How she can have both parents use School Pass because it always defaults to one parent?
 - Answer: Need to add other parent in on the Carpool tab
 - Ginny Richmond: What if school arrival is different?
 - Answer: Doesn't matter as long as the student gets here
 - Deidre O'Connor: What age group needs to have a parent meet them at the bus stop?
 - Answer: K-1 only
 - Sue Bottino: Can kids get on any bus? (e.g. if they miss their bus)
 - Answer: Yes, can put your kid on any bus if they miss the bus
 - Can communication to parents be sped up if there are any changes with the bus
 - Eric Sprung (Principal) states that if a bus leaves later than 3:20 p.m., an e-mail will be sent
 - Notes that bus company has different protocol on how to communicate delays and usually the school is 3rd on the list to get notified
- Snow and ice issues
 - Thinking ahead to winter, a discussion was had regarding snow and ice at the bus stops. Concern about some stops where historically there have been large snow piles to navigate around/over and with regards to icy sidewalks and being enough space on side walk to have everyone wait safely.
 - Whose responsibility is it? Residents must shovel but we are unsure if city has additional responsibility for bus stops/ADA ramps on the sidewalks.
 - Suggestions:
 - Use 311 to report and problems - can send pictures if you have the app.
 - Make sure that the drivers know to stop a little further from the curb to allow student so step up onto the bus from the roadway where hopefully there is no ice.
- Bus Behavior
 - Mr. Sprung is aware of some of the behavior issues on the busses but not all of them
 - If issues need to be addressed let him know.

- He will ascertain what happened/who was involved/who witnessed and establish what interventions are needed. (Conversation with small group, conversation with small group, assigned seating on the bus)
 - Bus drivers are being involved with this too, giving thumbs up/down quick reports as they arrive regarding overall behavior on the bus.
 - Idea suggested that we should reward the good behavior with buses competing against each other for most thumbs up over set period; Zervas tried something similar with mixed reception.
 - Question: When are parents notified that there was an incident?
 - Mr. Sprung responded that once he has established the facts then he makes the decision on how wide the circle of involvement is and notifies parents of those involved. Not sometimes just the parents on the children directly involved, sometimes a larger circle, sometimes the whole bus/class.
 - Question: Who makes the complaint/reports the incident?
 - Answer: Parents, Children, Safety's, teachers, bus drivers
 - It was noted that while the bus driver cannot see everything on such long buses, if they feel there is a safety issue, they can and will pull over.
 - 5th Grade Safety's
 - There was praise for the 5th grade safety's that have been given the responsibility of helping the K's and 1's on the buses. A couple of parents reported that their K/1st grader are loving having a 5th grade buddy on the bus and it is nice to see them mixing on the bus. Also it was noted that on one bus at least one of the safetys told one of their peers to sit down and put their seatbelt on.
- **FACEBOOK PAGE**
 - Mr. Sprung is working on a school Facebook page to share things that go on at Cabot. It is almost ready to launch.
- **SPIRIT DAYS**
 - Halloween is coming to Cabot - a flyer will be coming home this weekend.
 - K and 1 will wear their costumes over their clothes and have a parade, either outside or around the school
 - Grades 2-5 can bring their costumes if they wish and teachers will decide the appropriate time for students to put them on to show their friends
 - There will be a Cabot spirit wear day once a month and in May/June a crazy hair, hat....week.