

SDMC | MINUTES

December 14, 2021 | 4:30 – 5:30 PM | Wheatley High School – Zoom Conference

Meeting called by	Joseph Williams	Other Committee Members:
Type of meeting	SDMC	Janice Thomas, President Alumni
Note taker	Carmen Jimenez	Jim Smith, Alumni Member
Adjournment	Eddie Orem	Melodee Thomas, Graduation Coach
		Carla Brown, CTE Teacher
		Donnie Walker, Teacher
		Pauline Johnson, Teacher

Introduction by Joseph Williams, Principal

Mr. Joseph Williams began talking about testing. District will send us the results and will be discussed on the next SDMC meeting. This week has been very busy with scholars testing and upcoming holiday break. Calendar dates are different for the semester and I would like to hear the opinions from the committee as it relates to keeping the current schedule or having the finals ending in December as opposed to in January. Another discussion is about having metal detectors for safety measures. Most certainly we are following every safety protocol. Harris County is no longer under the red level, however we are still taking precautions by still wearing masks and providing masks for everyone entering the building. Staff members are continuing to check in the work app each morning and if flagged they are to stay home to quarantine. Special thanks to Mr. Eddie Orem for providing us student teachers from University of Houston Downtown. We are looking for great teachers and what better place to have them learn than at Phillis Wheatley High School. Although some of the student teachers may not choose to work at Phillis Wheatley, if we get at least one person to join the team it hopefully will continue to build the partnership and pipeline of talent. Also, we have the new Theatre Arts Program, currently working with a vendor to provide additional lighting and a box room. We have added wrestling to our athletics department this year. At this time we are open for discussion, any questions?

Ms. Janice Thomas says she is concerned about the vacancies at Wheatley. What is the impact to our students with having teacher shortage?

Mr. Joseph Williams shares that every student teacher works with teacher mentors due to no certification not only to observe, but to support teacher in small groups. We have vacancy support from the district by it assigning teacher development specialists (certified, veteran teachers) who taught classes until we filled our vacancies.

Aside from that, the master schedule has been changed to dissolve some small classes. We recently hired a new Math Teacher and Art Teacher.

Ms. Janice Thomas emphasized that Wheatley receive the necessary support. How are you doing for parents getting more involved?

Mr. Joseph Williams shared that we have monthly parent meetings. As it relates to support in recruiting/hiring teachers the district is providing stipends. Achieve180 provides additional stipends to teachers. I am participating in a district committee where we are looking into putting in place different models and create a plan to approve teachers receive additional funds. Any more questions? If not let's move to #1.

Core Value- Safety Above All Else: In the wake of everything going on in our schools, my colleagues and I were talking about possibly having metal detectors in the schools. Especially in high schools, what are your thoughts?

Mr. Eddie Orem mentions in his 33 years in education has heard of this same topic, same idea but unsure if at Wheatley had metal detectors back 1989. We had in place where officers checked backpacks or purses as they entered the building with a wand. Dogs were brought in, unannounced and it really worked. These officers were well known in the community as well.

Ms. Janice Thomas recognizes the issues in the community, but they lack services in best supporting scholars and right now would not be a good time since we suffer from emotional and social problems.

Mr. Joseph Williams mentions how our campus police officers have a good standing with the scholars and community. Officer Taylor and Officer Fernandez have a good rapport with our scholars.

Ms. Janice Thomas stated it's not about our officers at Phillis Wheatley but maybe not appropriate at this time. I am sure they do have a good relationships with the students.

Mr. Eddie Orem says that we need the right people to understand that security is not the same as policing.

Mr. Joseph Williams any more comments before we move on to the next item? As it relates to doing a survey out to the community so that we can get an idea of what their needs are by creating a poll survey since many may not be familiar with zoom.

Ms. Melodee Thomas says if a survey goes out can it have a mix of both of what Ms. Janice Thomas and Mr. Orem discussed? I do think the discipline concerns cut down when they brought in the dogs and it happened routinely. Not sure how comfortable I am with metal detectors. It may send out wrong signals because of the feelings of having relatives in jails.

Mr. Joseph Williams we will continue to have this discussion with the cabinet because of what's happening around with the shootings at the schools.

Mr. Eddie Orem send survey and be flexible of doing it.

Mr. Joseph Williams we will put a date on the survey and when we have more information to make better discussions if need be, we can provide another survey. What Ms. Thomas shared, yes I remember the dogs in the building but unsure why it stopped. The 4 years in Aldine district, we had metal detectors, but we didn't get any resistance from our parents.

Ms. Pauline Johnson says in the light of what's going on, I do think this is the right time to put the detectors and not have to wait for an incident to happen.

Ms. Janice Thomas Just asking how we feel about it, are you open to having more discussions about this topic?

Mr. Joseph Williams Most definitely. He stated he will have a parent meeting and have the discussion at this meeting. More feedback on ending the fall semester in December where scholars take their finals during this month.

Ms. Pauline Johnson asked if we start school 2 weeks earlier in order for finals to take place in December.

Mr. Donnie Walker said it's better now, Teachers get more pull in getting grades to enter time to reflect after the break more benefits now.

Ms. Melodee Thomas said she doesn't agree with the current setting because it affects scholars being able to take certain dual credit courses because college/universities semester ends before calendar year. It can also affect professional development and summer school in the summer.

Mr. Joseph Williams moves to traditional ending in Fall Semester in December.

Mr. Eddie Orem moves for recommendation to Principal.

2nd motion by Melodee Thomas

All in favor: Joseph Williams, Melodee Thomas, Donnie Walker, Paul Richard, Eddie Orem, Pauline Johnson,

Against: None

Conclusion: All site-based decision has voted and in motion and asking that the calendar be moved back to ending in December for Fall Semester.

Mr. Joseph Williams continues to open the floor for further discussion on any items mentioned.

Ms. Janice Thomas appreciates all of what staff and teachers are doing in working with the scholars and alumni are here to support principal, just reach out by email in order to get something done.

Mr. Joseph Williams reiterates by asking if there any further questions? *Pause*. Thanks to the committee and promises to send out survey to get feedback about metal detectors and prays for a restful holiday season with family.

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 pm.