

# Meeting Minutes

**Morris Brandon ES**

**Date: 4/17/20**

**Time: 3:00-4:30pm**

**Location: Video conference via Zoom**

- I. Call to order: 3:02pm
- II. Roll Call

Role	Name (or Vacant)	Present or Absent
Principal	Jay Bland	Present
Parent/Guardian	Patterson Calhoun	Present
Parent/Guardian	Claudia Fotzeu	Present
Parent/Guardian	Fran Egan	Present
Instructional Staff	Sam DeCarlo	Present
Instructional Staff	Sonya Walston	Present
Instructional Staff	Rachel Davis	Present
Community Member	Anna Fiveash	Present
Community Member	Peyton Johnston	Present
Swing Seat	Tamila Jackson Whitaker	Present

Quorum Established: Yes

**III. Action Items**

a. **Approval of Agenda**

Motion to adopt made by: Johnston      Seconded by: Davis

Members Approving: All

Members Opposing: None

Members Abstaining: None

**Motion Passes**

b. **Approval of Previous Minutes**

Motion to adopt made by: Davis      Seconded by: Walston

Members Approving: All

Members Opposing: None

Members Abstaining: None

**Motion Passes**

## IV. Discussion Items

- a. **Discussion Item 1:** Parent feedback heard by the GO Team has been overwhelming that MB is doing a phenomenal job with distance learning and keeping our community connected during this time!
- b. **Discussion Item 2:** Do we know anything about the impact of social distancing and virtual learning on the students' social and emotional learning?
  - i. Per Mrs. Whitaker, it varies by student and factors like whether they have siblings and whether they are able to chat online with friends can have a big impact. As the School Counselor, she has reached out to all of her students to offer one-on-one Zoom meetings and has also offered her time to the entire Morris Brandon community. She recommends giving both parents and students grace in this time of uncertainty. Her Google number is 404-369-3679 and anyone in the Morris Brandon community is invited to contact her.
- c. **Discussion Item 3:** Suggestion to simplify Zoom meeting passcodes for students. Mr. Bland asked for parents to email him with any specific concerns.

## V. Information Items

- a. **Principal's Update – Mr. Bland is receiving upwards of 200-300 emails per day from APS, staff and the community. APS is way ahead of other districts during this time of distance learning in grading practices, Zoom meetings, and technology provided to students. APS Participation dashboards are shared by APS with Principals daily and Brandon is the only school that has 100% of teachers logging student participation (all 43 homeroom teachers are in compliance). 97.8% of our students have logged into MyBackpack during virtual learning – the second highest among APS elementary schools (less than 25 students have not logged in).**
  - i. Hiring: Staffing is set for next year; a new 4<sup>th</sup> grade DLI teacher has been hired – she was the top candidate after 16 interviews and requires Visa sponsorship which is an additional investment Brandon is making into the program.
  - ii. Enrollment: The online APS enrollment process is cumbersome, and so far not much information has been shared with schools. It is difficult to project enrollments for next year. APS' final 2020-2021 school budget allocation will be based on attendance on day 10 of the new school year. Currently DLI interest form is a paper form only; either APS will create a digital process or Morris Brandon will develop something digital for our school.

- iii. Budget: APS is planning on a flat budget for next year; however Covid-19 may result in budget reductions. Morris Brandon has \$65,000 remaining this year from substitute expense savings. We are using it to fund some professional development and digital resources but plan to leave a balance of \$20,000 - \$25,000 to give back to APS if needed.
- iv. Distance Learning: Mr. Bland has created a master recommended schedule for teachers to utilize with different expectations by grade. Daily morning announcements get upwards of 200 views. A parent also started a FaceBook group for all the homeschooling parents in the community. **We are valuing compassion over compliance.** Brandon has pioneered “flex Fridays” to provide optional enrichment activities, Specials, and allow students time to catch up on assignments from the week or teachers to have individual or small group student meetings. March 13 was the final day of in-school grading; anything post-March 13 can only help a student and the primary metric will be participation. Each teacher needs to give only 5 grades per subject for the last quarter. Spirit Week was held virtually, and Specials are continuing. DLI teachers were getting overwhelmed so priorities were reset to focus most on reading, writing and math rather than language and Mr. Bland sent a letter out to DLI parents explaining that. There was a schoolwide parent survey conducted that received over 300 responses and found that 80% of parents were satisfied with the virtual learning experience in the first weeks. Morris Brandon has also hosted two food drives with overwhelming contributions to support our community.

### VI. Announcements

- a. The next GO Team meeting will take place prior to the end of the school year and will be shared with the community in advance once the date has been determined.
- b. GO Team elections for open positions have been delayed by APS until the start of the new school year.
- c. APS Announcements:
  - i. APS has announced that Dr. Carstarphen’s contract will still end on June 30, 2020 and the Board sent a communication that they will announce a sole finalist candidate shortly.
  - ii. We are moving to a four-day school week; teachers will still be working on Fridays but student attendance will no longer be taken on Fridays. (Brandon’s “Flex Fridays” will continue)
  - iii. The school year remains as scheduled with the last day on May 22, 2020.

- iv. All APS school buildings are closed until June 1, 2020 with the possibility it may extend beyond that date. Morris Brandon will be prepared with robust virtual learning if we can't return to school buildings in August.
  - v. APS has cancelled the APS Power Up and Xanadu summer programs and may potentially cancel other summer programs. Those funds will be reallocated to help students catch up from Covid-19 learning delays.
  - vi. All gifted assessments were completed before distance learning began. Gifted notification was supposed to happen on 5/15; this will likely be postponed until the Fall as Gifted Staff need to be back in the building to access the paperwork needed. APS will notify parents about the notification delay, however this will not impact those students newly identified as Gifted in receiving services at the beginning of the next school year and Morris Brandon is planning classes accordingly.
- d. Mr. Bland is currently accepting parent feedback for class placement and working with school staff to create balanced classrooms for next year. This is a critical step that will happen before the end of this school year.
  - e. PTA is hosting a virtual coffee talk on May 8<sup>th</sup> with Principal Bland. Details will be forthcoming, and questions will be able to be submitted in advance.
  - f. The Hive has cancelled all summer camps, which includes Kindergarten Camp.
  - g. Mr. Calhoun and Ms. Fotzeu lead the GO team members in applauding the phenomenal efforts of Mr. Bland and the Morris Brandon administrative leadership team, staff and teachers during this unprecedented time! You are amazing and we thank you!

## VII. Adjournment

Motion made by: Whitaker

Seconded by: Davis

Members Approving: all

Members Opposing: none

Members Abstaining: none

Motion Passes

**ADJOURNED AT 4:08pm**

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**Minutes Taken By:** Fran Egan

**Position:** GO Team Secretary

**Date Approved:** [Insert Date When Approved]