

## MORNINGSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Date: Wednesday, March 5

Time: 5:00 pm

Location: Amy Mather Library, Morningside Elementary School

- I. **Call to Order - 5:01 PM**, by Brooke Linefsky
- II. **Roll Call; Establish Quorum** - Quorum established by Kristina Benavides Davis

Role	Name (or Vacant)	Present or Absent
Interim Principal	Brian Baron	Present
Parent/Guardian	Kristen Cincotta	Present
Parent/Guardian	Chappelle Washington Freer	Present
Parent/Guardian	Brooke Linefsky	Present
Instructional Staff	Kristina Davis	Present
Instructional Staff	Allison Espelosin	Present
Instructional Staff	Amelia Morel	Present
Community Member	Betsy McKay	Present
Community Member	Kristen Pollock	Present
Swing Seat	Kareem Hall	Present

- III. **Public Comment** - no public comment
- IV. **Action Items**
  - A. **Approval of Agenda** - Allison Espelosin motion to approve, seconded by Kristen Cincotta, passed unanimously.
  - B. **Approval of Previous Minutes** - Amelia Morel motion to approve, seconded by Allison Espelosin, passed unanimously.
- V. **Discussion Items**
  - A. **Final budget recommendation** - Brian Baron discussed the budget process. The team reviewed components of the budget and budget by function. One update regarding the draft budget is a positive change in allocation. A reduction of 10 to 8 substitute

teachers, due to the continuation of two in person building substitutes, has occurred. Because of this, we have been allocated approximately \$19,000 for Teaching/Other Supplies to purchase toner for classroom printers. Allison Espelotin and Amelia Morel asked if the school gets reimbursed if teachers have to use their classroom printers if copiers around the building are not working. Brian Baron responded with no, but the district is changing out copiers in buildings to high capacity printers soon.

- i. Brian Baron explained a question asked during the last meeting regarding allocation of EIP positions. EIP as a support service is funded with a different model. They are not allocated positions, but funded and budgeted. EIP uses a different formula for EIP funding, based on FTE.
- ii. Brooke Linefsky asked if the \$19,000 is marked for toner specifically, or if it can be used for general supplies. Brian Baron responded that it does go into the bucket for general supplies.
- iii. The team voted on approval for the final FY25-26 presented budget. Amelia Morel motion to approve, seconded by Kristen Pollock, passed unanimously.

## **B. Principal Report**

- i. **Pre-K** - Brian Baron discussed a cluster utilization chart with the MES projected population over 90% capacity for the next 5 years. We are currently the only school in the midtown cluster above 90% capacity. Brian Baron discussed the number of spaces at MES used for student classes, not offices. There are already certain classes, EIP, PEC, ESOL, and Gifted, sharing class spaces. At this point in time, MES is not equipped to support a Pre-K class. There are other requirements that go into creating a Pre-K class. Further discussion regarding a Pre-K class should go through the Early Learning Office and they determine locations of Pre-K classes in the district.
- ii. **Upcoming Assessments** - MAP, Write Score, and GMAS windows are approaching.
- iii. **Power UP** - Summer school registration, open to anyone, is now open. Summer school transportation is provided by the district and will be hosted at VHE.
- iv. **2025-2026 School Year** - Brian Baron reviewed the 25-26 school year with 6 K-3rd grade classes and 5 4th-5th grade classes. Parent Input Forms are due March 21st. This is a hard deadline because 3rd-5th grade class placements will occur before spring break. K-2nd grade class placements will occur after April. Families will still receive class placement information over the summer.

## C. Principal Selection Process

- i. **Survey** - Brooke Linefsky discussed the multiple surveys staff, community, and families have had access to to give their input on the principal search. The GO Team is working with transparency and sharing information as quickly as possible. Kristen Cincotta developed an infographic going home in Digital Dolphin and Wednesday folders so families and community members have access to the Principal Search Process. Currently, we are in the MES Community Feedback window, including alumni as community members, current community members, staff, and families. Surveys are due by March 9th. Results will be discussed March 13th. PTA is providing childcare for the APS Feedback meeting noted in the Infographic. This will also be an opportunity for questions and to give any other feedback to help with the principal search. An additional survey will go out from the GO Team to get further information from the community before any decisions are made regarding the principal search.
- ii. **Steps and Timeline** - Brooke Linefsky discussed the tiers of the principal hiring process which can be found below in the infographic. The infographic has already been sent to families, staff, and community members.
  1. When the agenda for the May 5th Board of Education meeting comes out, usually the day before the meeting, we will have the final principal decision. The GO Team, staff, community, and families will learn about the final decision at the same time.
- iii. **Selection of Staff Representatives for Tier 3** - Brooke Linefsky shared that the GO Team has been tasked with choosing two additional staff members to invite to the Tier 3 principal meeting so staff and community members are balanced. This number has increased to 3 additional staff members since Allison Espelosin is unavailable for the meeting on April 18th. Amelia Morel discussed inviting teacher of the year and support teacher of the year. The title of teacher of the year and support teacher of the year are determined by peer nominations, then observations, rubrics, and data. The support teacher of the year, a paraprofessional in kindergarten, would provide a different perspective during the hiring process than what we currently have on the team.
  1. Chapelle Washington Freer mentioned that she envisioned someone that represents subgroups or works with more students like an interventionist, specialist, counselor, or social worker. Amelia Morel and Allison Espelosin discussed for the third teacher position, since Allison Espelosin will not be able to make the April

18th meeting, inviting Travis Welsh, another interventionist who works with subgroups and also has a different teaching perspective. Amelia Morel discussed that Holly Acton, the teacher of the year, is a third grade teacher, STEAM, and Master Teacher. Angela Banks, the support teacher of the year, is a kindergarten paraprofessional. Travis Welsh is an interventionist. These are three very different people that can offer various perspectives and student groups. Chappelle Washington Freer agreed that these would be good people to invite to the meeting and she is still thinking about a social and emotional focus for students during this process as well.

2. Brooke Linefsky discussed focusing on the opportunity to give voice to the entire community. Amelia Morel discussed making sure we have a strong staff representation. The team agreed that we would send the names of Holly Acton, Angela Banks, and Travis Welsch for the Tier 3 phase of the hiring process.
3. Allison Espelosin mentioned that we need to hear the voices of people with different perspectives around the building - counselor, social worker, master teacher leaders, student support team, assistant principal - to help with the hiring process.

## VI. Information Items

- A. **February 24, 2025 CAT Meeting Report Out** - Chappelle Washington Freer discussed that during the meeting, the cluster discussed expanding access to families, offering virtual options for meetings and events. A STEAM event was also planned and executed for students around the cluster to come together. Brian Baron added that board members discussed feedback for the next strategic planning period for the district.

## VII. Announcements

- A. **GO Team Declarations (extended to March 7)** - 4 members are rolling off this year. Brooke Linefsky reminded everyone to fill out the principal search survey.

## VIII. Public Comment - no public comment

- IX. **Adjournment** - Motion to adjourn by Kristen Pollock, seconded by Allison Espelosin, passed unanimously at 5:56 pm.

## A. Next Meetings

- i. Principal Search: APS Meetings 3/13, Tier 2 on 4/1 (Chair, Vice Chair),  
Tier 3 on 4/18
- ii. GO Team: 4/23 (last meeting!)

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**Minutes Taken By:** Kristina Benavides Davis

**Position:** Secretary

**Date Approved:**

## Everything You Need to Know About the Morningside Elementary School Principal Search!

The principal search process will start with a period of community feedback, followed by a four-tier process led by the Atlanta Public Schools Human Resources office, with input from and participation by the MES GO Team, the MES PTA, and the MES Foundation. The MES GO Team has added additional forums for the MES community to provide input into this process.



### MES Community Feedback (February 21 - March 31)

**APS Principal Survey:** All community members, staff, and parents are asked to fill out a survey circulated by APS in order to voice their priorities for our new Principal. **All APS survey responses are DUE by Sunday, March 9.**

[Click here to complete the APS Principal Survey!](#)

**APS Feedback:** Representatives from APS will review the APS Principal Survey results during two virtual meetings on **Thursday, March 13**. Attendees will also be able to provide additional input during these meetings about our focus and priorities for the process.

- **March 13, 3-4pm:** MES Staff
- **March 13, 4-5pm:** MES Parents and Community Members

**GO Team Feedback:** Community members are welcome to join GO Team members in the MES library on **Wednesday, March 5 from 3:30-4:30pm** for an informal opportunity to discuss this position. This feedback will allow the GO Team to best represent your concerns and interests as the process goes forward, and to answer any questions you may have about the process. MES community members will also be able to share additional feedback directly with the GO Team via a Google Doc survey to be released in mid-March.

# 1

### Candidate Short List (March 2025)

APS Human Resources will create a short list of 12 potential candidates. Applications will be assessed using two tools:

**Principal Profile:** Using the feedback from the APS Principal Survey and the discussion on March 13, APS HR will create a Principal Profile. Candidates will be assessed based on this profile across all four Tiers.

**Hire View Video:** APS will create a brief "Hire View" video with questions for potential candidates from the Cluster Superintendent (Audrey Sofianos) and the other Midtown Cluster principals. Candidate responses to the Hire View video will be assessed as part of Tier 1.

# 2

## Initial Candidate Review (Tuesday, April 1)

The GO Team chair (Brooke Linefsky) and Co-Chair (Amelia Morel) will meet with the APS HR representatives and the Midtown Cluster Superintendent to review applications and narrow the field of applicants using feedback from Tier 1 to rank and rate candidates. The highest scoring candidates will progress to Tier 3.

# 3

## Panel Interviews (Friday, April 18)

MES community representatives (GO Team members, PTA Co-Presidents, and the MES Foundation President) will participate in panel interviews with each of the remaining candidates over the course of a full day. Candidates will be asked a set of questions pre-selected by the panel and present their plans for the school. All responses will be rated and ranked by the panel members, with the three highest scoring candidates advancing to Tier 4.

# 4

## Final Decision by APS

A final candidate will be selected from the remaining applicants by APS HR representative Matthew Rogers, Midtown Cluster Superintendent Audrey Sofianos, and APS Superintendent Dr. Brian Johnson.

The final candidate will be presented to the APS Board of Education during their monthly meeting on Monday, May 5th. The public will be notified when the final recommendation is made to the Board of Education.

## How Can I Make My Voice Heard?

1. Complete the APS Principal Survey before Sunday, March 9th
2. Attend the MES GO Team Feedback Session on Wednesday, March 5th from 3:30-4:30pm and complete the GO Team survey
3. Attend the APS Feedback Session on Thursday, March 13th from 4-5pm
4. Reach out to your GO Team representatives at any time!

**THANK YOU** for participating in this important process for our school!