

**LSAT Budget Meeting**  
**Statement of Principles, Priorities and Process**  
**January 6, 2011**

- I. Process
- II. Budget Priorities
- III. Next Steps
- IV. Conclusion

**I. Process**

DCPS' Office of Community and Family Engagement commissioned Local School Advisory Teams (LSATs) with a schedule and process to advise Principals and administrative staff on the construction of FY2012 (School Year 2011-2012) School Budgets that reflect the priorities of the local school's community.

Following the filing of enrollment projections January 5, 2011 by principals to the Central Office, LSATs were directed to hold a special meeting to determine budget priorities in advance of budget allocation proposals. DCPS, in a December 16, 2010 meeting with LSAT chairs, cautioned participants to be mindful of DC Municipality budgetary shortfalls and the effect it would have on DCPS. LSATs were told to be prepared to "do more with less" and to anticipate as-yet-to-be-determined budget cuts across the board and to be mindful that "painful decisions" would have to be made.

DCPS also stated the need to solicit substantive community input in the budget development process. The Cluster LSAT met January 6, 2011 to review enrollment estimates and construct principles and tangible priorities to help guide the budget recommendations to reflect school-level needs.

The Cluster LSAT is responsible for the budget of Peabody ECC, Watkins Elementary and Stuart-Hobson Middle School. Montessori, with its expansion and move to Logan, has been directed by DCPS to form its own LSAT to consider its budget. School-Within-School (SWS) develops its own budget, yet Peabody and SWS share budgetary resources to maximize assets for both programs.

**II. Budget Priorities**

The Comprehensive School Plan (CSP) submitted by Principal Brandon Eatman to DCPS with guidance and recommendations from LSAT this past Fall serves as the foundation to guide budget priorities. The Capitol Hill Cluster School, "Where Every Child Achieves," strives to fulfill the following values:

- All children, regardless of background or circumstance, will be provided the opportunity to achieve
- All children, regardless of achievement level, background or circumstance, are entitled to substantive resources to boost their development and achievement
- All children should have the expectation, opportunity and resources to maximize their achievement
- Achievement is a function of effort and support, not innate ability

LSAT must work within the budgetary framework to fund and then implement strategies to achieve these values. There are three sections within the budget where LSAT established tangible priorities to support Capitol Hill Cluster School values.

**Personnel Services Priorities (Building Staffing):**

Value: Every student should receive the highest-level of individualized attention possible.

- Maintain developmentally-appropriate teacher-student ratios across all grade levels
- A priority to staffing that works directly with children across all achievement levels to maximize academic growth
- Resources for differentiated instruction: an equal focus on providing remedial, special education and advanced learning resources
- Foreign Language Curriculum Development at Watkins either through hiring full time teacher, Rosetta Stone, and/or distance learning

**Core Staffing (Mandatory Staffing):**

- Core staffing is a minimum threshold for every school to offer a standard level of programming, including: art, music, physical education in addition to “wraparound services” such as social workers and school psychologists
- Core staffing also includes support for Central Office Programs and Initiatives and office support staff
- LSAT notes that DCPS Chief-of-Staff Lisa Ruda spoke at the December 16, 2010 DCPS LSAT chair meeting of the opportunity for flexibility in Core Staffing requirements due to budgetary restraints if the case can be made that waivers would be in the best interest of student achievement

**Non-Personnel Spending: (Discretionary Budget)**

Value: Students should have access to reliable, current technology; the best practices and research-supported education initiatives led by highly-effective teachers supported by the necessary resources to effectively address achievement challenges; and a safe and clean learning environment.

- Technology (including maintenance and support/repairs for existing technology investments as well as upgrades and new purchases to unify across Cluster; the hiring of tech support to serve all three campuses)
- Professional development: the funding for Cluster teachers to seek and attend professional development opportunities that provide substantive support for the Cluster’s Core Values in concert with long-term planning to make it strategic, comprehensive, and useable. (Before next LSAT meeting, Amy Werthiemer and Suriya Douglas will develop list of professional development opportunities and potential costs; Administrative team will explore joining the DC Collaborative; or look into forming PD collaborative with Eastern and Stuart-Hobson feeders)
- Classroom/office supplies
- Custodial supplies

### **III. Next Steps**

- LSAT awaits the release of the “DCPS FY12 Budget Guide,” originally scheduled for January 4, 2011 to offer more information on the budget process and possible cut estimates
- Initial proposed budget allocations are scheduled to be released January 14, 2011 to Principals. It is recommended that once those proposals are released they are distributed to Cluster teachers and LSAT members.
- Availability will also be made to the Cluster community at-large. Input, recommendations and comments can be made to LSAT Co-Chairs Marc Osgoode Smith ([osgoodesmith@msn.com](mailto:osgoodesmith@msn.com)) or Vince Morris ([vsморris@gmail.com](mailto:vsморris@gmail.com))
- Administrators will hold a second Teacher Data/Leadership Team meeting before 6pm, Thursday, January 20 to seek input and recommendations.
- LSAT will hold a closed-door session budget meeting Thursday, January 20, 2011 at 6pm at Stuart-Hobson to make its recommendations and approve a budget for submission to DCPS
- From January 19-26, 2011, Principals and LSAT Co-Chairs will have the opportunity to schedule “Technical Assistance Sessions” with the Central Office to address waivers or special circumstances.
- February 3, 2011: Final Budgets to be submitted.

### **IV. Conclusion**

The Capitol Hill Cluster School faces three challenges: the impending cut in budgetary resources due to the city’s reduced revenues; a tight timeframe in which to react and develop remedies to minimize any negative impact; and a tight time-frame in which to maximize community input.

The Capitol Hill Cluster School LSAT is commissioned with managing those challenges on behalf of the school community. In crafting its recommendations for the FY12 Cluster budget, it will be guided by the principles enumerated in this document as well as the Cluster’s Comprehensive School Plan (CSP). LSAT has set out a schedule by which these recommendations will be developed. Finally, it has developed opportunities for all community members to have access and offer input into those recommendations.

LSAT’s over-riding guidance will be to channel any and all available resources to achieve the maximum educational experience for every one of our students.