

PS 516 Sunset Park Avenues Elementary School Leadership Team (SLT)  
December 11, 2018  
5:00 - 7:00 p.m.  
Mezzanine Room

Present	Absent	Guests
Jill Smith Amber Rashid Michelle Giambo Amanda Blevins Meghan Wilder Rachael Sullivan- UFT rep Courtney Epton Deanna Abrams -PTA rep Amy Miles Tara Bringley Tory Messina	Carrie Fleming	Jessica Knudson Linda Ponciano

The meeting was called to order at 5:09 pm.

We read last meeting's [Minutes](#) and approved them with edits.

We began with an icebreaker where we shared fun facts about each other.

### **Principal's Report**

Ms. Smith shared our current homework policy as it is outlined in our faculty handbook. We also looked at the homework policies of three other District 15 schools. We shared out what we noticed and wondered. Most members agreed that the other schools' policies are similar to our policy, other than the fact that most policies didn't mention grading of homework.

We discussed the difference between checking and grading homework. Some parents simply want homework checked, while others appreciate homework being graded.

Some parents wanted more creative options for homework, such as games or conversations that families could have at home; other parents were more interested in simpler homework (fact fluency, journal entries), while other parents did not think much homework is necessary at all and that teachers should spend their time creating lessons for class. Most parents were interested in there being more choice for homework.

Teachers shared whether or not they felt homework was valuable to their instruction. Some teachers shared they felt there was value in certain elements but not everything. One teacher shared that homework is a good way for students to get in the routine of doing something

academic outside of school. Another teacher shared that she does not feel that she gains any additional insight from homework.

Ms. Smith asked how we might be more transparent about our homework policy and the grading of it. She asked if homework time would be better spent leveraging reading work and incorporating student choice (giving students a menu of choices).

We discussed how to include more parents in the homework discussion. We discussed the ideas of having meetings/forums (similar to school uniform forums) as well as sending home a survey. We also agreed that teachers would gather sample homework packets.

### **Teachers' Report**

Teachers shared that other teachers are concerned about the lack of PTA communication with teachers, outside of PTA meetings. Teachers proposed having PTA send out a weekly or monthly email with major events, whether they need teacher volunteers, and a contact person teachers can put parents in touch with. We also discussed the fact that some teachers have been asked by parents why events can't go until later in the evening, and teachers would like parents to know that most events are volunteer based and events that go later in the evening are more challenging to get volunteers for.

Ms. Abrams shared that there are only 5 members on the PTA executive board, who are unpaid, and they have the intention to send out weekly emails, however, they have not been able to get it done yet. Volunteering for school events feels tricky for parents because they are attendees and if they volunteer they will have to step away from the school event, whereas an event, like a dance, is easier for parents to volunteer at because they don't have such a huge responsibility.

Ms. Smith shared she can add the PTA events to her weekly newsletter and to the academic calendar.

Meeting adjourned at 6:54 pm.