Approved Meeting Minutes - JRM SAC Meeting Sept 2, 2026 (SY '26-'27)

Roll Sheet Link- Sign In Sheet: Sept 2 Roll Call

Facilitator - Roll call of SAC members:

Parent Members		***Admin & Staff Members***		***Community Members***		***Students SGA reps***	
Sam Vitiello (F)	P	Principal Laurie	P			Owen Kuster (HS)	P
Stacy Leonard (O)	P	Ms. Solomon	P	HSA Rep	P	TBD (MS)	
Kristyna Carroll (S)	P	Ms. Gray	P				
Lauren Bell	P	Ms. Neu	P				
Liza Herzog	P	Ms. Geiger	P				
David Neale	P	Ms. Smith	P				
Michael Wang	P						
Yaling Xie	O						

Meeting Start Time: 6:00PM
Meeting End Time: 7:43PM

Sharing of Agenda- September 2, 2026 (SY 2026-27)JRM 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 jrmastermansac@gmail.com.

1. Welcome, Introduction & Norms:

Norms of JRM SAC meetings
SAC Officer elections Aug 31st 2026 Update:

2. A. Facilities Update:
Check if anyone from the District 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.
Outstanding from last year:

- Second floor boys bathroom repairs - complete
- Roof pooling - resolved
- Building work orders - only 311 (BIF) to be complete
- Rewiring ID swipe machine - complete

Mr. Anthony Greene: bathroom repair and roof pooling completed. Will look into Room 311 and rewiring. Will look into having a team tomorrow and provide the Principal with an update. The water fountain filters and A/C filters have been cleaned during the summer break.

Principal Laurie: Strike plate on door was replaced.

3. Principal's Update:

I. First week of school: All smiles - welcomed 126 new 5th graders

II. Masterman US News and World Report Ranking: Based on the performance of the class of '25 that graduated 2 years ago.
III. School Enrollment: Any change in variables from what was agreed to by the District for this admissions cycle since the start of the school year. - no we are stable with 1200 students
IV. Title 1 Meeting and **Back to School Night: Thursday, 17th September at 5:30pm (Welcome and title I presentation at 5:00)**

Principal Laurie: we have had a terrific start to the school year. Confirmed that one of the electronic buzzers for the entrance door was repaired today. We are joined by new staff members and made an announcement in today's Masterman Minute. Welcomed Ms. Tosto (Health & PE), Blumenthal (Mathematics), Ms. DeNaples (joining Special Education), Mr. Christian Miller (7th & 8th Social Studies); Mr. Ryan (Vocals teacher).

Ms. Marcus is on sabbatical, so Mr. Whitlatch will fill-in. Mr. Kamison is on paternity leave, so Ms. Cooperson will fill-in. Mr. Gordon is the new school safety officer - replacing Officer Taylor.

US World News: Masterman ranked #3 in the nation. That is a result of the class of 2025. FOX News came to visit a classroom.

Enrollment: we were stable in our predicted enrollment numbers. So this provides us with a level of stability and helps execute our plans. 1200 students - 4 sections in middle school; 23 9th grade and approx. 126 for 5th grade.

Next Monday no school.

Sept 17th Back to School Night and Title I will be bundled that same evening. HSA will have a table, and a new student portrait vendor will be present to provide samples.

4. High School Update- Owen Kuster- SGA President **September SGA SAC Update**

HS Student Government is represented by every grade. The HS SGA will bring opportunities for the rest of the school year. Advisory Elections will be held Sept 9th to 11th. Club Fair will take place on Sept. 15.

The fall picnic will take place on Oct 8th, which is a Thursday. Due to the growing HS population, requesting 40 chaperones.

Last year it was difficult to find chaperones, so the spring picnic was cancelled.

SGA President shared a link to the picnic chaperone form: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf5UcWjcIEPXTtEjcVh3l69_HDLNEr3dcQaV09C1QxN8R-Yvg/viewform

Student Social Events/Activities: Better support of SGA community building activities

Collaborate with the HSA to help support school activities.

ED College Applications: Amnesty dates for seniors for Nov 1 Deadline: Suggested Thursday and Friday preceding deadline: Oct 29th and Oct 30th (reflecting CHS calendar)

Many seniors traditionally consider a ED. The deadline for some students will be November 1st. So student amnesty days, Oct 29th and Oct 30th, will be shared with faculty and staff.

Chaperones:

Instructions on process: Quick Guide: How to Get Your Clearances to Volunteer

Clearances: Family & Community Engagement (FACE) – School District of Philadelphia.

5. Middle School Update-: MS SGA

Time line for having an elected MS SGA president attend SAC meetings. -
MS SGA elections have not taken place but hope to have it done by next month
The Facilitator motioned to pass minutes. Seconded by Organizer. Voted and passed.

6. Meeting minutes from last SAC meeting for Approval:
June 3, 2026 JRM SAC Meeting Minutes

7. Old and New Business:

I. Teachers and Staffing Update/ Intros

- Teaching Staff:
- School Safety Officers: Officer Gordon and Officer Washington
- Climate Staff:
- Custodial Staff:
- Building Engineer: Mr. McKnight
- Crossing Guard: Vacancy
    - An interested community member is interested. The school is working with the district to fill the position. Masterman is not listed as an option as this is managed by the Office of the Streets.
- Building Sub:

The district's position is that there are no building subs. That's throughout the whole district.There is an internal individual who is happy to fill in for the school year.

II. Academics

A. Testing Update

2026 Results and School Selection:

- Have any Keystone/ PSSA results been released to the school? No
- Do we have any clarity on why there is a delay? State verification of results
- School Selection has been postponed - will Masterman continue with the scheduled open houses - yes
- Principal Laurie is reaching out to principals at other schools where algebra is being offered to 8th graders so that Masterman can meet with those students in relation to the selection process

For the 2026-27 School Year:

- PSAT and SAT(juniors) dates for HS have been updated on the school calendar
- AP test dates and times are on the College Board Website

A question from the floor: if my student is taking an AP at MM for the first time will their teacher be informed about the test or does the student need to be initiating the test? Per Dr. Graham, AP test dates are determined by the college board. The students are registered by staff at school. Students take exams with their peers in classrooms.

- STAR testing dates for each grade on school calendar
  STAR testing will continue.
- Firefly: Will we use this academic year? If so, how many times a year?
    - The district has taken the position that Firefly will be optional. So there likely will be some classes that it will be used.The PSSA data will be used to determine the worth and value.The school's position is that the Firefly will not be a required test.
- PSSA/ Keystones: Windows were announced by State and District - when will school make a decision on dates.
    - .Principal Laurie has a clarification.The PSSA and Keystone scores are being reviewed by the state before being certified. There are some preliminary results that the district has but not

the school. The state is moving through the process of validating those results. As this is the first year Pennsylvania had online testing for all PSSAs, they want to be sure those numbers are accurate since they are used for admissions for criteria schools.

- The school has scheduled 4 open houses, and an internal opportunity for parents of 8th graders to come.Sept 15, 23 (Zoom), and 29 are open to the general public. The event for our 8th grade families is Sept 9th via Zoom.

B. Curriculum

Parent Visibility into Curriculum / Academic Partnership

- Climate & Culture discussion included concern that middle school families often do not know enough about what students are learning, what units are being covered, or what skills students are expected to develop.
- Back-to-School Night provides some of this information, but not all families can attend, and families with multiple students cannot always attend every teacher's session.
- Explore practical ways to improve parent visibility and partnership around academics, especially in middle school.
- Possible ideas raised: brief principal overview at early SAC meetings next year on academic progression by subject; short grade-band or department-level explanations; quarterly teacher or team updates describing units covered, skills developed, and what is coming next; sharing this type of update before report card conferences.
- The goal is to help families better understand what students are learning and strengthen parent partnership around academic engagement.

C. Chromebook / AI / Technology Use

- Google usage reports for families: clarify whether families can receive information to better understand how students are using Chromebooks particularly MS
- Any change in technology/ cell phone policy at school this year?

The school has been having conversations about technology use. They are working with the district on moderating its use. Ms. Lerer provided some guidance around parental controls that can be put on at home through your internet service provider. The school would like to partner with the SAC and SAC committees. A parent asked about restricting or limiting AI writing assistance tools. Per Dr. Graham: they are limited on school WIFI. However, for grades 9-12 Gemini is allowed.
Per Dean Geiger: 5th-8th graders are not permitted on phones or Chromebooks during lunch.

D. Field Trips / Experiential Learning

- Have field trips concerns/ideas shared from SAC been discussed with staff and are there any updates of how field trips will be planned this year?
- 5th graders have a scheduled field trip. Field trips are being streamlined by the district.

III. Communications and Schoolwide Updates

i. School Entry for MS and HS: Can school confirm that entry policy will remain the same until cold weather?
High School Students, Grades 9-12 should enter on the 17th Street side of the building. Doors will open at 7:40 a.m. - **Yes**

The school has also experimented with an early high school entry time, and found it to be effective. The lines for entry have been shortened. The school will explore entry times for cold weather.

Middle School Students, Grades 5-8 should gather on the patio facing Spring Garden Street and will enter through the patio doors beginning at 7:50 a.m. - **Yes**

ii. Health Curriculum / Syllabus: Status of sharing with parents. - Upcoming

iii. Grading updates on Infinite Campus Expectations: Status of communication to the school community, including grade update frequency expectations. - **Will send a comprehensive communication addressing grade update cadence, HW policy, and make up/missed work policies.**

iv. Absence Policy and make up timelines for missed work and testing: HS class curriculums do not reflect adherence to District and School Policy uniformly for all courses. Could the school update all teachers on District/School expectations so students are well aware of what they are required to do. - **Yes - Memo sent today**

v. Homework Policy: Confirm handbook update reflecting revised policy and schoolwide communication 4pm HW posting deadline and Holiday HW policy and teacher buy in of this policy. - **Yes**

vi. School Profile and Course Offerings document: Confirm updates for 2025–26 on the school website. - **Currently Updating**

vii. Any updates to Community Handbook for SY 2026-27 - **Meta Glasses**

Meta Glasses can record and project images onto the user. Students have asked to use Meta Glasses, and the school has said “no” as there is no salient educational use for it.

VI. NEW Business from SAC input forms:

Input 1: Request for better communication from school prior to the start of the year from a 9th grade parent. Principal Laurie had communication with a new 9th grade parent. The issue is that the school receives emails from the district as part of their application. Many initial welcome emails bounced back. The school will examine and look for a better way.

Input 2: Could we clarify the school-wide approach to student restroom access during class, particularly when limits on how many students may leave at one time conflict with documented accommodations or other time-sensitive needs? We have previously discussed that students, including female students, may sometimes have sensitive reasons for needing restroom access without having to explain or draw attention to themselves, as well as the importance of body positivity and respecting students’ physical needs. It would be helpful to understand what guidance applies school-wide, what discretion teachers have, and how accommodations and urgent needs should be handled consistently. - This issue is resolved - We

Principal Laurie: the school trusts the students to make the decision that they need to make in the moment, and trust teachers to be responsive, kind, and considerate. If a student has an accommodation or documented needs, those will be followed.

Input 3: I am concerned with the message delivered to the high school student assembly, that the reason / purpose for attending Masterman is to attend an elite college. Maybe my child misunderstood, but if this was said, then I am quite upset. It is so wrong on multiple levels. I thought the reason is to get a great education? The push for “elite schools” is misguided and unhealthy for students. An elite school is not within reach for many

students who cannot afford even discounted costs, and more importantly, students can receive a great education at many colleges. Should Masterman be pushing students to take on excessive amounts of student debt? Pushing students into highly competitive environments can be detrimental. An elite school does not mean the educational and overall experience is better- it means a good brand and networking. Masterman should be encouraging students to find a school that is a good fit for them and HOW to do that. And how many students will feel shame because they do not meet this stated expectation? I am so disappointed. My family must take cost into account and I don't want my child graduating with debt,which can limit life choices. Masterman needs to reevaluate its messaging.
Principal Laurie: the purpose of a Masterman, is education in and of itself. There are students who choose to apply to very competitive programs, so if that messaging was given in that way, I don't think the intention was to say that is the point of a Masterman education. We are aware of the costs or burden. With the school, finding the right fit for the student.The Masterman reputation provides students with choices. Principal Laurie is also willing to have a conversation with this parent.

Input 4: Why is the schedule so inflexible? It seems that courses were filled to the limit and this District is not permitting any more overfull classes. This is a problem the District created when they gave us a surprise 100+ extra students. Please fight harder - or let us know how we can do so - to demand the District give us additional flexibility to address the situation.
Principal Laurie and Mr. Roache worked together to resolve major issues. Some movement should be available.

Input 5: Are there health classes built into the curriculum? Do students learn about reproduction, contraception, puberty, etc. If so, when do these take place. If not, why are they not learning about these important topics?
Principal Laurie: will work with the school's physical education department. School will share with parents.

Input 6: By how much is JRM over-crowded? What size student body is the school actually designed for? How many people are allowed in this building via the fire code? It was obvious even when we visited it was over-crowded, but what are the numbers and what are the solutions? How is this impacting class size? Or gym use? Or extra curriculars? Or student-to-teacher ratio?
Principal Laurie: capacity is 800-850 students. The difficulty is the district's push to offer as many seats as possible. The limit of number of students in a class is 33, and the district puts 33 students in every class. This impacts scheduling flexibility. The school continues to advocate to the district for resources.

Input 7: The success of Masterman is, in great part, due to its amazing teachers. I have 2 children in HS and both are reporting some of their finals were made by AI. This is unacceptable. (From June 2026)
Principal Laurie: teachers have access to Gemini, but agrees with the concern as it is unacceptable.

Input 8: PSSA delays, alternative testing and SAC meeting invite as a calendar invite

Input 9: Communication seems to have gotten worse. It's been a strength of Principal Laurie so far, but the early dismissal on Wednesday after finals (10:15) was not widely shared to high school parents, especially when students have traditionally remained at school on the final exam day (like they did in January). (From June 2026)

Input 10: Clubs and Sports offerings 5th vs 6th grade and the rest of MS
Dean Geiger: nothing is able to be shared until the school finalizes use of EC funding. Clubs will start on a rolling basis, so the best way to find out is to be on the Google classroom pages. MS can expect information in Oct, and HS can expect after the HS Club Fair.

Floor

8. Home and School Update-
HSA has a structured process for accepting grant requests. The school admin and teachers have been informed about the HSA grant process. Email: grants@mastermanhsa.org.
Fall Dues campaign is ongoing. It is a big part of how the HSA funds student activities. Currently 15% participation rate, but hoping to exceed participation rate from last year.
First HSA in person general meeting is tentatively scheduled for October. There will also be grade specific "coffee chats" via Zoom.

5th & 6th Grade: 9/28/2026 7:30 PM
7th & 8th Grade: 10/5/2026 7:30 PM
High School: 10/14/2026 7:30 PM

HSA will also have school coffee hours at school.The first one is Sept 25th.

9. 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: TBD

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86246374656?pwd=Le1BraReH0aFqher4MaLvCpOKSmb31.1
Meeting ID: 862 4637 4656 Passcode: 876279

b. **Teaching and Learning -** Co-Chairs: Ms. Kim Neu,Sam Vitiello and TBD
Meeting time: Second Mondays at 7pm
Next meeting September 14th 7pm

https://philasd-org.zoom.us/j/89170837993?pwd=VDFzZldyMDI1U2IyL0ttcGRYSUc2dz09
Meeting ID: 891 7083 7993 Passcode: 143290

c. **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion -** Co-Chairs: Ms. Carolyn Gray and TBD
Meeting time: TBD

d. **AD HOC MS and HS Admissions -** Co-Chairs: Mike Wang
Meeting time: TBD