

SHEPHERD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Minutes of Local School Advisory Team meeting of MARCH 13, 2014

Present: Kesha Pendergrast (parent representative), chair; Mark Pattison (parent representative), secretary; parent representative: Keith White; teacher representatives: Robin George, Elizabeth Guldin, Nicole Pethtel; community representative: Carl Bergman; Washington Teachers Union representative: Tia Holt; PTA representative: Sherilyn Pruitt; plus principal Jamie Miles and principal intern Angel Hunger.

Absent: Kamilah Martin-Proctor, parent representative; Renee Hamer, teacher representative.

Minutes: Bergman moved, Pethtel seconded, approving the minutes of the February meeting. Motion carried.

The balance of the meeting concerned the proposed 2014-15 school budget.

A D.C. Public Schools worksheet showing Shepherd's preliminary allocations was distributed.

Shepherd will get a \$42,706 increase from DCPS, a 1.4 percent increase over 2013-14. However, the International Baccalaureate coordinator position has now been funded through DCPS itself instead of being charged to the school, saving Shepherd \$90,000.

After last year's adjustments, Shepherd now has a fourth allotment for "specials" teachers. The school, though, has five: two language teachers, plus physical education, art (half-time), music (half-time).

Pre-K/3 is also accounted for in the budget, but, as with the IB coordinator position, the principal does not have to juggle the numbers to make it work. There will be one such class for 2014-15 (and possibly a second classroom sometime later), three kindergarten classrooms, and two classrooms for all other grades. Kindergarten usually has the largest waiting list. Very few parents with children in pre-K at Shepherd go to another school for kindergarten.

A 2015 budget worksheet was distributed.

Shepherd now gets funding for 0.8 of an assistant principal based on enrollment. But without needing to hire an assistant principal, we can spend the money as we like; the funds will pay for the counselor position.

We have dropped to 0.2 funding for an English Language Learning position. Most students stay in the classroom, and the teacher comes in. The teacher shares time with other schools in DCPS.

Shepherd got money midyear to have a fulltime library aide. We will have a full-time librarian for 2014-15. This will allow Shepherd to tap the resources of college and university library science programs for interns.

Primary Years Program satisfaction award: the “option” to apply has to be used for student satisfaction. The principal wants to use the grant money for transportation costs for enrichment and field trips.

A “second step” program in first grade is focused on social-emotional development, character-building, and bullying-prevention. This comes to about \$16,000.

In student surveys, Shepherd students say they want more clubs and organizations, would like more time for recess, and want to be sure their teachers like them.

With the push for more clubs and organizations comes the need to fund them. Shepherd is short of basketball uniforms, and the cheerleaders want money. Other clubs need funding as well.

There was a desire expressed for DCPS to explain why Shepherd has only 0.5 funding for a social worker when in the past it had always been a 1.0 position.

Special education: Shepherd has 25 in special education schoolwide – less than 25 students when it comes to tested grades. The numbers are relatively low for DCPS. There’s not enough for a subgroup to be teased out for testing results or with ELL. However, this funding would help cover the costs of a part-time business manager,

There is \$7,600 in Title II money for professional development.

Each school in DCPS needs to have two people who can open and close the building. Shepherd currently has three on staff. Cutting the number to two will allow the school to transfer about \$10,000 in funds elsewhere.

The worksheet displayed two options on how the school could rearrange funds to get to four fulltime-equivalent specials positions. One would include a “teacher lead.” This position, if selected by the principal and approved by DCPS, would work in sync with the instructional coach, one focusing on intermediate grades, the other on early-education students. It would also give Shepherd an opportunity to cultivate leadership within its ranks.

Another possibility would be a team-teaching approach -- two teachers responsible for the same classroom (one mornings, the other afternoons, or one focusing on math, the other on language arts). The position could also serve as a safety valve of sorts to deal with teacher pregnancies, sicknesses, injuries and leaves. No matter how such a position is parsed out, Shepherd will very well require the use of a substitute at some point during 2014-15.

DCPS now has a computer tech coming to Shepherd every Tuesday and Thursday to inspect and fix equipment. Mr. Wolcott checks laptops as an aide as well.

The library aide left midyear.

If the art teacher were kept at a part-time position, the pre-K/3 class would not have any contact with the art teacher. The pre-K/4 classes would have art with the teacher every other week. All

other grades would have art weekly. One worksheet option has a full-time art teacher, which would entail art every week for every classroom.

DCPS is moving to a model which will allow for part-time teachers and the departmentalization of elementary school faculty.

Teachers serving on the LSAT were asked the upsides and downsides of the two options presented in the worksheet. A decided preference was given in their responses to the option that has the “teacher lead” position. This was the recommendation given by the full LSAT to the principal, who concurred with the advice.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next LSAT meeting will be held WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, at 4 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Pattison, secretary
Shepherd Elementary LSAT