

JRM SAC Minutes for Apr 8, 2026

Roll Sheet Link- Sign In Sheet: [April 8th Roll](#)

Facilitator - Roll call of SAC members:

Parent Members		Admin & Staff Members		Community Members		Students SGA reps	
Sam Vitiello (F)	P	Principal Laurie	P			Nabilah Chowdhury (HS)	
Stacy Leonard (O)	P	Ms. Solomon	A			Harriett Benner (MS)	P
Dhivya Kaushik (S)	P	Ms. Gray	P				
Lauren Bell	P	Ms. Neu	P				
Tracy Joslyn	A	Ms. Geiger	P				
David Neale	A	Ms. Smith	P				
Michael Wang	P						
Yaling Xie	A						

Sharing of Agenda- [April 8th SAC Meeting Agenda](#)

To submit a topic to be placed on the agenda for the next SAC meeting please use: [SAC input form](#) or write jrmastmansac@gmail.com.

1. Welcome, Introduction & Norms: Norms of JRM SAC meetings

2. A. Facilities Update:

Check if anyone from the facilities office is attending the SAC meeting and offer them a forum for updates. Thank you to the District Facilities department for their continued engagement in our community and their partnership.

- Second floor boys bathroom repairs and reopening timeline.

Work is going to start and happen after hours from to 3.00pm to 11.30pm on Friday and then continue over the weekend as needed. Facilities is in the process of getting/replacing wet-vacs for Masterman.

- Roof and remaining open work orders.

Drains have been cleared and the flooding should not happen again. There was debris that had to be removed.

- Bathroom privacy strips: installation progress.

Have been ordered and work orders implemented for installation.

- Salt spreader and battery-operated leaf blowers: purchase update

Both of these have been ordered.

B. Safety Update: Mr. Roland Hayward if present or Principal Laurie
Safety Assembly update

Officer Taylor has not been in the school for the week. He will be back in a couple of weeks. Lt. Haywood has been in the school this week. Entry Audit has been completed and back door entry is a weak point that needs to be managed. Mr. Gilken and Ms. Donique?? Will man the backdoor.

School needs more personnel - there is a new Officer Cambell/ Officer Thomas who will be there everyday to help with the safety aspects.

Parent: There were a lot of police officers around the school this afternoon and Principal Laurie said it was probably training for the World Cup.

C.SAC elections Information: organizer

According to the SAC bylaws, elections will be held in accordance with the SAC bylaws. The same election timeline will be used as last year. 1 vote per family. Those interested will need to follow the FACE process. The SAC election form will be sent this coming Monday. The application deadline is April 30th. On May 7th, the ballot will be shared to the community, and the elected members will be shared during the May SAC meeting. The deadline for voting will be May 21st.

3. Meeting minutes from last SAC meeting for Approval:

[March 4th Meeting Minutes for approval](#)

Meeting minutes were passed.

4. Principal's Update:

- a. College acceptances
- b. SAT
- c. Firefly Testing Progress
- d. Budget Presentation

Masterman Minute was formatted differently today to center it on students. College acceptances deadline is May 1st. Juniors took SAT today and the bells were silenced and everything went off without a hitch. Firefly testing was conducted (Firefly was developed by PA Education). STAR testing (private) was supposed to be predictive in students' levels. Firefly is directly aligned to Keystone and PSSA's and provides a free vehicle for predictive support for students for standardized testing. SDP is doing to determine testing guidelines for next year on whether both Firefly and STAR will be used. SDP required all schools to conduct Firefly testing. This also helps in evaluating delivery of content. Will Firefly results be shared with families? Principal Laurie will conduct an audit to see if teachers have shared the results with families. Ms. Gray shared that it was a paper report that she shared with her students' families. Teachers have access to prep books to supplement and support students with

deficiencies. Principal Laurie will be check to make sure all teachers share the reports with their students families.

Students in 5-8 have taken Firefly testing for PSSA, students taking Keystone Algebra and Literature have been tested and students taking Keystone Bio will be tested next week.

Multiple meetings have been conducted on the budget for next year. The principal shared his screen to present the school budget. Two funding sources - Title I (this is Federal funding) and from Operating (tax dollars from the City and State). The purpose of Operating is to pay for teachers. For 2025-26 Operating budget was \$9,031,703. For 2026-27, the Operating budget will be approximately \$10,003,000.

There is a Centrally managed budget which is directed spending by the district and there is a principal-directed budget which is used for instructional and student experience (teacher salaries, basic operating, art and music, ec etc. etc.)

Principal Laurie went over his presentation - which is linked [here](#).

5. High School Update- Nabilah Chowdhury - SGA President

[April 8th - HS SGA Update](#)

The Faculty Basketball game: a student vs faculty game occurred. Polish exchange students were in attendance.

Spirit Week: students were broken up (white vs. blue) and games and other activities took place during the week.

Talent Show: SGA will be hosting a Talent Show in April. Students are encouraged to sign-up.

6. Middle School Update- Harriett Benner: MS SGA

Practice PSSA Link: <https://wbte.drccedirect.com/PA/portals/pa/ott4?adminId=550004&index=1>

If you click PSSA it will give you the practice tests and online tools from ELA, Math and Science. You have access to grades 3-8. It does not have an answer key but maybe we can make a google doc answer key for Masterman families.

Student Government Reps for 7th and 8th are planning their end of year dances and reps are organizing and planning for it.

NJHS requires 15 hours of volunteer hours.

7. Old and New Business:

I. Teachers and Staffing Update/ Intros

- Climate Staff: One position open (we have a reliable sub)
- Custodial Staff: **Filled**
- Building Engineer: Mr. Tom McKnight
- Crossing Guard: Mr. Terrence Henry

New safety officer who will be in the building - Officer Campbell.
Mr. Emery has returned from paternity leave.

II. Academics

- Course allocation process transparency and communication improvements.
- 9th and 10th grade course selection announcements.

Monday- Apr 13 the courses will be delivered to 9th and 10th grade.

- Musical amnesty policy, including quizzes policy refinement with SGA update

Working with students to get feedback on how best to refine the amnesty policy..

- Roster for 26-27 update

The principal shared his screen and shared the 26-27 HS (9th-12th grade) classes and number of sections. (include link)

9th graders for 26-27 will take a Personal Finance course (it is required by PA Department of Education).

Given only one class each of Spanish/French 3 is being offered for 11th grade next year- which these students will be provided with an option to take AP language in their senior year.

Long language immersion or international trips scheduled during the school year: Concern about the academic, extracurricular, and equity impact of trips that require students to miss substantial instructional time during busy parts of the semester, especially when March is already a peak period for AP preparation, third-quarter grades, All-City, spring sports, NHD, Olympiads, debate, the musical, and other major commitments. There is also concern about the effect on classrooms when several teachers are away to chaperone a relatively small number of students, and about the high cost of these trips, which can price many families out. Request discussion of whether these trips could instead be scheduled during spring break, summer break, or other non-instructional periods, and whether shorter or more accessible models could reduce missed learning and broaden participation.

Trips need to be looked at strategically and planned and streamlined for international trips to ensure equity and preparedness. We need to figure out the cost/benefits of these trips.

III. Student Life:

Attendance, Grading, and Family Communication

- Attendance discrepancies and correction process.
- Period attendance and substitute attendance practices.

- Update Handbook

Per the principal, Masterman has the best attendance record in the District but is looking at ways to maintain the attendance record. The principal will update the handbook to detail attendance record timeline (including attendance corrections).

Gifted Services

- GIEP creation delays and gifted services capacity.

IV. School Selection and Enrollment

- Projected enrollment and waitlist status. 5th and 9th: Language requirements for 9th new admits
- Waring / middle school transition implications.

23-9th graders, 134-5th graders are incoming. Language for new 9th graders is not a requirement, but a survey will be sent to them on what language they are interested in. The new students will be distributed across all classes and will be mindfully integrated into the community.

Waring. The district's facilities plan was approved by the school board. The implication is that certain MS grades will be moved to the Waring building.

VI. Communications and Schoolwide Updates

Principal Laurie will send updates/communicate the information to the entire community soon.

- Final exam schedule: update on timing and communication to students and families.
- Health curriculum / syllabus: status of sharing with parents.
- Grading expectations: status of communication to the school community, including grade update expectations.
- Homework policy: confirm handbook update reflecting revised policy and schoolwide communication.
- School profile and course offerings on website: confirm updates for 2026–27.
- Handbook attendance contact: confirm Ms. Lambert is listed correctly in all sections.
- Title I meeting Zoom information: notification of uncertified teachers to families.
- Handbook update: PBIS section

VII. NEW Business from SAC input forms:

I. Course Selection Transparency for Rising Seniors

Concern that the current course allocation process remains unclear and may be described in conflicting ways, including both random assignment and teacher input. Concern was also raised about uneven access to informal guidance, limited counselor involvement, and the lack of a clearly documented process. Request that the school publish a transparent explanation of the course allocation process, including the criteria used, the role of teacher input, the role of counselors, and how waitlists are determined.

II. **Field Trips and Experiential Learning**

Concern that some grades, particularly 7th grade, appear to have had very limited field trip opportunities this year. Input emphasized the value of regular field trips for experiential learning, classroom community, and taking advantage of Masterman's location near important historical and cultural institutions in Center City. Request discussion of how to strengthen grade-level field trip opportunities across the school.

The school team will strategically plan field trips/periods for trips to ensure to use the city as a resource for learning- possibly start planning

III. **Report Card Conferences and Parent Access**

Concern that with half days being eliminated next year and conferences being compressed into one full day per marking period, access to conferences may become even more limited. Additional concerns include inconsistent sign-up timing, broken or incomplete sign-up links, insufficient appointment slots, and the difficulty families face when trying to connect with multiple teachers, especially when they have more than one child in the school. Request discussion of how to make the process more predictable, equitable, and accessible for all families.

The district has not shared with the school the plan for report card conferences. The SDP calendar has one day per marking period for report card conferences for next year.

Possibility communicating with families that teachers are open to meeting with families outside of report card conference windows.

IV. **PSSA Online Writing and 5th Grade ELA Support**

Family question about how to help 5th graders prepare at home for typing essays as PSSAs move fully online, and whether there are writing tools or frameworks that can help students keep their essays focused and organized. Input specifically asks whether there is a grade-appropriate structure similar to earlier tools such as RACES.

School will look into RACES.

V. **Microaggressions Affecting Students of Color**

Concern that students of color in middle and high school are experiencing microaggressions from teachers, with negative effects on belonging, well-being, and academic success. Request that the school and district address this through stronger awareness, accountability, and more inclusive practice, including DEI-related training for teachers and administrators.

This is an on-going work to make sure all students feel welcome and included. Last year the DEI committee was working on trying to figure out a way to report these experiences. The school will look into ways to address this concern.

VI. Recognition of Student Achievement in School Communications

Concern that student accomplishments are no longer being communicated and celebrated in a meaningful or consistent way through official school communications. Input notes reduced visibility of achievements across academics, debate, National History Day, arts, athletics, and other student activities, and emphasizes that recognizing student success should be a core responsibility of school administration rather than something families must rely on parent-run channels to learn about.


The Masterman Minute is a hand produced artifact and Mr. Laurie will try and have staff do student shout-outs and will figure out ways to center student achievements in the newsletter.

VII. Floor

VIII. OLD Business from SAC input forms (In Info gathering queue)

- VIII. **Advisory:** Thoughtful input around advisory/study hall: I think that the school community generally agrees that this is valuable, however, my thought is that the time could be more intentional, especially if we treat it as a shared responsibility between teachers and students. A meaningful start to the day, consistent across all Sections. A well-designed advisory (framework) can help students feel connected, organized, and aware of what's happening in their school community. (One Masterman)
- IX. **Grade field trips and end of year activities:** Clarification of process regarding how activities/field trips and end of year trips are organized for each grade and how that information is shared with parents.
- X. **Community Service Hours:** What qualifies as service, How students report hours, How to submit/track with Mr. Gilken

9. Home and School Update-

 SAC Meeting 1-5-26 HSA Report

HSA president provided the updated HSA report:  SAC Meeting 4-8-26 HSA Report

10. SAC Committee Updates: *Committees will meet on Mondays or Thursdays at 7pm and the school calendar and SAC webpage will be updated. Committee reports on discussions will be shared with the community at SAC meetings. All are welcome to participate at committee and SAC meetings.*

- a. **Climate and Culture & Health and Wellness** - Co-Chairs: Dr.Lauren Bell, Stacy Leonard, Michael Wang
Meeting time: Third Mondays @ 7-8
[H&W/C&C March Meeting Report](#)
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86246374656?pwd=Le1BraReH0aFqher4MaLvCpOKSmb31.1>
Meeting ID: 862 4637 4656 Passcode: 876279

a. Climate & Culture / Health & Wellness

- **Potential move of middle school students to Waring**
 - Discussion of possible repercussions of moving middle school students to another building
 - Request for continued community input on the impact of this change

- **Preservation of the 5–12 model**
 - Concern that the 5–12 structure is one of Masterman’s greatest strengths
 - Concern that splitting the model would weaken continuity, community, and school identity
- **One Masterman culture and cross-grade community**
 - Concern that students growing together from 5th through 12th grade creates a strong shared culture and sense of family
 - Concern that splitting the school would weaken One Masterman identity
 - Concern that communication and whole-school planning are already difficult in one building and would be significantly harder across two buildings
- **Impact on signature programs and traditions**
 - Concern about the effect on peer counseling, the musical, and other cross-grade traditions and activities
 - Concern that moving middle school out would weaken the school’s distinct model and make it feel more like a lesser version of Central
- **Impact on the music program**
 - Concern that the music program functions as an 8-year developmental pathway
 - Concern that separating middle and high school students would disrupt continuity and weaken the program
- **Expansion and school identity**
 - Concern that expansion at the expense of continuity would erode Masterman’s small-school culture and distinct identity

b. Teaching and Learning - Co-Chairs: Ms. Kim Neu, Dhivya Kaushik, and Sam Vitiello

Meeting time: Second Mondays @ 7-8

[T&L](#) [SAC T&L Committee Meeting 3/9/26](#)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://philasd-org.zoom.us/j/89170837993?pwd=VDFzZllyMDI1U2lyL0ttcGRYSUc2dz09>

Meeting ID: 891 7083 7993 Passcode: 143290

c. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - Co-Chairs: Ms. Carolyn Gray and Dr. Tracy Joslyn

Meeting time: TBD


d. AD HOC MS and HS Admissions - Co-Chairs: Stacy Koilor, Neha Vapiwala, Mike Wang

Meeting time: First Mondays @ 7-8 in Oct, Nov and then Jan and Feb of 26

General Information for reference:

Student performance data and metrics:

1. School Plan Status: [Julia R. Masterman High School \[2140\] 2025-2026 School Plan.pdf](#)
2. School Snapshot June 2025: [Monthly Data Snapshot - 2025-06-30 - \[2140\] Masterman](#)
3. Year end Grade distribution for last year for core subjects in all grades from [Qlik](#)
 - a. [Can we get this for each core subject for each grade?](#)
4. Three years PSSA data for Masterman: [PSSA range scores information from 2024-25](#)
5. Three years Keystone Performance Data for Masterman: [Keystone performance 2024-25](#)

6. AP score Analysis:  [SAC - MASTERMAN AP Score Analysis 2019-2025.pptx](#)