

## Ludlow Taylor LSAT Meeting

**Date:** 2/13/24  
Virtual/Zoom

**Time:** 6:00 pm

**Location:**

**In Attendance:** Penelope Miller (Principal); Heather Martin (parent rep); Caleb Ward (Parent rep); Sandy Watson (Assistant Principal); Rodney Parker (2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher & teacher rep); Audriana Henderson (ECE CES & teacher rep); Cate Brandon (parent rep & chair); Elisabeth Golub (4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, teacher rep, secretary) Yakeema Blackstone (Pre-K 3 teacher, teacher rep). Up to 15 other teachers & community members

### Planned Agenda

- Nutrition Committee update
- Budget updates (open door)
- Budget Updates (closed door)

### Meeting Notes (**action items in red**)

Minutes from last meeting approved.

#### Nutrition Committee

- Michelle Hines, parent spearheading the Nutrition Committee, provided an update. She shared that they have been moving slowly in part because it's a self-selected group and not representative of the broader LT community. For example, committee members are mostly White, affluent, and care deeply about this issue.
- The first Committee project is creating a document for ECE & Kindergarten parents about snacks. The document, when finalized, will share suggestions for families to help plan classroom snacks (not prescriptive). The goal is to help families choose snacks that are easy for teachers, healthy, kid-approved, and abide by any allergy restrictions in the classroom.
- Michelle stressed that the committee is soliciting feedback at various stages. They will be presenting the document to ECE teachers, then the broader parent community, edit as needed, also solicit feedback from the Administration. After all that, the Committee will share with room parents to share with all families. The goal is to have the document finalized by the beginning of next school year.

- Michelle went on to address rumors she has heard about what the Nutrition Committee is planning. She explained that she is a pediatrician, and she understands that what parents feed their children is a personal and cultural choice, something that parents take great pride in. In her words, the parents on the Nutrition Committee feel fortunate to be part of a school that maybe our kids get a little too much love when it comes to food. They know that it comes from a good place and want to balance that with the health concerns that our community has. She encouraged teachers and families on the call to reach out to her.
- Parent rep asked if the Nutrition Committee can share documents w LSAT so we can give feedback. **Michelle said she can share the draft documents with LSAT as they come together.**
- A teacher on the call shared the concern that Michelle was saying that non-affluent, non-White parents didn't care about their children's nutrition. Michelle thanked the teacher for sharing their concern and stated that was not what she meant. She explained that she was Korean American, married to a Black man, and parent to two Black children. She shared an anecdote that growing up her mother learned to make one kind of "American" sandwich so that she (Michelle) could bring it to school for lunch and not worry about being made fun of for having "strange" food. Michelle stated that culture & race matter, and she doesn't want what's coming out of the Nutrition Committee to seem like "what White people think about nutrition is better." She explained that her intention was to say that the committee is composed of mostly White & affluent parents, and that there is self-awareness that their viewpoint will be biased. They are trying out best to seek out viewpoints that are not represented on the committee, and she is hoping more people will join.
- A parent on the call said that their hope was to center the voices of LT teachers; maybe take a more "moderate" approach and prioritize what teachers think. A teacher on the call shared that they would be very interested in joining.
- LSAT shared stated that it would be great to get more teachers involved, and shared Michelle's contact information: [michelledorothyhines@gmail.com](mailto:michelledorothyhines@gmail.com)  
703-967-9464

## Budget

- Dr. Miller shared that DCPS released the school budgets. There is some public information, which can be discussed in the larger LSAT meeting. There will also be part of the discussion for a closed-door meeting with LSAT members.
- Dr. Miller shared that overall, the school has been allocated 7.1 million dollars for next year. 3.9 million is flexible, the remainder is for “fixed” positions. Dr. Miller shared her screen, showing the page with the fixed positions. These include: 1 school leadership position (principal); 12 ECE positions; 12 Sped positions (3 inclusion teachers, 3 teachers for self-contained classrooms, and each classroom is assigned 2 aides); a 0.5 ELL teacher position; Schoolwide instructional support (librarian). There are also “locked” positions supporting student social emotional well-being: a full time psychologist, a full time social worker, and a 0.5 social worker. There are also 4 custodians.
- Dr. Miller explained that classroom teachers & other positions are not locked into our budget when it is sent to us. We take the remaining money and purchase classroom teachers, specials teachers, a Kindergarten aides.
- The PTO president shared that LT seems to be under-allocated for special education positions compared to other schools. Almost all schools on the Hill seem to have more (e.g. Brent, Maury, Watkins). She suggested that this could be an area where Dr. Miller might be able to successfully petition for additional funds. Perhaps our students with Special education needs might be undercounted because we went without a school psychologist for so long. This situation seems to fit with the scenarios listed by DCPS as acceptable for a petition.
- Miller responded that the number of students with IEPs and their corresponding hours are part of the budget allocation. She explained that a petition is different from budget assistance. For example, with the 0.5 Social Worker position, we can take that money and turn it into something else. Budget assistance, asking for another position to be added to our staff, is a different process.
- Dr. Miller went on to say that when we look at our current staffing model with next year’s budget, we are in a deficit. There are a few changes to schools the budgeting process at work. Last year, WTU contract was not allocated into the budget. This year, ET-15 positions are more expensive

this year. Also, the addition of the .5 ELL teacher will be hired and paid for through our budget. We previously had few ELL students, so it was a less than half-time position, so DCPS assigned us an itinerant ELL teacher.

- An LSAT parent rep asked if Dr. Miller could explain upcoming targets & deadlines to the larger group on the call. Dr. Miller stated that the first petitions are due Friday (2/16), One thing she would like to petition for is some changes to the structure of the custodial staff. The second round of petitions are due next Tuesday (2/20), and the final budgets are due next Friday (2/23).

\*End of public meeting, beginning of closed-door meeting for LSAT members\*