

SHEPHERD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Minutes of Local School Advisory Team meeting of JUNE 6, 2012

Present: Nancy Ulba, chair; Tia Holt; Joele Michaud, Sherilyn Pruitt, Lisa Connor, Mark Pattison, Jacqueline Ajala, Robyn Brooks, Jamie Miles – and, briefly, at the end, Valena Valentine-Nelson.

Chosen as teacher representatives for the 2012-13 LSAT are Nancy Ulba, Tia Holt, Valena Valentine-Nelson and Joele Michaud. Chosen as parent representatives are Jacqueline Ajala, Lisa Connor, Mark Pattison and Sherilyn Pruitt.

Much of the meeting was spent on reviewing initiatives and activities of the previous year.

Academic Enrichment: The school was able to participate in GeoPlunge for grades 2-5 thanks to the PTA. There were timed GeoPlunge tournaments where Shepherd competed against other schools in DCPS and finished fourth and seventh in the two tournaments.

Safety: A petition campaign to, among other things, get the city to add a crossing guard at the intersection of Jonquil and 14th was sidetracked when petition signatures disappeared at Fall Fest. Parents were deemed the worst offenders – and the situation won't change unless parents are willing to scold their fellow parents. There is still a need for a second crossing guard. Mr. King was going to work on a safety patrol, but that never got off the ground. However, the school printed "tickets" for a student safety patrol to give to parking violators. The key is to stress good habits and to stick with it.

Retention and Recruitment: One idea for retention and recruitment was a brochure. Community representative JT Taransky has a mockup, but it never got produced. There is hope that the draft will be finalized and printed over the summer. The brochure should be able to be used for a year or two without alterations. ... Also, the principal went to the Shepherd Park Citizens Association's January potluck ... A survey was created by the committee to track reasons why parents take their children out of school, but it got lost. Can it be recovered over the summer? It may be that Patrick Grobbel, another community representative, has pieces of the survey

Community Engagement: There is a value to getting the community involved in the school. Can retirees help at lunchtime? Mornings? 3 p.m. dismissals? Nobody ever met with the principal to try to enact these ideas. ... The Shepherd Park Citizens Association's picnic is set for Sunday, June 24, at Lowell School. Mark said he would talk with picnic planners as to the possibility of a more formal presence for the school there.

Comments and Concerns: There was a lot of anecdotal evidence for why parents take their children out of Shepherd, including "churn" in third and fifth grades; setting up a child for a preferred middle school; going to private school (but much less so in the past four years), negative attitudes toward the upcoming year's teacher(s), and the focus on testing.; some of those reasons could be used in an exit survey. A point was raised that in many cases Shepherd's better students are transferred out. Mark Pattison said he would assemble an exit survey draft ...

Registration has exceeded the 50%+ mark, which allows the school to interview for impending teacher vacancies. Lisa Connor said she has a list of parents willing to make follow-up phone calls to encourage registration... Next year's grades and classes: two pre-K, two kindergarten, two first grade, three second grade, two or three third and fourth grade (both not three for each), two fifth grade. Jamie Miles said that while it is possible there could be a combined third-fourth grade class, that is not her preference. Teachers will be shuffled depending on the needs to be filled and the strengths of new hires. Jamie Miles alluded to the rigorous Teach DC pre-screening process, and that there was nobody in the pipeline from Teach for America. Further, requests for letters of recommendation to other schools have gone significantly down during a down economy.

Follow-up: There was some talk about the continuous lack of follow-up and follow-through. Rather than have the LSAT chair be an ex officio member of every committee, the preferred method of operation for 2012-13 would be task forces to get things accomplished within dates certain. ... Mark Pattison and Sherilyn Pruitt said they would work on the exit survey (it was done and available June 7, thanks to assistance from Joele Michaud) ... Lisa Connor to get the registration follow-up in motion. She said she would also work on the safety patrol issue, which could include some summertime safety training. ... Mark Pattison said he would inquire about the Shepherd Park Citizens Association picnic.

No election of LSAT officers for 2012-13 was conducted.

The next LSAT meeting will be **TUESDAY, JULY 24, at 10 A.M.**, inside the school.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Pattison