

Shepherd PTO Meeting – January 27, 2021

Exec Board: Liz, Taryn, Sara, Andrea, Ayana

Meeting called to order at 6:33

Dr. Hedlund Update

- Art Teacher Update:
 - He was able to leave the hospital and has moved into a rehab facility
 - Dr. Hedlund will forward a mailing address
- Re-Opening
 - Will open on Monday with 7 total classrooms
 - 4th Grade is being postponed through Term 3
 - Made an offer to a teacher for PK 3
 - Have been having meetings with classes that are returning
 - Friday meeting for all kids who will still be doing virtual learning
- CARES Classrooms that were going forward are doing really well.
- Staffing update on 3rd Grade teacher who is out temporarily but will return in April
 - The 3rd Grade CARES instructor is trying to become able to convert the class from CARES to IPL
 - They are working to hire someone short term who can teach for the teacher while he is on leave
- Technology
 - IB Coordinator has been and will continue to coordinate technology needs
- Vaccination Updates -> first shots are going forward for those who are teaching in person; the second shots will happen around February 15
- HVAC System
 - They assured the school that it is safe
 - They have filters in each room
 - They have sealed off A-Wing so that none of the workers come in / exit through main entrances
- Black History Month Program
 - A group met (mostly teachers) to discuss celebrating black history specifically in DC.
 - One idea is to resurrect the all-school meeting to showcase learning about DC black history, music class will be focused on DC music (go-go), and IB efforts will be aimed toward these efforts
 - They are going to try to do a scavenger hunt of local areas that are important to DC black history

Parent Questions

- Describe a day in the life of the students?
 - Dr. Hedlund and Ms. Rottman discussed the schedules and the efforts to keep children in their cohorts to avoid contamination

- What will happen with on-line learning?
 - Dr. Hedlund provided information on how this will vary based on the grade. Some classes are going to be shuffled, and some are going to be taught both online and virtually. Support will be provided to the virtual teachers who are going to have larger homerooms than they did. For fifth grade, the IPL students will do 2/3 of their sections virtually while in the classroom so that they can keep differentiated learning.
- Are teachers obtaining vaccines and will that change the number of kids who can ultimately return to school?
 - Those who are in the building are prioritized for vaccines, and at this point there is no information about whether teachers who are not IPL right now are going to get them earlier or if they will have to join the line based on their standing in their jurisdiction.
 - The school cannot and is not forcing any teachers to obtain vaccinations.
- Social / Emotional Learning – what role does the CARES class have?
 - These issues are handled pretty student-by-student
 - For some of the CARES classes they have found that there are certain students who required additional supports, but the majority are completing their assignments timely.
- How will recess be conducted?
 - They have found that the kids are really good at keeping distance and wearing their masks.
 - They may have to remind the kids periodically, but they have been setting expectations for behavior and norms.
 - They were trying to figure out zones and the number of kids that should be playing in each zone.
 - Only one classroom is let out on each playground at a time
- How will kids see each other in the near future?
 - DCPS has mandated that schools cannot push or coordinate in-person activities

Advocacy Update

- Kate Snyder has led the effort at coordinating advocacy
- Deal / Wilson feeder pattern efforts
- If parents want to get more involved with this there is a mini-committee to help figure out how to help

Community Center Update – Tami W (aftercare)

- The Center is up and running
- There are questions about programming
- There was an agreement that aftercare would have access until 6:30 pm
- New Information: they want to open the community center to the public at 3:00 pm
 - This will deny the school the ability to have school events (like basketball)
 - This will hurt the aftercare community
 - The only way that other school communities have been able to push back is by being loud.
 - DCPS has not signed an MOU with DPR yet that will govern how the relationship will look

- They would like parents and teachers to push back, to send emails, to make calls, etc.
- There will be a Ward 4 call on DPR facilities and use on February 4

Shepherd Library Update – Mark Pattison

- Announcement was made to close the SPH library
- Thoughts on how the PTO can support efforts to keep the library open
- Request to get involved as much as possible

Outdoor Learning Efforts

- There is a sub-committee who is working on identifying potential options
- There is a separate, unrelated, petition about increasing DCPS dollars for outdoor learning options

LAMB Facility / Lafayette

- Official announcement today that Lafayette will not get the building and it will instead become a City-wide PK facility

PTO Business

- Working on ways to support both kids and parents returning and staying home
- Andrea budget update →
- April Activities → some will be with students and others toward adults. There will be different price points and different engagement levels.

PAVE Update: Alicia Williamson (Parent Amplifying Voices in Education)

- They have been talking about various issues impacting the communities, including food insecurity and parent advisory committees regarding re-opening
- They have also put together what is called a “Parent Statement of Beliefs” that people can review and sign.
- They have “Coffee Chats” every few weeks. The last meeting focused on providing information on the vaccine and COVID and children (led by doctors from Children’s Hospital).
- Information on the organization can be found at www.dcpave.org

Meeting Called to a Close at 7:54 pm