



Capitol Hill Cluster School

Where Every Child Achieves

Peabody | Watkins | Stuart-Hobson | A DC Public School

March 1, 2022
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Welcome & Introductions

Ramona Burton (LSAT co-chair), Henri Rowe (Watkins teacher, LSAT co-chair), Denise Forte (PTA rep for LSAT), Ebon McPherson (Peabody teacher rep), Kersyln Featherstone (S-H parent rep), Bethany Rosera (S-H teacher rep), Annie Slattery (Peabody teacher rep), Sarah Cissna (Peabody parent rep), Sara Friedman (Peabody teacher rep), Shannon Russell (Peabody parent rep), Kathy Zeisel (Watkins parent rep), Peter Honovar (City Year/community rep), Nancy Abou-Samra (S-H teacher rep), Monique Sullivan (Watkins teacher rep), D'Ambra Taylor (S-H teacher rep), Gerty Johnson (S-H parent rep), Principal MScott Berkowitz (Peabody/Watkins), Principal Eric Fraser (Stuart-Hobson); Tiffany Kaijage (Stuart-Hobson)

LSAT Open/New Business

- **Principal Berkowitz Reflections**

Reflecting on significant mistake about announcement on Hoodie Day during Spirit Week at Watkins. During the leadership meeting preparing for Spirit Week there was discussion about acknowledging Trayvon Martin and connecting Black Lives Matter to Spirit Week, but ultimately the decision was not to do it. During announcement time, Principal Berkowitz decided on his own to follow through. Principal Berkowitz has acknowledged the importance of making decisions in collaboration, especially given his personal identity and privilege. There have been supports from IS Stover, Kindred, and DCPS Central Office. Robyn Harper from DCPS Central Office met with teachers from Watkins last week to help with processing.

There were public questions asking for a summary of the incident; on the kind of risk mitigation going forward about Spirit Week being just Spirit Week, and whether there was a political statement. There were several public comments about this not being the first incident concerning people of color and the need to fully address the harm to people of color, children of color, and how the Cluster can be more inclusive and a safe space. Another comment that people may not be ready to get to Next Steps, and the potential to including Peabody staff/parents to this discussion.

- **FY '23 Budget Submission Summary**

- **Stuart-Hobson**

Principal Fraser noted that they're able to keep all staff, but have to scale back for some FT to PT and non-personnel spending in order to keep all staff; keeping all staff will help the master schedule to still work out; the school can fill in gaps with ESSR (pandemic relief money).

- **Watkins/Peabody**

Principal Berkowitz noted that they will be able to keep all staff, added a few positions for both campuses, continuing to support Social-Emotional learning and wellness; will

use ESSR money to keep partnership with WISE and to fund Kindred; afterschool tutoring to continue next year; and non-personnel will be lighter next year.

- **LSAT Recruitment/Election Overview**

It's only March 1st but never too early to think about next year! As always, the LSAT tries to recruit an experienced parent and a new parent for each campus. Bijan compiled data for parent population and looking at which parent demographics not represented in LSAT. Ramona is a Race, Class, and Equity chairperson and RCE is looking to organize a family event so that families can connect.

There was a plug to join PTA (which is free! with donations accepted): link provided <https://capitolhillclusterschool.ejoinme.org/JoinPTA>

LSAT Standing Topics

- **Staffing Updates**

- **Watkins**

- One of fifth grade teachers has been absent for most of the year. Other 5th grade teachers have been phenomenal in filling in gap. Principal B couldn't expand on what he's working on to fill in the gap. Kathy mentioned that 5th grade parents are worried that their child will not be ready for 6th grade because they have fallen behind due to this staff shortage. Principal Berkowitz shared that Ms Goedeke and Ms Rachel have been providing consistent support to that class since winter break. IS Stover mentioned that he will work with DCPS Central for some summer acceleration to help 5th grade students transition. A parent expressed concern about timing for planning a summer acceleration program as parents are already planning for summer camps. IS Stover said he'll communicate a timeframe to parents for timing of Summer Acceleration academy next week. Principal Fraser summarized regularly schedule Summer Bridge program for incoming 6th grade.

- Watkins lost a Special Education teacher; caseloads are being reassigned and will begin with IEP goals afterwards. There was a concern about IEP evaluations already backing up. There was a question about cancelling PARCC tests, IS Stover responded that PARCC will be administered as it's a federal requirement.

- There was a question for both school leaders: Has there been a concerted effort to make special education assessments for placement, implement current IEP and 504 plans, also implement tiered intervention plans for those students that are need this school year? Also, is there any lag time from last years needed assessments, etc? If not, is staffing an issue and how to move past that?

- **Stuart-Hobson**

Finally, a FT COVID coordinator is on staff! But, still no FT substitute.

- **School Culture**

- **Peabody/Watkins** – culture issues and concerns were addressed during Principal Berkowitz reflections.

- **Stuart-Hobson** – Principal Fraser shared some of the MTSS data. Since students' return in January, things have settled with conflicts, partly due to less vacancies and less turbulence with staff shortages which has helped with stability and crisis management. There was a parent concerned because grades not being input by teacher and now there is a big hole to dig out of. Teachers should be putting in two grades every 4-5 days, parents can feel free to Fraser on missing grades. Parent

expressed that when teacher is absent, kids can feel like they can just hang out in the auditorium; has hurt culture. Fraser says that sometimes teachers don't leave any work

- CSP Update ****Campus Breakout Groups ****
 - **Peabody/Watkins** – Berkowitz shared MOY reading and math data; data shows greater growth rates than in previous years but proficiency rates in math and ELA are slightly lower than where they were pre pandemic; Request to see data by grade level next month; would also like data for Pre-K through K shared next month.
 - **Stuart-Hobson** – Principal Fraser shared the data for three of the goals in the S-H CSP, most of the data was slightly lower than past years.

General Campus Updates

- **Peabody/Watkins**

Cluster families are invited to attend the event “Three Generations of Survivors: Stories of the Holocaust” (on Zoom); Wednesday, March 2nd, 8:00-9:15 pm; Peabody’s winter reading challenge- kids read and logged over 7000 books this winter; Watkins black history month video celebration is up. Thanks to Ms Rowe and the bhm team; Third graders had an African American living wax museum on Tuesday, thanks to Ms Parler’s leadership on the third grade team; The boys and girls basketball teams had playoff games this week. Update: the girls lost by one! The boys won big and are in the next round Monday at 4 at Eastern HS; PARCC testing is back and the schedule is coming out soon; The debate club is back on Friday mornings thanks to Ms Langhorne; Outdoor lunch is back for students eating in their classrooms; Soccer and track sign ups are open and so is girls on the run.
- **Stuart-Hobson**

Shout to AP Turner, Pergeson, Simmons on organizing Black History Month performances! Swim team brought home 3rd place. Track and Baseball is starting in spring. Ms. Abou-Samra took 3 students to the Spelling Bee district competition. Debate team is off to nationals again this year! Students are bringing in their NHD projects into the building. Student devices going offline soon to prepare for PARCC. There will be Parent-Teacher conferences on March 10. Students were accepted in DC Study Abroad Program. Ms. Taylor and Fraser working to pull together Affinity group work, detailed in Sunday, Feb newsletter. Induction for NJHS coming soon. Panel on W6pso, Fraser will be on panel along with other MS Principals next Wednesday, parents are encouraged to support!

Public Comment: None

Next meeting: April 5