



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

**LSAT Meeting Agenda**  
**Stuart Hobson Middle School**  
**November 1, 2017**

**Watkins & Peabody - Principal's Updates**

General updates

- Enrollment - Peabody and Watkins are both slightly ahead of projections.
- Paper-audit scheduled for November 2.
- Equity Funds - budgeted to fund Saturday PARCC tutorials

School Climate Initiative - Walkthrough Feedback

- Ms. Dickinson: First official walkthrough was two weeks ago
- All schools begin in phase one. 1. Watkins moved into Phase 1.5 with the following growth areas: 1) the crisis preparedness book was visible in 6/10 classrooms, 2) our vision & mission statement was posted in 7/10 classrooms, and 3) a "Do Now" to immediately engage kids was visible in 8/10 classrooms.
- The walkthrough team selected a random student focus group. The students in the group had really internalized their experiences at Elliot-Hine, so staff have been thoughtful about how to process that information - what implementation of new policies and procedures should look like to make sure students feel really good about their new space.
- Next, the SCI team will decide on an area of focus, which will either be school connectedness/engagement, professional relationships, supportive learning environment, or adult/student interactions.
- Family Engagement Lab - DCPS hasn't rehired for the position so this is on hold.

Staff Roles/Responsibilities & Behavior Management

- Cafeteria management - Voices should be at a level 1 (soft) but there have been times when it is necessary to go to a level 0 (silent) because students are not able to bring it down to a level 1 (and it is too noisy in the cafeteria). When this happens, students do not have to stay on 0 for the remainder of lunch; they are able to return to a Level 1 once Level 0 has been reached and expectations have been reset with students.
- Discussion about keeping cafeteria in control and functional but preserving it as down-time/fun-time for kids.
- Working with DPR - checking in with teachers and staff from other programs weekly and then implementing based on those discussions. Have received feedback on scheduling piece so we check in weekly and look two weeks out in doing so.

- What is the 5th grade cornerstone showcase? It's an experience - project based culminating event after a unit of study. All grade levels will do at least two this year.

#### Comprehensive School Plan - EP 2: Rigorous Content

- Using a visual tracker to review action items and results. Tracker is reviewed monthly with ALT and Dr. Chapman
- The main focus is on rigor. Data shows consistent, thoughtful lesson planning by teachers results in productive small-groups so kids at top/bottom margins make appropriate growth.
- APs provide templates to teachers and feedback on the lesson plans IF the teachers will submit lesson plans.
- Not all teachers prepare lesson plans. Training to support teachers in this effort has been offered - that training was after school. Not all teachers attended, but there was solid attendance particularly from new teachers and some of the "highly effective" teachers.
- .5 Spanish teacher hired in September but other school had priority on scheduling. We then had to make a schedule to fit that pre-existing schedule.
- Specials schedule has changed - it was originally designed with a "floating Wednesday" to accommodate students with Monday/Friday schedules as those are often days off, i.e. students with Friday Art have missed a lot of class. However, that lead to confusion about where students should be.
- Now switched to an A week and B week. Primarily the same. One day changes weekly to accommodate Tech/Spanish every other week. There has been a learning curve as we work through a .5 Spanish schedule. It may change for the upcoming quarter. Will shift similarly to Peabody's schedule with each class switching when they see each specials teacher. For example, if you get tech twice now, you will not have it twice in the next quarter.
- Henderson provides support for 1st - 5th graders, especially around technology, and was hired with knowledge that he has this skill set. Last year he pushed into classrooms for tech support and got very good feedback from teachers. He works with the specials team to plan, so he is using the same planning tools as the other specials teachers. Some of this support now includes some STEM work around coding games, keyboarding 1 -5, and providing PARCC support through the use of tech - intentionally giving additional access to 3rd graders who will be new to the PARCC assessment which is done online. He's also supporting blended learning for literacy/math.
- Specials conferences - Ms. Bell says don't feel like you have to wait until there's a problem. Feel free to just say hello and begin building the relationship with specials teachers.
- Our new Spanish teacher is very well prepared for "teaching" and is adjusting to US teaching culture with full support from administration to help him acclimate to how we approach teaching. His lessons are terrific.
- Principal Bell clarified the role of the aide is to support instruction, not manage behavior. Aide scheduling was done based on teacher feedback for priorities. Teachers came together and agreed on certain cohorts of kids where support is

most needed. Aids are scheduled to float into those classrooms at critical times to provide instructional support where it's most needed.

- We have 6 -7 student teachers through December and will continue this practice
- We are looking at marketing to in boundary families. Are we open to the lottery experience as a community? Some parents were not last year so we need to revisit that as we weigh budget impacts.

## **Stuart Hobson - Principal's Updates**

### General updates

- Enrollment audit November 2nd.
- Will host a food drive sponsored by National Jr Honor society
  - Competition between advisories - challenges LSAT committee to do the same
  - Will collect non-perishables but will accept perishables on the last day
- Parent-Teacher conferences will be held Friday
  - We now have assigned conference times between 8 - 3:30
- We are in embassy adoption programs - Poland - had scientists come in and discuss with experiment

### School Climate Initiative

- Complete at SCI walkthrough on Oct 4 from 9 - 12
- Focus was on making it a fun space and a place where kids love to be
- Walkthroughs are unannounced and evaluators go into whichever rooms they wish
- They also chose six random students to participate in a focus group
- Overall, SH scored 63/69 keeping us in phase 1 - see rubric
- SH had two red areas: having mission and vision posted throughout the school (weren't printed in time and expected to get reds there). Decided it was more important to be authentic and create a mission that was true to what they believe than rush to get it done in time for the walkthrough. All else was logistical. Although school work was up, the dates weren't on the paper so they got marked as outdated.
- Results indicated students received specific positive feedback and noncontingent attention, which SH placed a big emphasis on. Some specific feedback stated, "We feel like the adults really love the students"
- Going forward, SH will work to focus on internalizing these areas rather than just moving on to phase 2.
- Fights? Principal Comeforo: We have had incidents outside of the building but not many incidents inside the building. Some feedback from the student focus group indicated they don't always feel safe coming to or leaving school. While these are not reflective of the climate in the building, Principal Comeforo checks on kids outside of school and drives to areas where he knows students will be.
- Noise plan for SH during cafe? Principal Comeforo: We don't make them go to a noise level zero. We've tried to make them aware of their noise level by using a decibel reader, etc. Sometimes we have a competition for who can be the quietest longest

- SH has started implementing whole school incentives, but recognizes the need for more individual awards such as the triple zero awards (recognition for 0 absences, 0 referrals, 0 fs). Those who achieve this will earn a chance to go on a special field trip. PTA will cover these costs
- Also give “uncontingent praise” by being a panther of the day which requires you to do nothing but be present.” - Panthers of the day get a bag of candy, a lapel pen, and do lunch roll call. “We want to have fun and the kids are having fun”

#### Comprehensive School Plan

- SH has adapted the tracking system used by Watkins. It includes four focus areas: literacy, math, social emotional, and Response to Intervention (RTI)s
- Data suggests a 6% increase in advanced readers and no change in the amount of below basic readers - 22% are reading vastly below grade level. We see similar data in math. 45% are two or more levels below starting the SY in math.
- RTI - Excellence Through Equity funds will be used, similarly to Watkins, to fund a program on the weekends for students performing at lower levels. SH will use college students to serve as mentors for our students.
- Student recruitment next year?
- Principal Comeforo: We will begin going to other feeder schools. Even if all Watkins students come to SH, it won't fill the seats. We must attend other school events and try to build those relationships now. SH will have an open house that has a panel with parents, students, and staff.
- We will have to use “grass roots” tactics in order to get to the out of boundary kids. We need to start thinking about that as enrollment season begins. A discussion continues on how to get that information. The possibility of using EdFest to highlight our schools emerged. It was noted it is difficult to find ways to get the info out without it being blocked by communities that are not willing to share information about other schools.

Adjourn - 7:50