



Capitol Hill Cluster School

Where Every Child Achieves

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

LSAT Meeting Minutes Stuart Hobson Middle School March 3, 2020

LSAT Member Attendees: : Meg Booth (Chair), Tiffany Kaijage (Chair), Principal Comeforo, Principal Bell, AP Hollis, Alva Abdussalaam, Katherine Antos, Vernastene Black, Kate Fiske, Kimberly Griffin, Rachel Houghton, Jenn Loeb, Ebon McPherson, Tatiana Sheppard, Annie Slattery, Lauren Tate, Finnuala Tessier, Brittany Wade

Approximately 8 parents also attended

PTA Survey

Maeve McKean (PTA President) and Jenn Loeb (PTA representative to LSAT) shared findings from the PTA Family Survey.

Background:

- PTA developed survey in response to discussion at October 2019 LSAT meeting in which LSAT and Cluster families identified need to better understand factors affecting retention
- Race, Equity and Class Working Group provided comments on survey; LSAT did not. If survey administered again, will ensure LSAT members receive draft survey for review
- Recognize families leaving not unique to Cluster, but still want to better understand why
- 263 parents responded – largest number from Peabody, followed by Watkins then Stuart Hobson
- Findings were provided to the Cluster community via googlegroups

Survey findings:

- What made families choose Cluster: Community, diversity, teachers
- Ever considered other school options: only 18% never have
- Reasons look at other schools:
 - Insufficient communication
 - Lack of academic rigor (though full extent of academic programs may not be well communicated)
 - Classroom management
 - Concerns over school bullying - PTA meeting devoted to school bullying. Every school should have a bullying point of contact (POC) and plan. Cluster has these POCs at each school but few know who they are or how to report

- Want honor society – Stuart Hobson has one. Looking into it for Watkins
- Difficult to further analyze findings by campus given limits of online survey tool
- Overarching theme: Need to tell Cluster story better. Survey helped to identify priority topics to better communicate

Next steps:

- For each of the recommendations, PTA has taken steps to address
- PTA willing to use Cluster website to provide information on topics identified as high priority for better communications
- Interest from LSAT and community members in additional questions to ask. Will provide opportunities to review draft of any future survey

Campus Updates

Stuart-Hobson

- Filled custodial vacancies
- Space camp “taking off” in 2 weeks. PTA provided many full and partial scholarships
- Finalized PTA grants: Reading intervention field trip, cursive writing club, D&D club
- Seeking lacrosse coach so can offer co-ed team
- Ms. Black got grant for surplus computers from federal government for Stuart Hobson
- 8th graders in push for high school applications
- Saturday: Cheerleading championships and several students in Honors Ensemble at Duke Ellington

Watkins, Peabody

- Several activities coming this spring as part of embassy adoption program
- Boys basketball in championships
- Coaches reaching out to recruit 4th and 5th grade students for spring sports
- Prepping for PARCC Assessment. Working with PTA for Saturday PARCC Academy – PTA paying for teachers to do this. 4th year offered
- Identifying new principal:
 - Instructional Superintendent Stover working with LSAT co-chairs
 - 2 community meetings will be held this spring
- Custodial team fully staffed
- Ms. Nigro has started as long-term sub for Ms. Stewart
- Black History presentations this week and several exploratory field trips in weeks ahead

Coronavirus Preparedness

- Reinforcing hygiene practices:
 - Ensure hand-washing happening at school
 - Working with families to reinforce responsible hygiene
- Principal Bell:
 - Custodial team disinfecting door knobs, furniture.
 - Inventorying soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels (just Peabody), tissues.
 - Will work with after cares (Flex, Joe’s Den, Rita’s Place) to ensure they are cleaning, disinfecting given after cares use some classrooms after custodial staff come through

- Will work with schools and after cares to solicit donations of any needed materials
- Principal Comeforo: Could use hand sanitizer donations
- Reinforce importance of keeping anyone who is sick home in order to protect the health of students, teachers, and administrative staff
- DCPS cancelling international trips between now and May. Be aware that there may be additional cancellations (such as domestic trips)

Public Comments

- How is bullying defined and is there really a lot of it happening?
 - Principal Bell: Not many instances of actual (reported) bullying, but cases taken very seriously. Less than 5 cases at Watkins reported, investigated, and interaction with parents. But recognized instances may be under-reported.
 - Any instance should be reported to the teacher and Principal.
 - Disconnect between perception vs reported amounts of bullying. Unsure if this is because:
 - Lack of knowledge of what qualifies as bullying
 - Not knowing how to report
 - Don't want to report
 - Bullying one of issues raised on PTA survey, and PTA willing to put more information on Cluster website on bullying

Public meeting ended at 7:20. Remainder was LSAT only to discuss final campus budget submissions.

Next meeting: April 7th at Watkins.