

SHEPHERD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Minutes from School Advisory Board meeting of OCTOBER 12, 2010

Present: Jennifer Pauk (moderator), Marcus Hall, parent representatives; LaShahn Booth, Timothy Leonard, Joele Michaud, Mary Thomas, teacher representatives; Robyn Brooks, staff representative; Mark Pattison, PTA president; Don Squires, community representative (parents); Jamie Miles, principal. Guest: Tia Holt, kindergarten teacher.

Unable to attend: Steven King, teacher representative; Marcie Bane, Charisse Brossard, parent representatives.

Minutes: Minutes of the August meeting were approved subject to the following changes: deletion of reasons for absence; Mrs. Miles stressed that she is not a member of the SAB; and that the SAB minutes would not be available for viewing until they were approved.

The teacher representatives said they would like to choose Clay White of the Washington Teachers Union as their community representative.

Copies of the Family Engagement Plan and the Comprehensive School Plan were distributed.

Comprehensive School Plan: Miles directed the SAB members to the goals and objectives: a 3 percent math and reading proficiency increase (equal to 12 students) as a “safe harbor” to avoid a No Child Left Behind designation; an increase in the number of special education students scoring proficient in reading on the DC-CAS test (seven to 10 students); and develop, implement and reinforce a scholastic behavior management plan to decrease the time and number of students spent in the office for referrals to less than 5 percent by the end of the school year.

The PTA has been asked to fund a new Saturday Academy at a cost of \$14,000. This would be for students in grades 3-5, with one teacher for each grade and one teacher for specialized purpose as well as support staff, materials and snacks.

An intervention project has started with grades 3-5 and will work its way down to lower grade levels.

The Wilson Read program will be for grades 4-5 only.

Some gaps among second graders have already been identified and will be worked on.

It was suggested the comprehensive plan make mention of proficient and advanced students in the sense that they will have extra enrichment activities to challenge them further; the Study Island materials can be of help in this.

In the matter of discipline, the point is to change behavior patterns rather than to stop repeated unwelcome behaviors. Time spent in the office takes away from classroom time. The most severe behaviors tend to come from the same students. Trainings and peer mediation has not been included in this plan, but revisions will be made as necessary.

The SAB was asked to strategize, review, examine and recommend programs that the school can either adopt or adapt.

In the matter of academic achievement, teachers are willing to tutor but current rules forbid them to be paid. Can the PTA act as a third-party pass-through to keep things legal?

Intervention folders are being created for all students involved in an intervention.

Two churches have offered volunteer services, and the principal will follow up on their offers. The Congregation Tifereth Israel tutoring program has resumed for 2010-11. Catholic University has students in the building giving assistance. The University of Phoenix also made a recent overture. There is no tutoring taking place in aftercare.

Family Engagement Plan: The plan has separate grids outlining Communications, Continuous Outreach Programming, Strong and Inclusive Parent Services, Budget Action and Plan. Within each grid is type, person responsible, goal, and how measured.

The school is moving toward one student-led conference.

A parent compact is on page 8 of the plan. The principal has had all new parents since her arrival sign the compact.

TV Turn Off: A bulletin board display is a possibility. It will be brought up at the PTA meeting. There will be TV Turn off commitment forms during the Oct. 18 parent-teacher conferences. There are three levels of commitment to turning off the TV: gold, silver and bronze. Parents and children must be given an alternative to watching TV to make this effective.

Upper Grade Vocabulary: Charisse Brossard has been working on this endeavor. Wordly Wise in fourth grade (it was also used in third grade in 2008-09) to build student vocabulary. Because only half of the students' parents paid for the instructional fees, it limits how much Wordly Wise can be distributed; book fair proceeds help fund unpaid instructional fees.

Holt Change Project: Tia Holt outlined the impetus of a Change Project that would require buy-in from different segments of the school community. The project could focus on children, on parents/community, or on teachers. It is intended to be a sustainable project that could continue even with the departure of the originator/s. No project has yet been chosen as Holt's initial round of advisers – Pattison, Bane and Pauk – have met just once jointly. Many calls came for a TV Turn-Off project, although later calls suggested eating habits, recycling, and study habits. A TV-watching survey with 239 students responding had imprecise wording and will be retaken, although the numbers suggested in the survey were not encouraging.

Money for Art: In response to a query, there should be money for art supplies, even unconventional supplies, in the school budget.

Budget: There should be no adverse effects of the current round of budgeting on Shepherd as it is fully “subscribed” with 357 students.

Security: Inconsistencies were noted in the school’s security. The principal agreed to look into it right away.

Early and late: Teachers see students in the auditorium at 7:45 a.m., which should not be, but the school takes care of them as best as possible even though they’re not supposed to be dropped off for free breakfast (a place where students have said they don’t want to go) until 8 a.m. By the same token, although the sense is that there is improvement, there is still far too much tardiness. Parent conferences correct the problem only slightly. It was suggested to put the names of tardy students and their parents in the Mustang. Other strategies are being considered to highlight incentives and consequences.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting of the SAB will take place TUESDAY, NOV. 9, at 3:45 p.m. in the school library.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Pattison, secretary
Shepherd Elementary SAB