

Ludlow Taylor December LSAT Meeting

Date: 2/20/25

Time: 6:30 pm

Location: Zoom

In Attendance: Penelope Miller (Principal); Beth Ward-O'Connor (Parent Rep, Co-Chair); Channing Cooper (Teacher Rep, Co-Chair); Elisabeth Golub (Teacher Rep, Secretary); LaQuontinesha Atchinson (WTU Building Rep) ; Angelle Baugh (PTO Co-President); Chris Hanley (PTO Co-President); Shoko Satoh (Parent Rep), Ms. Joseph (Teacher Rep)

About 9 additional teachers/parents/community members on the call

Proposed Agenda

1. **Progress reports on prior LSAT agenda items**

- *Hiring updates*
- *Technology/device distribution updates*
- *School communication updates*
- *Playground policy updates*
- *Lice & other communicable diseases*

2. **Community Survey re: Budget Priorities**

3. **Any Other Business?**

Notes **[action items in red]**

1. **Progress reports on prior LSAT agenda items**

Hiring updates **[Slide 4]**

- Co-chair reported that the new music teacher has started, and the new SWD teacher is scheduled to start on Monday, 2/24
- Dr. Miller shared she has not sent out the letter to 1st grade families informing them the request for an additional 1st grade teacher was denied (an action item dating back to the November LSAT meeting). **Action Item: Dr. Miller stated that she will send out the letter to 1st grade families on Monday, 2/24, when she sends out the family newsletter.**
- Co-chair asked about an update on Sped hours not being met, another action item from the January meeting. Dr. Miller stated that she now had that information but needed to remove identifying info to protect student privacy. A “handful” of students are affected, concentrated in 3rd & 5th grade. **Action Item: Dr. Miller stated that she would send out the number of Sped students affected and the number of hours to make up to LSAT members on Friday, 2/21.**
- A parent on the call asked Dr. Miller to clarify what a “handful” means—how many students with IEP are missing hours, and how many total hours?

- Another parent on the call requested an update on another matter related to special education. The parent reported that their child is in the ECE CES class, and the teacher has been out several days a week on maternity leave for most of the school year. The parent reported that there has not been a substitute for the teacher when they are out. The parent specified that the CES teachers was in the classroom one day a week during the months of October, November & December, and has been in the classroom two days a week beginning in January. This parent stated that parents of students in that classroom have not received any information about a substitute teacher. This parent was very concerned about not having a “trained professional” in the classroom to support students, some of whom are non-verbal.
- Dr. Miller responded that the lead teacher in that classroom, while on leave, still is supporting with planning and supervision. The school has had a few substitutes, but no one in there consistently. The parent asked why this is the case, and if it's legal. Dr. Miller responded that the teacher in that classroom is allowed to take maternity leave. The school has posted that opening, but hasn't been able to fill it. Additionally, she explained that a substitute teacher hired for that class wouldn't have to be licensed. The parent replied that they were open to discussing this concern further with Dr. Miller after the meeting, but stressed that “these kids have a lot of needs.” This parent added that their child is supposed to receive quarterly progress reports, but they have not yet received any. This parent wondered how the lead teacher could fill out the progress reports if the teacher isn't consistently in the classroom.
- A parent rep asked if the school administration has considered assigning the new SWD teacher to the ECE CES classroom until the teacher returns from maternity leave in March. Dr. Miller stated that has not been considered. She explained that the new teacher's background is with upper-elementary and middle school students, and the teacher is not trained in working with children with autism. **Action Item(s): Dr. Miller stated that she will discuss the possibility of the new SWD teacher supporting the CES ECE classroom with the rest of the special education team. She will also look into the status of the progress reports for students in that classroom.**
- Dr. Miller stated that, after looking at the information about IEP hours and student coverage, she determined there were 10 students missing hours. A parent rep asked what percentage this was of all students with IEPs at the school. Dr. Miller replied there are about 60 students with IEP (not including students in the CES classes), meaning roughly 17% of students are missing hours.
- A parent rep asked about the delivery of make-up IEP hours—is it better to spread make up hours out, or to deliver them in larger amounts? Dr. Miller replied that it depends, since learning was really about “the number of reps at bat.” I.e., hours can be lumped together or spread out.
- Co-chair suggested that in the next regular LSAT meeting, Dr. Miller could share a sketched-out plan of how the new Sped teacher is being utilized. **Action Item: Dr. Miller**

agreed to provide an update on the progress of making up missed hours at the next LSAT meeting.

- A parent asked why information about sped hours has been so hard for the school to provide. Dr. Miller replied that sped teachers don't document hours in the same way as related service providers (e.g., speech and occupational therapists). Routinely, sped teachers in inclusion settings don't track hours. A parent followed up to ask why not if these are federally mandated. Dr. Miller replied that the way that the school ensures hours are being met is through sped teachers' schedules. In her experience, it's not standard to track hours in DCPS or Montgomery County Public School, the two systems she's most familiar with.
- A parent asked how the school responds when a parent raises concerns that their child is not getting their hours, if there is no tracking of hours. One of the co-chairs asked if this is something the school could do next year. Dr. Miller asked if the parent was suggesting the school do this just for sped teachers. The co-chair responded that the school system tracks instructional days overall (e.g., determining if there is a need to make up school days due to snow days), and it made sense to track sped hours specifically since they are legally required. Another parent raised the point that not tracking sped instructional hours raises questions about the validity of the data the school might provide around missed IEP hours. I.e., why should a parent believe it when the school tells them their child is missing x hours. Dr. Miller replied that the school has asked the Sped teacher working with the understaffed grades (3rd & 5th grade) to track hours.

Technology updates **[Slide 5]**

- The conversation turned to technology updates. A teacher shared that they have gotten new devices, but some are not functional (e.g., iPads that don't allow students to get on the i-ready instructional programs). Mr. Barnes, the Manager of Strategy & Logistics (MLS) is aware, but hasn't been able to provide a timeframe of when the devices will be fixed or replaced. A parent rep noted that when the head of technology joined an LSAT meeting earlier in the school year, he stated that schools should maintain a stockpile of extra devices at school. This parent wondered if Mr. Barnes needs to request more items to have extras on hand.
- A co-chair wondered if it would be helpful to do another survey of teachers, to see how widespread this issue is. A teacher on the call shared that a larger issue is the quality of the student devices (specifically referring to the 1:1 tablets used by 3rd-5th graders). Dr. Miller noted that Mr. Barnes has created an online form for tracking tech needs, and wondered if teachers are using the form. A teacher pointed out that when teachers submit a request, they don't know if the request has been received or what the turnaround time is for meeting the request. Dr. Miller added that some requests need to go through Mr. Bruno, our OCTO person, and some things are not quick (e.g., re-imaging iPads). PTO co-president confirmed that the PTO has not received any tech-related supply requests.

- **POSSIBLE action item: Mr. Barnes check in with teachers to get an updated tech inventory/ensure they know about/are using the tech request form?**

Communication update [Slide 6]

- Co-chair reported that Remind app seems to be working for most families. She also shared that she has an upcoming call with someone from DCPS Community Affairs to see if anything else can be done to fix issues with Blackboard.

Playground update [Slide 7]

- Co-chair reported that the playground is now open on weekends and holidays. No public code, and there are new policies around trash disposal. So far the system seems to be working well.

Lice and other communicable conditions reporting [Slide 8]

- Co-chair summarized the discussion from last meeting. It was proposed that families can be asked to voluntarily report lice, strep, and other communicable conditions to the classroom teacher & nurse, and classroom teachers can share that info with families. Several parents on the call reported getting such communications from their children's teachers. Co-chair asked if there was official communication about this coming from the administration. **Action Item: Dr. Miller will share this practice with families AND teachers (families are asked to voluntarily share communicable conditions with classroom teacher & nurse; classroom teacher can share anonymously with classroom families).** Upcoming staff meeting might be a good venue for sharing with staff.

2. Community Survey re: Budget Priorities [Slides 10-23]

- Co-chair provided an overview of the data collected from the survey so far. 123 respondents, which is more than last year. Less staff participating (so far) than last year, and little participation from families of students in self-contained CES classrooms. There seems to be decent participation by families of students with IEPs, and there seems to be high participation of ECE families. The survey didn't collect data about respondents' grade-level affiliation (e.g., grade-levels of students from families who responded, grade levels taught by teachers who responded). The survey will remain open until DCPS releases next year's budget.
- Co-chair summarized respondents' priorities [Slides 13 & 14], and their input on potential funding cuts [Slide 15], and well as opportunities to add a staff member [Slide 16]. Preserving specials classes/teachers & ensuring small class sizes came through as notable priorities. Respondents identified eliminating a member of the wellness team as a priority IF budget cuts were necessary. Respondents also prioritized adding a resource teacher to support students below grade level. The co-chair also explained they included a slide of

“representative feedback” [**Slide 17**]- comments that seemed to capture themes from across the response.

- There was a question about the role of a behavior tech, and how that role differs from a Restorative Justice Coordinator (RJC), which LT currently. Dr. Miller, as well a parent on the call who is a social worker, clarified that an RJC can deal with individual student behavior & incidents, but also works on school-wide issues. An RJC can be pro-active, for example leading trainings or implementing SEL curriculum. A Behavior tech, by contrast, deals with behavior incidents and may also support behavioral support classrooms; they are more akin to an aide. Behavior Techs don't receive specialized training, and are less expensive than an RJC position.
- Dr. Miller added that at LT, the RJC partners with the Wellness team on school wide and pro-active efforts to support SEL. The RJC is responsible for documenting & coordinating with central office when we do have serious behavior issues. A parent asked if Dr. Miller could provide some examples of what the RJC is currently doing with classes & grade levels. There was another question about the Healthy Relationships program, which the school social worker brought to the school this year. Dr. Miller confirmed the Healthy Relationships program is being implemented. It's being taught by certain specials teachers (the PE teachers & the librarian), though not on a weekly basis. .
- The co-chair summarized survey respondents' feedback on any opportunities for “extras” [**Slides 18-20**]. Several different priorities came through, though Foodprints and more differentiation (support for students below & above grade level) were particularly salient. One comment shared had to do with additional support for the library. PTO co-president stated that there's a new PTO committee, meeting next week, which will specifically look at supporting the school library.
- The co-chair explained that the survey wasn't able to really collect responses specifically from families of students in the self-contained CES classrooms. Survey respondents didn't seem to understand the question(s) aimed specifically at those families (i.e., folks responded that didn't seem to actually have kids in that classroom). The survey so far has captured feedback from families of students with IEPs [**slides 22-23**], who reported a range of satisfaction and experiences.
- The co-chair explained that there were questions on the survey specifically intended to measure ECE families' priorities for specials classes. The context for these questions was a shift in LT's Spanish teacher's role this year; she also became the part-time ELL teacher, and therefore was unable to continue offering Spanish classes to the ECE classrooms. Parents of ECE students who responded to the survey seemed to prioritize their children's access to art and music (i.e. didn't put Spanish as more important than those Specials).
- There was a brief discussion of the logistics of the LSAT's role in the Budget process. Dr. Miller explained that she consults with the LSAT, but ultimately has to make the final decisions regarding the budget. There are some positions that are required and can't be

touched. There's usually some back and forth with DCPS as part of this process. LSAT will need to meet about this, and the rules state that the meeting has to start off as an open meeting, and then be moved into a "closed door" session once the discussion turns to budget specifics. LSAT needs to announce the meeting two days in advance to the community, so there will likely be a short turn-around time. **Action Item: LSAT members agreed to tentatively hold Wednesday 2/26 @ 6:30 pm next week for a budget meeting.** The time may have to change depending on when DCPS release the budget.

- Before the meeting was adjourned, a parent asked for confirmation for when parents of students with IEPs in grades understaffed for Sped teachers would be notified of 1) the number of hours of missed specialized instruction and 2) the plan for making up those hours. **Action Item: Dr. Miller stated that families of kids missing IEP service hours would be notified of total number of missed hours and the plan for making up by the end of next week (by Friday, 2/28).** The parent stated that was not acceptable, since parents haven't been updated since the fall. Dr. Miller stated that the plan for make-ups would need to be developed with the new SWD teacher, and she's not starting until Monday. A teacher rep added that Dr. Miller should be able to share the number of hours with families when that information is shared with LSAT (Friday, 2/21), and the plan for making up could be shared once it's developed.
- **Notes from December and January LSAT meetings approved**
- **Meeting adjourned**