

## **SHEPHERD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

### **Minutes from Local School Advisory Team meeting of MAY 10, 2011**

**Present:** Marcie Bane (chair), Mark Pattison (secretary), Jennifer Pauk, Sherilyn Pruitt, parent representatives; Steven King, LaShahn Booth, Mary Thomas, Joele Michaud, teacher representatives; Robyn Brooks, staff representative; Don Squires, community representative; plus Jamie Miles, principal. **Not present:** Charisse Brossard, parent representative.

**Minutes:** The LSAT approved the November, January and March meeting minutes for posting, and the March conference call notes for internal review.

**Budget:** The budget submitted by the principal to DCPS following the March conference call was approved. The school will lose one language teacher, the librarian, and the aides in grades 1-5. Also, the art teacher will go to half-time. A little more money may come from DCPS; a difference of even seven students can have funding implications.

**School Resources:** The principal will work with the PTA to help fund office supplies that were not covered in the school budget approved by DCPS. The extent to which the PTA can help will be based on auction proceeds, which were not yet finalized by LSAT meeting time. These supplies are different from the SchoolKidz school supplies ordering program offered to parents; in any case, paper is part of the SchoolKidz order for virtually every classroom.

**Playground:** New playground equipment has arrived and was being assembled. In a week's time, the new padding was to be installed, with the possibility that the new playground would be ready by the end of that week. Many of the items reflect the school colors of green and gold.

**Mentoring:** Every new parent has been assigned a current parent. A few reassignments need to be made. The next messages to new parents will be about SchoolKidz, upcoming assessments, and the June 6 "Pre-K Day" at school. PTA information will be needed for that day.

**Enrollment:** There has been a bounce in in-boundary students since January.

**Parental Involvement:** Classroom parents should be on top of teacher and classroom needs. The sentiment was expressed that there needs to be more consistency. Should there be guidelines? Should there be an orientation – a face-to-face meeting among next year's classroom parents? The topic will be covered at a May 15 PTA officers meeting. A full roster of class parents should be in place before Labor Day, two weeks after school starts, so that Fall Fest and snack schedules can be gotten more easily in place. It was suggested that the more that be done online, the better; Survey Monkey was proposed as a tool to achieve that end. It was noted that school newsletters tend to be ignored by students in grades 3-5; it was suggested that classroom parents could send the Mustang as an attachment to get more eyeballs for it. While it was noted that some parents can use the computer lab, it was suggested a community-parent computer lab day to see what the school has to offer. Another point made was that the "specials" teachers could benefit from having access to the list of classroom parents when the teachers have identified particular needs.

**TV Turn-Off:** Its merits having been noted, the desire is to kick off TVTO at the start of the school year. Jennifer Pauk has said she'll need helpers to launch it for 2011-12.

**Aftercare:** A committee will be formed with parents whose children are currently in aftercare, with Mrs. Miles and Ms. Confer available. Springboard, which had pitched aftercare a year ago, is still waiting in the wings. It was noted that parents all too frequently fail to pay. As a result, aftercare is thousands of dollars in arrears.

**International Baccalaureate/Academic Enrichment:** The 2009-10 LSRT's Academic enrichment committee focused on IB, while this year things sputtered and the committee never got off the ground. There must be a focus on selected activities lest the committee lose focus. Should IB coordinator be on next year's LSAT to give the effort greater focus, or should the IB coordinator be invited to sit in on an as-needed basis?

**Behavior and Consequences Plan:** Focus on behavior and consequences at the start of the school year. There seem to be limited consequences today for bad behavior. Some behavior needs to be deterred; there is not a lot of repeat behavior by students. They have to be kept on constantly about this. The IB "Essential Agreements" texts are stored in a computer at the school. Parents must also be made to support the school's insistence on proper behavior, although the ignoring and hassling of teachers by parents also happens. Parents should respect any adult in the school building. It was suggested that chairs for meetings be arranged so that parents can see each other, and not just look at the speaker. PTA meetings now in the cafeteria aren't perfect, but more helpful in that respect. The school can use Back-to-School Night, Pre-K Day and before-school Orientation Day to bring home this message. Teachers could also offer workshops to parents, although it may be preaching to the choir. Could the PTA identify parents who would benefit from workshops? ... Another issue was the blockage of the crosswalk at 14<sup>th</sup> and Jonquil by parents' cars. The principal said she would ask for a new assessment and police enforcement.... Despite the new playground, teachers remain firm in their position that the auditorium is the best place for morning dropoff and afternoon pickup. ... Even though there is staff at the school by 7 a.m., there are almost always students who have been dropped off by their parents and are fending for themselves before the official 7:30 a.m. start of before-care. The school can call D.C. Social Services, but absent signs of neglect or abuse, there seems to be little that can be done. Can the PTA get a head start on this topic in August, praising and scolding parents who set a bad example?... The principal remarked that some of the us-and-them neighborhood/non-neighborhood feeling among parents has lessened as of late.... It was noted that parents' enthusiasm seems to wane by the time their children reach third grade. Can we excite their parents anew?

**Northwest Current:** There was spirited discussion about Shepherd's contribution to the Northwest Current's "School Dispatches" pages.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting, with both current and incoming LSAT members, will be held TUESDAY, JUNE 7, at 3:45 p.m. in the school library.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mark Pattison, secretary, Shepherd Elementary LSAT