



Capitol Hill Cluster School
Where Every Child Achieves
Peabody | Watkins | Stuart-Hobson | A DC Public School

LSAT February Meeting Minutes

March 2, 2021

6:00 – 8:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

LSAT Member Attendees: Ramona Burton (Parent Co-Chair), Katherine Antos (Secretary), Shannon Russell, Ebon McPherson, Annie Slattery, Pamela Dickerson, Kimberlynn Jurkowski, Monique Sullivan, Steve Sweeney, Gerty Johnson, Vernastene Black, Kate Fiske, Karen Gordon, Bethany Rosera, Clara Hargrove, Rachel Houghton, Beth Dewhurst, Brittney Prophete, Jenn Loeb

Principals MScott Berkowitz and Eric Fraser; APs Boisvert and Hollis

Approximately 30 parents, teachers and community members in attendance

Meeting recorded and available upon request.

LSAT Open Business

SY22 Budget Update

Budget information for any school available at www.dcpsbudget.com.

Stuart Hobson:

- Submission due tomorrow
- Sent out family survey.
- Priorities: Maintain current staffing model and do not reduce staff. If money remaining, build budget that helps meet students' SEL needs and be "school-ready."
- Therefore tried to keep staff, maintain partnerships such as City Year
- Interest to restore money for field trips, etc assuming that will be possible next year
- Teachers want to formalize some leadership roles and create professional ladders, so looked at ways to accommodate that while still meeting staffing needs of classes
- All schools given some degree of budget acceleration
- Reopening Community Corps (RCC) will be meeting next week to discuss: 1) any adjustments to Term 4 (minor), 2) restoring learning over summer, 3) use of acceleration dollars

Peabody/Watkins:

- Academic Leadership Team (ALT) and LSAT priorities aligned around SEL and learning supports for students coming back to school. Some opportunity for growth to address these needs
- ALT will be discussing tomorrow what T4 and summer work could look like. After chance to discuss w/ teachers, Principal Berkowitz willing to engage with LSAT and RCC

LSAT members confirmed Principals' statements that budget formulations reflect priorities of LSAT, community, teachers.

Overview of Middle of Year (MOY) Data related to CSP goals – Breakout Sessions by Campus

Peabody/Watkins

- All MOY testing complete
- Text Reading and Comprehension (TRC) – K-1
 - 1-on-1 teacher student assessment. Experienced differently virtually from how would in school
 - K – decrease in proficiency from BOY to MOY
 - For both grades: Decrease in MOY proficiency from last year to this year, could in part be due to modality
 - Wouldn't explain decrease in proficiency from BOY to MOY given same modality
 - Houghton: Based on her previous experience teaching K, normally see gains more in EOY compared to MOY
 - Boisvert: 1st grade has most expected level gains of any grade. Can vary whether more gains are in MOY or EOY
 - Berkowitz: What doing – reassigning small groups to ensure properly differentiated
 - Loeb: Shows challenges of year. Imagine will be harder to get better by EOY if less/larger small groups in Terms 3 and 4. Hearing a lot of concerns about virtual learning though no reflection on teachers
- Reading Inventory (RI) – 2nd grade
 - Computer-adaptive assessment. Experienced same way as would in school
 - Improvement from BOY to MOY - lowest group shrinking, highest group growing
 - Slight improvement from last year
 - Burton: How map to CSP?
 - Berkowitz – many goals related to PARCC, which are not happening this year. Meeting TRC goals look unlikely, but on track for RI
- iReady Reading – 3rd – 5th
 - Generally keeping pace with last year
 - At other DCPS schools – 3rd -5th : Seem to be keeping up. Also seeing most loss/struggling for K-1 students
- iReady Math
 - Will be on track to meet CSP goals
 - % proficient generally keeping track with past years, though lower levels growing
 - Gaps are persisting along race
- Proficiency decreases at higher grades
- Antos: Based on this, how would priority addressing learning loss/learning support? Focus on reading?
 - Currently don't have math interventionist, but addressing this in budget
 - Will be discussing summer programming tomorrow with ALT. Priority for DCPS as well. Want to be thoughtful and targeted to the students
- Don't have multi-tiered structure of supports in place to address loss in virtual learning environment. Will be priority when back in school next year
- Laying groundwork for cultural, SEL supports as well – eg, behavioral. Already starting this with students who are now doing in-person learning (IPL)
- Need to do something about gaps in special education (SPED). Room to grow in co-teaching area, which can't be done virtually
- Leadership team has not discussed interventions to address racial achievement gaps. That is more Tier 1 and looking at best practices for class culture, Writer's Workshop, guided reading.
- Want to create an instructional handbook for teachers of best practices and then go over it in LEAP weekly PD, with follow up by instructional coaches
- Surveyed all families who declined an IPL seat to understand why and how can support.

- Slattery – hard to see instructional systems virtually. Easier to do this in-person and lots of systems to do so. Staff likely missing these systems, esp for Peabody staff who even in person are not at their school.
- Burton – Very hard to get Tier 1 interventions in a virtual setting

Stuart Hobson

- Mr. Fraser presented CSP pull out information to show (1) shared leadership, (2) engagement, (3) culture of achievement, and (4) academics, the latter two are the meatiest of the SHMS CMP.
- The Shared Leadership slide showed bars and lines – where SHMS is currently and where the top 25% of schools score. The idea is to identify gaps where SHMS supports teachers best and least well. SHMS teachers feel very good about leadership opportunities (higher than the 25% percentile of all schools) but have the biggest gaps for professional development, observation/feedback, diversity/equity/inclusion, and school operations (transitions, daily maintenance, general flow of the day).
- Student-reported “sense of engagement” is low nationally, but SHMS has increased by 4 percentage points since last year. Virtual learning makes this a difficult goal to pursue, but there is optimism post-reopening. The goal remains to increase the sense of engagement by families. Progress there is measured by views on the Family Newsletter, which is high (>900 views weekly on average) and increasing compared to last year.
- Attendance (measured by logging in) is higher than last year and SMHS’ gain is significant compared to other middle schools who are struggling. Students with low Wednesday (non-course days) attendance have been identified and the number has dropped from an earlier high of 122 to 39 in early March 2021. Effectiveness of Wednesday learning being re-evaluated continuously.
- Culture of achievement is improving. At Term 1 progress reports, nearly 2/3rds of students were on verge of failing, with substantial recovery by the end of the term. By Term 2 progress reports, the near failing student numbers were cut in half and failure data dropped by the end of Term 2. Improvement accomplished through changes in instruction, assessment, and opportunities for students to re-do work.
- ANet exam results (English) demonstrate proficiency increasing, and performance gaps are shrinking (lower performing group increasing at accelerated rate). SMHS outperforming DCPS average by approximately 3% with higher outperformance by 8th grade students. Reading performance (Reading Inventory) shows that SHMS is increasing the proficiency of all students, all cohorts, over the time period between 6th to 7th to 8th grades.
- ANet results (math) against DCPS average, advanced math students (geometry) are performing substantially better (27%), nearly already high school levels. Achievement gaps (between black and white cohorts) are shrinking from 6th to 7th to 8th grades, but all outperforming other DCPS middle schools. iReady and MAP results confirming highly effective instruction as students move through grades at SMHS as well.
- Academic gains significant compared to other middle schools
- Continuing to work on how can support Wednesday learning

Term 3 IPL/Virtual Learning Updates and Any Changes for Term 4 (T4)

Stuart Hobson:

- T4: DCPS doesn’t have expectation for radically different plan. SHMS developed plan to be nimble, adaptable going into T4. Eg: Academic support, connection to buildings can increase esp in outdoors as whether better. If Mayor’s Order changes limits on # kids in a cohort and/or # cohorts a staff person can see in a month, would create more opportunities for staff to work with more students

- Don't anticipate changing M, T, Th, F instruction time. Looking at doing more with W time and considering supplemental activities in evenings, weekends. Eg "play dates," building tours
- Looking to accelerate over summer with use of acceleration funds – including in person

Peabody/Watkins:

- 4th grade teacher who was granted leave from IPL is still teaching virtually
- Additional support:
 - 10 volunteers from non-homeroom staff, including paraprofessionals and specials teachers, who want to work with students
 - Will be launching on 3/11
 - Will be focusing on 1st and 3rd grade, the grades w/ largest virtual classes and highest need students
 - Eg, connecting arts to topics that are being covered in Writer's Workshop and math
- ALT will talk about adjustments to T4. Don't think staff got those conversations last time to provide input. Rather, they were told would need to report as assigned. Looking to bring them along and work with them in T4
- Public health emergency ending 3/31 changes leave options for teachers. Need clarity on options before communicate to staff. A lot of leave currently ends 4/1
- Willing to reconvene RCC after first work with teachers through ALT rather than starting with RCC. Concern that over-promised ahead of Term 3 b/c got ahead of staff. For teachers not on ALT, will look at ways for other staff to engage
- Message from DCPS is to enhance where are. That could include considering other staffing models if there is teacher buy-in
- Multiple RCC members noted RCC also included teachers and that staffing model didn't necessarily reflect preference of RCC.
- ALT is APs, instructional coaches, lead from each grade
- Antos: Willing to have RCC meetings at time when teachers available. Also be intentional about inviting parents of high-need students who are remaining virtual so can consider how to support their needs in T4
- Un-departmentalization and giving up PD days really big lift for teachers. Will discuss again, but wasn't favorable previously
- Interest in outdoor learning in T4 and/or next year. Have large field, but need more guidance on:
 - Bathrooms – esp difficult for lower grades where go as group
 - Set up/take down, esp for DPR spaces – does this need to happen daily?
 - Tents that have aren't practical for inclement weather or serving as a classroom all day
- Will be talking to ALT about options to support all students, not just high need: Other programming/activities that can do out of school, summer programming, early start to year
 - Dr. Kim providing some information to ALT on out of school activities

Other updates:

Stuart-Hobson:

- SHMS Book Buddies: recording books for kids. Available online: <https://flipgrid.com/gordon5601>. Will be adding more. Website thru this weekend. Did live session with Peabody today
- Science Fair yesterday. Rigorous questions from judges.
- Now working on History Day projects. Research, technical writing

Peabody/Watkins:

- Spirit week

- 2nd Peabody All-School Meeting happened today
- Black History Month – Incredible program designed by teachers. Students did a great job, and great to see how parents got involved because happening at home
- Encourage friends to take RCE survey. Pushing phone calls, texts, etc. Trying to drive up representative participation
- School Improvement Team (SIT) for Peabody – Didn't say much other than on track and Berkowitz and Teachers will be allowed back in meeting in early Aug. Will get updates on DGS team doing this work at next meeting.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences on Friday – likely won't have enough slots to do all on Friday. Be patient with teachers as schedule other times. Teachers will make time to get it all done, just may not be Fri, Mon or Tues

Public Comment

- If only teachers who are IPL are getting offered vaccine, how does that affect planning?
 - It's not DCPS priority - it's Mayor, DC Health for IPL teachers to be vaccinated first
 - President Biden has promised 1st shot for all teachers by end of March
 - [Citywide petition](#) for all teachers to be vaccinated
 - Parents suggested reaching out to Mayor, Council about this
- What about PK4?
 - Only 3 PK4 teachers, so not possible to bring back IPL. Looking for options for additional teaching support
 - Will let IS Stover know that interest in CARES staff support for PK4, similar to 4th grade
 - Need to know if there's interest from students. If it's helpful to families, will pursue it
- If public-ready, will share feedback from tomorrow's ALT meeting re Term 4 support
- There is a meeting for families who were offered but declined IPL spots, as well as survey. Families should look for email from Principal Berkowitz about this. Email him if need it again
- Additional options that are being considered for supporting virtual students:
 - Additional hours
 - Office hours or study hall with Instructional Coaches
 - Specials activities
 - Lexia or iReady
 - Looking for it to start 3/11, so more information forthcoming before then (specific plans still being developed)
 - Will be temporary teacher supporting 2nd grade with significant experience working in ECE and 3rd grade, also Conscious Discipline expert. Depending on 2nd grade staffing potentially being restored, could potentially support other grades. She's starting to come up to speed before official start date and expect will start soon (exact date TBD)
- Reach out to LSAT members if additional questions that weren't addressed tonight.

Meeting adjourned 8:10 pm.

Remaining 2020-2021 Meetings

2020-21 Meetings	Location
April 6	Virtual
May 4	Virtual
June 8	Virtual
July 6	Virtual