

## **LSAT Minutes: Cluster Budget Process March 10, 2011**

Cluster Principal Brandon Eatman informed LSAT of the budget process for the 2011-2012 School Year. Proposed campus allocations should be available on DCPS's web site either currently or in the next few days.

The budget was released to principals Friday March 4, 2011 with a two-week deadline for LSAT recommendations. What was not revealed to the LSAT by DCPS was that there was a one-week deadline for the receipt of "petitions" for changes in core staffing in Comprehensive Staffing Model" (CSM). Core staffing are positions considered mandatory by DCPS, yet there are allowances to seek modifications by individual schools.

For example, since DCPS considers the Capitol Hill Cluster School three different schools from a budget perspective, it has allocations for three principals, while the Cluster model requires four assistant principals. Thus the Principal must formally petition to have the modifications changed.

Principal Eatman detailed each petition within each campus so that the budget would reflect the unique organizational structure of the Cluster, with each petition receiving approval from LSAT. Once those petitions are granted, LSAT will meet again, Thursday, March 17, 2011 in closed-door session to review final allocations and make recommendations for flexible funding, which allocates resources to fund staff needs that are unique to the Cluster's programs and goals.

LSAT affirmed that it would be guided by its "Statement of Principles, Priorities and Process" approved at its January 6, 2011 budget meeting in making recommendations once final numbers are released.

The LSAT notes with disappointment that DCPS was not in compliance with its stated "Role of DCPS Central Office" in its "Local School Advisory Team Guidelines: School Year 2010-2011, whereby:

"DCPS' Office of Family and Public Engagement shall:

- ensure that principals, in a timely a manner as possible, have the necessary material – data, budgets, DCPS school policies and mandates to the LSAT – to share with their teams."

Aside from not informing LSAT of the time-limit on "petitioning," DCPS did not make, as of the Thursday LSAT Budget meeting, "QuickBase" available to principals. QuickBase is a vital software tool that allows principals to plug in budget allotments that reflect the individual needs of the school. Without that tool, principals are hampered in providing a clearer picture of budget challenges and areas in need of LSAT attention.