Bates SPC/SSC Meeting

October 13, 2016

• Review of today’s agenda

• Review of Minutes from 9/28/16 meeting and motion to approve
  o two changes were made – Lauren Manasse-Latham is our new treasurer and it was Yilkal, a K2 dad who kindly offered his truck to tow the float for the Roslindale Parade

• Council chairpeople outlined two areas of focus for the SPC/SCC for the ’16 -’17 school year:
  o community building
  o fundraising
The goal would be to link the two to help enhance student experiences at the Bates. Purchasing a handbook as a possible resource was discussed. Format of tonight’s meeting will be different – those present will break into two groups to brainstorm ideas for both community building and fundraising.

• Bake Sale - The Election Day Bake Sale is coming up on Tuesday 11/8
  o Fliers will go home, there will be sign-ups for parents to bake and to work at the table and a link on the Bates website for sign-ups
  o Will need parent volunteers to manage baked goods arriving on 11/7
  o Ms. Drakes noted there are supplies available in a storage closet
  o Backup baked goods will be purchased at Costco

• Class Parents
  o Many responses have come in via sheets that went home with kids and online
  o Jocelyn Marshall – SPC co-chair and class parent coordinator - working to compile newly received contact information to disseminate to class parents

• Principal Updates
  o Mr. Vega will be unavailable from tomorrow until Thursday
  o Tonight’s topics are Social Thinking and Inclusion at the Bates
    ▪ What is inclusion? Inclusion means students with disabilities and typically developing peers being educated in classrooms together. Both students with disabilities and peers benefit from this model of education.
    ▪ What does inclusion look like at the Bates?
      o 15:5 ratio in inclusion classrooms
      o We do not have a specific disability that we specialize in (Some inclusion schools are specialized, e.g. the nearby JP Manning School).
      o All Kindergarten, first grade, and second grade classrooms at the Bates are inclusion classrooms. Inclusion will continue to roll up through the grades.
What does Social Thinking look like and sound like at the Bates?

- Social Thinking curriculum used with Bates students
- K and grade 1 get daily lessons in Social Thinking
- Working with all students to recognize that others have thoughts and feelings
- Students learn to share space, both literal and figurative
- Students develop skills to adapt to change
- Bates is one of two schools in Boston that offer social thinking to all students, not just special education
- Some schools use Social Thinking to work specifically with students with diagnosed disabilities
- Social Thinking addresses what is happening and how kids are feeling within the context of others’ feelings
- Mr. Vega has a handout – Social Thinking Vocabulary – language kids are learning at school
  - Whole Body Listening - Keeping body and brain in the group
  - Expected vs. Unexpected – What are others thinking when you aren’t doing what’s expected of you in a given situation?
  - Size of the problem – defining large and small problems and what responses/solutions are proportional for problems of different sizes
- Social Thinking seeks to build “Social Smarts” – consider consequences your actions are causing others to have feelings
  - thinking this way is difficult for kids and adults –
  - to be successful people they have to understand that they are part of a group, their behavior impacts others
- Different social skills need to be explicitly taught and kids need to be explicitly praised for displaying behaviors that are challenges for them
- Can’t hold kids accountable for behaviors we haven’t taught them
- provides a common vocabulary for students and staff
- Increases students’ awareness of their behavior and how their behavior impacts others
- Encourages positive behavior modeling, leading to greater generalization of skills
- Students learn to help friends recover and come back to the group
- Social thinking is aligned with Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
- Some behaviors are not just unexpected they are unacceptable because they are unsafe
- Acknowledging students for accepting things that aren’t what they wanted

Ms. Fitzgerald, one of our K2 teachers, presents about Social Thinking

- Reports that she enjoys using the Social Thinking curriculum in her classroom, that the curriculum has shifted her thinking as an educator
- Social Thinking helps children acknowledge their feelings and others’ feelings and be ready to learn and function in a classroom community
- Program gives vocabulary that is shared by adults throughout the building (teachers, specialists, administrators)
- Use picture books for teaching concepts to younger students – parents can purchase commercially – teachers have all in classroom
- Pete the Cat book as a tool for whole body listening and size of the problem.
- All students know “whole body listening”
• Size of the problem as a thermometer –
  o children able to use it to decide as a group when students are having a hard time
  o children are able to decide collaboratively whether their response is proportional to the size of the problem
  o small problems are ones that students can solve on their own, without a teacher, and don’t require large reactions
  o everyone has problems and everyone has reactions, including adults
  o mistakes are alright and are opportunities for learning
  o Students are engaged and curious about others’ struggles and feelings
  o Todd Parr books as teaching tools
  o Kids learn empathy and build a sense of belonging, students support one another, value showing love and kindness to one another
    ▪ value showing love and kindness to one another
  o Embracing all students and families

• Upper grades – Social Thinking language as a tool for debriefing
  o enables students to solve problems with support
  o prevents future conflicts – shifts language from “you shouldn’t have” to “what could you do instead?”

□ We are finalists for an up to $100,000 grant from EdVestors that will help the school continue this work. Results to be announced on 10/21
http://www.edvestors.org/initiatives/school-on-the-move-prize/

• All meeting attendees took 15 minutes to form two small groups to brainstorm around this year’s areas of focus:
  • Parent/family engagement
    o Classroom directories – connecting with families in your class as a starting point
    o Connecting at neighborhood level – Coach D has a map as part of the Safe Routes to School initiative that can help families see where are other Bates families who live within walking distance to their homes
    o Planning an international night, possible ideas for a winter event that could include presentations by students about different cultures represented at the Bates, food, languages
    o Separate committee formed – “Community Engagement Committee”
  • Fundraising
    o What are we currently doing: T-shirts, FoxFest, Election bake sale, Original Works
    o Ideas for further fundraising:
      • offers from Ria Café ice cream shop in West Rox – will offer 20%
      • Birch Street Home & Garden offering 10% back on purchases during a holiday night
    o Also need to address: goals for giving, describing what the impact is for students, overall goals, defining who in our school community does fundraising
    o Mr. Vega reports $5,000 donated to BEDF Fund from Wells Fargo bank
Parent/Teacher Questions and Comments

- Field trip funding – buses for field trips costs are covered by the school – teachers should let SPC know if they need money for a bus that is time sensitive
- Chairpeople asked that teachers let SPC know if they need funds for field trips that is time sensitive
- Citywide Parent Council Update: the city will be sharing the findings of its first survey of city’s education facilities. Findings will be shared at the weekend-long Build BPS conference on October 29-30, which is open to the public. For more information contact Bob Damon