



Capitol Hill Cluster School

Where Every Child Achieves

Peabody | Watkins | Stuart-Hobson | A DC Public School

LSAT Meeting Minutes Watkins Elementary School October 8, 2019

LSAT Member Attendees: Meg Booth (Chair), Annie Slattery, Ebon McPherson, AP Angry, AP Boisvert, Finnuala Tessier, Katherine Antos, Jenn Loeb, Jherlyn Brady, Principal Comeforo, Principal Bell, Kate Fiske, Pamela Dickerson, Tiffany Kaijage, Lauren Tate, Tatiana Sheppard

Katie Mustian (DCPS Central Office) and approximately 20 parents were also present.

LSAT Open Business

Discussed LSAT guidelines to post minutes within 3 days, retain for 5 years, and have audio recordings of minutes. Katie Mustian confirmed DCPS' intent is to support transparency and access to LSAT meetings. DCPS is not out to get LSATs that do not fully adhere to these guidelines.

Elected Tiffany Kaijage as Co-Chair, Katherine Antos as Secretary, and Jherlyn Brady as Community Representative.

Comprehensive School Plans (CSPs) and LSAT Priorities

Principals Comeforo and Bell shared their draft CSPs with LSAT for the purpose of gathering feedback and discussing areas that could be potential priorities for LSAT. The CSPs are for 1 year and are also part of a 3-year template that supports longer term planning. Each CSP follows the DCPS framework that includes shared leadership, engagement, culture of achievement and academics. The Principals noted that school staff and DCPS' Central Office are also reviewing the CSPs and use them to determine how they can support schools in implementing CSP actions. To that end, the Principals prefer to not significantly change the CSPs so that the focus can be on implementation.

Stuart Hobson CSP – Principal Comeforo

- Shared leadership
 - Goals for teachers and students based on Panorama survey, which is administered to teachers, students and parents
 - Parent communication
- Engagement
 - How is school communicating to partners, including number of people reading newsletter
 - Retention

- Culture of achievement
 - Increasing student satisfaction. Ensure all students feel loved, challenged, and prepared
 - Insight Survey – looking to increase peer culture
 - Decrease chronic absenteeism
- Academics
 - Increase PARCC scores
 - Reduce lowest level PARCC scores (1 and 2)
 - Increase year on student growth
- All of CSP has an equity lens that considers how school is working to close achievement gap

Peabody/Watkins CSP – Principal Bell

- Shared leadership – Teacher-focused and also draws on Panorama Survey
 - Create learning space that supports teachers as well as students
 - Distributive leadership – have teachers support decision-making and improvements through the teacher teams such as Conscious Discipline Team and Academic Teams
- Engagement
 - Retention. Increase re-enrollment rate from Pre-K through middle school. Could be area to engage with PTA and LSAT
- Culture of achievement: Want students to experience joy and rigor at school
 - Conscious discipline – new SEL framework that is a 3-5 year plan to improve student culture. Deliberatively being rolled out through work with trainer.
 - Attendance: Overall this is a strength (around 96%) but still want to show improvement
 - Opportunities for student voice and engagement
- Academic achievement: Joy and rigor again a thread
 - Writer’s Workshop: Proven approach that is already generating positive feedback
 - Math: Eureka Math (District curriculum) not fun for teachers or students
 - Response to intervention: How to support students with greatest academic and/or social needs early on. This also fits under culture of achievement

LSAT members and parent observers broke into school-specific groups to discuss CSPs further. When LSAT reconvened, Principal Bell noted that schools have limited capacity to support multiple priorities from LSAT. She is interested in LSAT support to understand why families are leaving vs staying at Cluster, as need to be sure that get to “why” of retention. For academics, Principals initially preference is to focus any LSAT efforts on writing (Writers Workshop) vs math.

Public Comments and Campus Culture

- How much are teachers out for professional development, requiring a substitute?
 - Admin team wants teachers in classroom as much as possible and looking into ways to minimize removing teachers from classroom.
 - Currently out for quarterly planning meeting (only half-day this quarter), IEP meeting (could be anytime) and LEAP (decreased to only missing 45 minutes/week class time)
- Are there CSP goals for retaining highly effective teachers?
 - Bell: Yes. Math teacher turnover has been part of challenge for math instruction. There are no CSP-specific goals for teacher retention, but retaining teachers addressed in Shared Leadership section. Focus on what teachers need to feel supported

- Need to talk more about culture and academic rigor if want to address retention. Families from out-of-bounds have considered leaving Cluster due to culture problems that are no fault of school, teachers or administration and concerns about academic rigor.
- Suggestion: Survey to ask whether families see themselves being here in a year at beginning of year, if not why and what they are looking for from school, and re-evaluate at end of year to see if they re-enroll
- Concern 4th and 5th grades are not learning environments. Inadequate specials – not seeing art or music come home. Classroom management best practices aren't being practiced in specials.

The LSAT meeting ended at approximately 8:15 pm.