

SHEPHERD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Minutes of Local School Advisory Team meeting of SEPTEMBER 11, 2012

Present: Sherilyn Pruitt (chair), Mark Pattison (secretary), Lisa Connor, parent representatives; Tia Holt, Joele Michaud, Nancy Ulba, Valena Valentine-Nelson, teacher representatives; Robyn Brooks, staff representative; Carl Bergman, community representative; Kesha Prendergast, guest; plus Jamie Miles, principal.

Minutes: Minutes of the July 24 LSAT meeting were approved.

Guidelines: LSAT guidelines and mission as found on the school home page discussed.

Leveraging power for school funding: Mark said he would ask the PTA president whether the D.C. PTA or a coalition of LSATs would be more effective in pushing the D.C. Council to more fully fund schools.

Safety Patrol: Training took place Aug. 31 for students, reported Ms. Holt. There are 16 students, more than the expected 12. However, there is no DDOT-allocated crossing guard anymore, and efforts to learn why have not yet borne fruit. Ms. Holt is trying to pair up students in a complementary fashion. They are asked to patrol 8:15-8:40 a.m. and 3:10-3:30 p.m. Ms. Valentine-Nelson said she would help. Students are still learning how to patrol; some parents are walking around them. Ms. Holt would like to have promotion ceremonies in December and June, and to have the funds to treat them to something like a bowling party or a trip to Adventure Park USA; funds would be required. It would also be helpful to acquire ponchos and some hot chocolate for cold-weather days, and \$5 gift cards as meeting prizes. There is a National Safety Patrol Parade in D.C. (possibly) with activities. Could there be fundraising or a pass-the-hat at a PTA meeting? Could we ask the patrollers' parents for help, and could they drive to activities to save on the cost of a bus rental?

TV/Video Game Turnoff: Pattison explained the premise behind TV/VG-TO, with child signatures, parental approval. The LSAT agreed to sponsor the program for 2012-13. Ms. Brooks said she will make copies. Pruitt said she still has program incentives from last year that could be used again. Pattison said he would find a photographer to take pictures of student participants for a bulletin board near the library. There will be signup tables at Back to School Night and Fall Fest. Pruitt said she would compose a letter.

Questions

Community Engagement: There was a desire to find measurable goals.

Academic Enrichment: This is meant to get students more pumped up about learning. GeoPlunge cards have been obtained for as young as second grade this year.

Culture and Climate: This was described as parental involvement increasing, the relationship among and between students, teachers and staff, tracking attendance at events. Pruitt said she would use Survey Monkey as a tool for reporting out on the next meeting, and judging where it was successful.

DC-CAS and No Child Left Behind: the principal explained that there is a huge (200-400 page) document that explains much behind DC-CAS. DCPS received a NCLB waiver and so is not judged on those targets except for the 40 poorest-performing schools. Shepherd has an index score of 74.7%, which is in the “rising” category; we are about 4 points away from the top category. Shepherd met “safe harbor” standards in all or almost all of its subgroups, with the possible exception of students receiving free or reduced-price meals. It was asked whether longitudinal studies can be done tracking individuals’ achievement from grade to grade; the answer was yes, but the measurements have been known to change from year to year, and from grade to grade. It should be noted, though, that 20 percent of Shepherd’s fifth graders last year had scores better than they had been when they were in fourth grade. The task of how to explain what the numbers mean in a DC-CAS report will be sent to the school’s Academic Committee for a planned “Testing Night” at the school, which would also include examples within categories being tested at different grade levels.

Class size: The largest classes are current in second grade: 26 per classroom. An additional teacher is coming, which will result in three second grade classrooms. The fifth grade classes are at 21 and 22 students, first grade at 23 and 25. There were 42 children reported in one Spanish classroom, but Rosetta Stone was to be installed free in the coming week, which will split the size of the group and give students in the computer lab a directed course of study. All students will utilize the same amount of lab time and direct instruction.

New business: Bergman made a donation of a dozen goodie bags filled with such school supplies as glue sticks, calculators and scissors, which he requested from the organization supplying such bags to the Barrington apartment complex in Rosemary Hills.

Meeting dates and times: It was decided that LSAT meetings for the course of the calendar year would be held on the second Tuesday of the month at 4 p.m.

The next meeting of the LSAT will be held TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9, at 4 p.m. in the library.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Pattison, secretary
Shepherd Elementary LSAT