

JOHN EATON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Washington, DC

Local School Restructuring Team (LSRT)

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, April 8, 2008

Minutes

Members in Attendance: Jacqueline Gartrell, Laura Broach, Carolyn Barnhart, Susan Eastman, Lisa Freda, Margot Berkey, David Shapinsky, Noah Steinberg, Joy Wallis, Claudia Withers

I. Principal's Report

General Updates

- Fourth graders were able to go on a field trip to the Chesapeake Bay --- the 4th grade teachers secured a grant to subsidize the trip. A good time was had by all.
- Fifth graders will be going to the Newseum's opening day on April 11. They may be featured on "Good Morning America."
- Also, Eaton fifth graders were well represented as regional semi-finalists in a writing competition in which students wrote to the authors of their favorite books. We had 11 or 12 semi-finalists.
- There are plans for the 3d graders to visit Mayor Fenty's Bullpen.
- On April 17, 2008, educators from China will be touring John Eaton.
- On April 18, 2008, there will be a Spirit Assembly, at which our cheerleaders will perform. Also, that afternoon, there will be a Peace & Harmony Run.

School Administration

- Mrs. Gartrell expects to receive Eaton's budget this week from DCPS administration. There will likely need to be a special LSRT meeting to digest and act on the information she gets.
- Eaton has a waiting list for preK and Kindergarten classes for the coming school year.
- A majority of Eaton staff and faculty will be returning next year.
- Our new custodian --- Mr. Waymer --- is on board.
- Ms. Gartrell has heard a rumor that summer school would be housed at Eaton this summer --- she has not been officially

informed. She hopes that we could get a break this summer so we can prepare for the coming year.

Special Education activities

- In general, there has been more positive interaction between plaintiffs lawyers in Blackman Jones and DCPS re provision of services in special education.
- There have been **preliminary** conversations among the principals in the Northwest schools about the potential entry of some students requiring special education supports into these schools. This is all in the planning and discussion stage.
- LSRT discussed issue of whether Eaton is providing what is necessary for our current special education students. Ms. Gartrell noted that we are working to respond effectively to their needs. We still need to work on some things, but we are doing better. Eaton currently has approximately 20 students who have special education needs.

II. **Principal Selection**

- Laura Broach heard from John Davis that Chancellor Rhee is waiting to be able to inform all schools at once regarding their principal selection processes.
- LSRT members discussed possible next steps while we wait for official announcements from DCPS. The conversation included:
 - moving ahead with LSRT priorities as delineated in our Local School Plan
 - put something out on the Eaton List serve, so parents know that there is a delay

III. **Planning for Next Year**

The group deliberated about the challenges and benefits associated with finding space for another K class before classrooms are available in the building when the 6th graders move to middle school. First, it was unanimous that previous notions of moving walls, changing doorways, etc. to enlarge some of our smaller classrooms were not feasible because they will require capital funds for non-emergency renovations. That was deemed unrealistic at this time. Secondly, despite a very positive conversation between Ms. Gartrell and Ms. Rogers about the possibility of JEAP having to use shared space throughout the building, the group felt that this would require too radical a shift in JEAP operations and could

increase costs to the JEAP program. Nonetheless, the JEAP rooms and PE room were identified as the only appropriate spaces in our facility that can house a class of 20 children, with a sink in the room, and bathrooms nearby. A compromise solution was sought that would not entirely disrupt JEAP or the PE program. The solution is aimed at ensuring office space for both JEAP and Ms. Magruder's needs, a base of operations for JEAP, and a space that can be used for PE classes during the day. Thus, the group felt that the best option was to combine JEAP and PE into one room for one year. A carefully planned use of space, the pairing down of some furnishings in the JEAP room, and new storage equipment/space will be needed in order to make this work effectively. This will not be an easy adjustment for either program, but the LSRT members felt it would be the only way to manage Eaton's needs in the short term. The driving goal of the LSRT is to ensure that Eaton will be able to withstand the loss of a grade of students without a significant loss of financial resources for the school. This means we must build the student population in the lower grades starting immediately.

In light of the above discussion, the LSRT voted unanimously to add a third Kindergarten class and to authorize Trish Berman to begin to notify parents accordingly.

IX. Next official Meeting scheduled for 4 pm on May 13, 2008. Given the budget issues --- there will probably be a special meeting called as soon as Mrs. Gartrell receives the budget for next year.

Minutes submitted by Claudia A. Withers