

SHEPHERD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Minutes from Local School Advisory Team conference call of DECEMBER 10, 2013

On call: Kesha Pendergrast (parent representative), chair; Mark Pattison (parent representative), secretary; Kamilah Martin-Proctor and Keith White, parent representatives; Robin George, teacher representative; Tia Holt, Washington Teachers Union representative; Carl Bergman, community representative; Sherilyn Pruitt, PTA president; plus Jamie Miles, principal.

Not on call: Elizabeth Guldin, Renee Hamer and Nicole Pethtel, teacher representatives; Robyn Brooks, staff representative.

Minutes: Pruitt moved, Pattison seconded approving the minutes of the November meeting. Motion carried.

The balance of the meeting was taken up with different items on the Follow-Up/Follow-Through spreadsheet that were not covered during the November meeting. Thirteen items had been covered in November, leaving 26 to be considered.

Researching academic achievement: There have been two items in the Mustang with parent input on how they help their children reinforce learning on the commute to and from school. There had not been any distribution of a flyer at afternoon carpool; Miles asked who was expected to produce such a flyer.

The school fair was postponed to January. Ms. George is directing a task force for this effort. Other teachers will submit notes to her. Submit for the citywide school fair.

Communications Plan: A working document was prepared by Pendergrast and distributed via the splsat email group; consideration of the items in the plan were deferred to the January meeting. Pendergrast said it should be considered a living, working document.

Igniting Creative Energy competition: White said he would get the details done the evening of the meeting.

Activities list: Pattison's original list was converted by Bergman into an Excel spreadsheet. It was judged to be best left to the respective sponsors of activities, events and initiatives to determine the merits vs. the effort involved. ... It was stressed again to tie in each event to the school's mission, the PTA's mission or the LSAT's priorities.

Parent mentoring: The "pair-a-parent" idea would best work at the start of the school year. Miles repeated that she got offers from only seven parents willing to be mentors. Initial contact between parents was made, but whether there was continued contact

beyond that she did not know. Shepherd gets a new family every week or two, although it loses a family at the same rate. The principal's game plan is a one-page summary plus the Mustang to boost the mentoring program.

Community contact: The Shepherd Park Citizens Association wants names and contact info for new neighbors. There is a Jan. 26 potluck at Northminster Presbyterian Church, Alaska at Kalmia, 5-7 p.m. or so for neighbors old and new.

Student residences: Miles said she would send of student numbers by zip code, There is interest in putting together a list of places where parents in certain zip codes could meet away from Shepherd to meet up. Martin-Proctor said she would assemble lists for 20011 and 20012, Shepherd's most populous zip codes. Activities could be play dates at a DPR rec center, or restaurants like Chez Billy or Sweet Mango. Another idea was the "Playdium" on the 7000 block of Wisconsin for a Saturday afternoon play date.

Volunteers for PTA functions: Clipboard for specific tasks was one idea. Using the Job Fair Guide/Help Wanted column in the Mustang is another idea. The Mustang found additional parents to help with editing and layout this way. The PTA's biggest needs at the moment are for the Jazz Night and the Gala.

Parent agreement: The draft letter was revised to reflect a parental commitment of 10 hours of volunteer time between January and the end of the school year. This is still on track for a January rollout.

Shepherd Park News insert: Pattison's emails to the Shepherd Park Citizens Association president went unanswered; he said he would go to the Dec. 11 newsletter labeling party at Ledo Pizza to see if this is doable.

90/80/90/90: Paced Interim Assessment testing slated for Dec. 11-12. Some results should be available that weekend, and a bigger-picture view of results a week later.

GeoPlunge: Shepherd's teams did well, including a first-place finish for one team. A Student Scoop column detailed the results.

Science Fair: There are opportunities for parents to attend. This year's fair, students in the lower grades will be able to do their own projects. It's possible there will be a show at Shepherd for them, because last year, only students in grades 3-5 could go to NOAA HQ. It's possible we could do a mock judging with questions being asked of students about their projects. To date, eight students need a mentor. Miles to follow up with Ms. Ulba on the need for additional mentors; two had signed up by the November LSAT meeting. If more are needed, Pattison will use the Shepherd Park listserv to ask for more.

Spelling Bee: Attendance is limited to parents and one teacher from the school.

Odyssey of the Mind: This program is getting a push by the school, but it needs a parent to take the lead.

Math Counts: Some schools west of Rock Creek Park do this, but not Shepherd. Shepherd has a Mathletes Club using the Singapore Math method.

Curriculum Night: The next one should occur in January. This does not include the two separate-yet-concurrent morning and afternoon sessions set for Feb. 19 on Common Core Curriculum aspects.

Mad Science: If Shepherd brings it back, it will be in late spring. The spring calendar will be done by late January.

Boundary redrawing: Martin-Proctor has been on a couple of call-ins. DCPS wants to get more parents to give more input. Pattison put in a bid for the Dec. 14 focus group at Turkey Thicket Recreation Center. DCPS is not getting as much parent participation as it expected. Martin-Proctor will see if DCPS would like to conduct a focus group at Shepherd. The PTA can arrange to get a Q-and-A on boundary redrawing on the school website. DCPS will welcome input from the office of the deputy mayor of office.

Cultural Arts Night: Target is early May. Pendergrast to develop a one-page intro to encourage performers to put their talents on display. There is a belly dance studio by Takoma Station that would be an excellent addition. Martin-Proctor said she believes a lot of Howard folk would be happy to show their talents. The question was asked as to the target audience.

PTA movie night: Could this be considered an effort at community engagement? It's not on the calendar. A June evening could be a possibility.

Use of community bulletin board: They would come in handy for Jazz Night and the Gala, although no flyers have yet been developed for either. Family Dinner Night is another possibility.

Family Dinner Night: The community should be invited. Pattison uses the Shepherd Park neighborhood listserv to issue invitations.

Academic Olympics: As no one seemed to know what it is/was, it will no longer be on the list.

Identifying the progress of community input: Where can we invite the community to participate? One such event is Dec. 18 – both the International Day and the “Holidays Around the World” concert program. The Fifth Grade Exhibition at the end of the school year; we can invite representatives from the mayor's office and other elected officials .

Jazz Night and the Gala are naturals. Classroom invitations are good to: work with the students on an IB unit. Could the LSAT have a chart detailing IB units by grade for the rest of the year?

Open houses: There are no more open houses for prospective parents scheduled, but there are tours available of the school each Tuesday and Thursday. A renovations open house can be had sometime around Valentine's Day. The progress of renovations cannot be ascertained as the School Improvement Team meeting set for Dec. 10 had to be canceled due to inclement weather.

Principal Sundaes: Word will be getting out about this incentive before the end of the year.

Volunteering: Select volunteers for specific tasks at the next PTA meeting. Some parents volunteer through the school website, and the offer goes straight to Pruitt as PTA president. She then gets in touch with them to thank them for offering to volunteer.

School paraphernalia: Water bottles and bags, and just a few T-shirts left. Items will be for sale at the Dec. 18 concert.

Parents meeting: The concept of a parents meeting on the Friday before the start of school can be handled closer to the date.

Volunteer database: Bergman said he has knowledge of several programs, one of which could work for Shepherd so long as he knows what the PTA wants to do with the data. He would conduct initial research and report back to the group. He cautioned against redundancy. Finding a good searchable and sortable database is always a problem. Should it be put online? A directory – not with emails, though – has been designed for delivery sometime next year. Bergman to get the Shepherd Park link to one membership management system.

Bike Rodeo: Pattison to notify Jim Elliott of the LSAT's desire that the bike rodeo be repeated. We just have to find the right day and date.

Volunteering, the sequel: Parents have told a teacher they're happy Shepherd is so active, but by the same token think there's too much going on.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be held TUESDAY, JAN. 14, at 4 P.M. The date is tentative based on Holt's ability to attend.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Pattison, LSAT secretary