

SHEPHERD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Minutes of Local School Advisory Team meeting of JUNE 11, 2014

Present: Kesha Pendergrast (parent representative), chair; Mark Pattison (parent representative), secretary; community representative: Carl Bergman; Washington Teachers Union representative: Tia Holt; teacher representative: Robin George; parent representative: Keith White; incoming parent representative: Aeva Doomes; plus principal intern Angel Hunter.

Absent: Kamilah O. Martin-Proctor, parent representatives; Elizabeth Guldin, Renee Hamer, Nicole Pethel, teacher representatives; Sherilyn Pruitt, PTA president; Jamie Miles, principal.

Bergman noted that if a new community representative is chosen by the parents, the LSAT listserv will need a new moderator.

Holt noted that the teachers have elected four representatives for 2014-15, but did not have their names handy.

Minutes: Bergman moved, Pattison seconded approval of the minutes. Motion carried.

Safe Routes to School: There was a recent meeting with a representative present from the D.C. Department of Transportation, in which traffic patterns were observed for the morning dropoff, with one person at each of the critical intersections at the school. The traffic survey was developed as a result, with both online and hard-copy versions distributed. The number of respondents was not known. Elliott wants new bike racks in a new location to foster use of bikes. There had been a meeting on Safe Routes subsequent to the traffic survey with the crossing guard present, covering such topics as distribution of decals, parents holding each other accountable, student incentives, and a regular bike or walk to school day. The traffic signal at 14th and Kalmia was also a subject of conversation.

Meeting with Kaya Henderson: Pattison was invited in mid-afternoon June 9 to attend an informal meeting with the DCPS chancellor that evening, with the primary audience being ANC representatives from Ward 4. Much of the discussion focused on Henderson's attitude/reply to the possibility of a stand-alone middle school for the north part of Ward 4 (north of Missouri Avenue). Henderson had acknowledged that DCPS has not sufficiently funded its K-8 schools and wanted

parents to give them a chance to improve. The topic is somewhat moot for Shepherd as current draft options in the school boundary realignment plans call for Shepherd graduates to feed to Deal Middle School, and then on to Wilson High School. There was a disagreement about the demographics in the north part of the ward, and the discussion was the most animated of the evening.

Year in review: Pendergrast listed many successes, with items not tackled completely by the LSAT in the single digits (out of a group of 40-plus).

Lessons Learned: Engaging parents is key. There are many activities regarded as schoolwide. What if things could be geared to smaller groups within the school? This could bring more parents. “First Grade Bingo” at another school was an example given. Considerations to take into account: Parking; the hassle of requiring teachers to be on hand more than once (say, for multiple Back to School Nights). Can we gear up the PTA to do things for new parents? How can we break things down to make events more intimate? Should we assemble students in the auditorium near the end of the day to provide teasers to an upcoming event (say, Literacy Night). This, of course, would require principal buy-in.

2014-15 LSAT nominations: White said he expected to have his hands full with an upcoming “Odyssey of the Mind” contest, which would take him out of the running for LSAT chair. He agreed to serve as interim chair until enough incoming members could attend to vote on a chair (or co-chairs or a vice-chair). Nominations for a secretary were likewise deferred. White did say he would recommend to the other parent representatives that Bergman be retained as community representative.

There were questions about growth plans for instructional aides, and whether aides were being retained as all the teachers had been for 2014-15 (they are).

The meeting was adjourned. No date was set for a summer meeting, which would have to be held at Takoma Education Campus, where Shepherd will be housed while renovations continue to take place.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Pattison, secretary
Shepherd Local School Advisory Team