



Skinner West Local School Council Expansion Committee Meeting Wednesday, October 28, 2020 5:00 P.M.

MEETING MINUTES

Deborah M. Clark
Principal

Aisha Crump
Parent Representative

Brett Hughes
Parent Representative

Sheila Howard
Staff Representative

Matthew Letourneau
Parent Representative

Fadi Matalka
Parent Representative

Vacant
Teacher Representative

Kimberly Rachal
Community Representative

Marla Sedler
Community Representative

Melinda Sgariglia
Parent Representative

Nell Strong
Parent Representative

Ramel Werner
Teacher Representative

1. Introductions

- a. The online meeting started at 5:05 pm.
- b. Present were Principal Clark Mrs. Clark, committee chair M. Letourneau, A. Rzepka, D. Desai, D. Lico, L. Fimek, and S. Thorne.

2. Committee Purpose and Charter

- a. The group discussed potential areas of focus for the committee:
 - i. Optimize school resources
 - ii. Promote manageable class sizes
 - iii. Advance academic programming
 - iv. Promote equity for all Skinner Superstars
 - v. Identify more funding for the school
 - vi. Bring more specialized teaching support
 - vii. Focus resources where they are needed most
 - viii. Plan for expected demand
- b. Optimize school resources
 - i. With the new Annex, the school now has ample space for the near future, though not as much as originally expected since both kindergarten and first grade classes are in the main school building and not the branch school. We have also made strides to add technology, though additional Promethean boards and Chromebook upgrades are still needed.
 - ii. More professional development opportunities are needed for teachers. Students would also benefit from more specialized teachers, e.g., foreign language. Once in-school classes return, we will need existing personnel to staff the care rooms and one additional security guard.

- c. Promote manageable class sizes
 - i. The group reviewed current class sizes, which range from 19 (Neighborhood 8th grade class) to 36 (two 5th grade classes and one 6th grade class). The average Classical program classroom is 28.4 students and the average Neighborhood program classroom is 29.8 students. The total number of Neighborhood program students per grade is summarized in the chart below. The chart demonstrates that grade-level population peaks in the 2nd grade (121 students), with 5th grade as the next highest (105 students). Second grade includes four Neighborhood classrooms and 8th grade has two; all other grades have three Neighborhood classrooms.

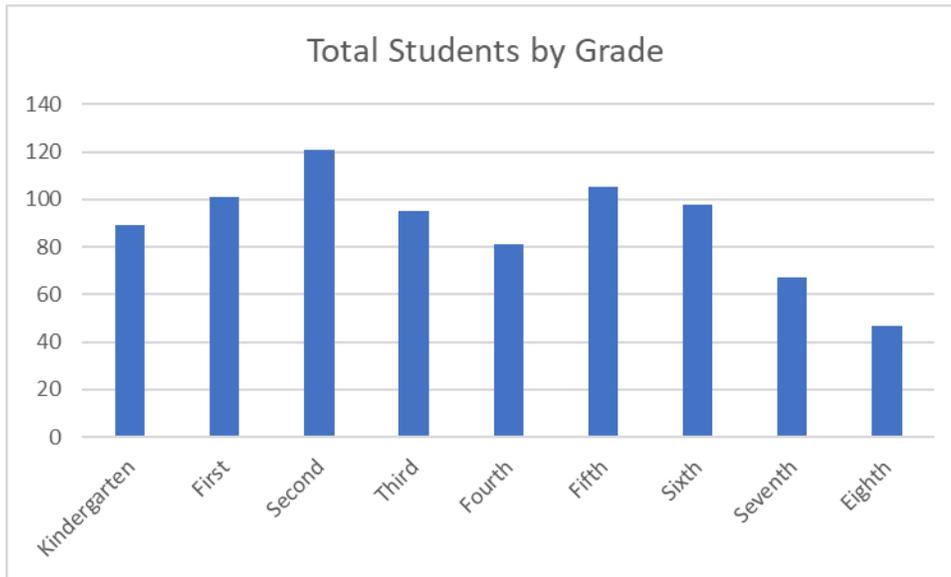


Figure 1 - Skinner Student Population by Grade

- ii. Mrs. Clark noted that the school could ask CPS to support two Classical classrooms per grade, as was done when the Neighborhood program was introduced (only 7th and 8th grade have two Classical classrooms now). She suggested that we should request that 30-50% of the new Classical classrooms should be reserved for Skinner students that meet the scoring criteria.
- iii. Some families in the Neighborhood program might not live within the school boundaries (see map below). This leads to larger class sizes but also brings additional funding for the school. Families attending the Neighborhood program at Skinner that no longer live within the boundaries are required to transfer to their neighborhood school, per CPS enrollment guidelines. The group discussed the option of conducting an audit to determine if any Neighborhood students do not live within the boundaries. Last summer, report cards were mailed out to Skinner families and several hundred were returned due to address issues. Mrs. Clark will review these letters and determine the reasons that the mail was returned, e.g., typos, families relocating. D. Desai offered to assist. The committee will discuss the

findings at the next meeting and determine next steps. L. Fimek offered to investigate student residency verification methods used at other CPS schools.

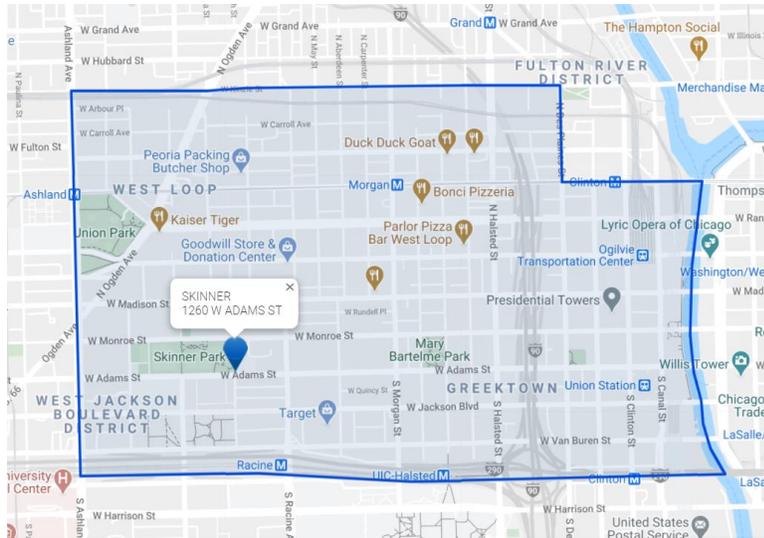


Figure 2 - Skinner West Boundaries

- d. Advance academic programming
 - i. The group discussed potential improvements to academic offerings, e.g., after-school foreign language classes. However, Mrs. Clark noted that after-school programming tends to focus less on academics.
- e. Promote equity for all Skinner Superstars
 - i. L. Fimek suggested that the school start a scholarship program to make the after-school programs like Star and Music House accessible to more Skinner families.

3. Old Business

- a. None.

4. New Business

- a. D. Desai asked if the committee should consider joining efforts to provide a new neighborhood high school, noting that Skinner students should have a path forward after 8th grade.

5. Adjournment

- a. The next committee meeting will be held on **Wednesday, December 2 at 5 pm.**
- b. The meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Matt Letourneau
Committee Chair