

Minutes
John Eaton Elementary School Home & School Association (HSA) Board Meeting
December 11, 2007
6:00-8:00pm
John Eaton Library

Present: Carolyn Barnhardt, Jeff Baxter, Lisa Baxter, Kim Bayliss, Annie Berman, Trish Berman, Mark Boss, Laura Bowman, Sheri Carline, Cathy Conger, Monica Davy, Anne Dullea, Joe Dullea, Susan Eastman, Marianne Eby, Kelley Ellsworth, Jacqueline Gartrell, Sari Henry, Renee Jones, Caroline Joss, Melissa Kim (principal of Alice Deal JHS), Eileen Langholtz, Judy Ling, Jeanie Mah, Lucy Mallan, Dakari McAdoo, Karen McAdoo, Matt Paul, Stratton Penberthy, Andrea Pinnock, Debra Ringel, Jeff Schwartz, Shaun Seaberry, Regen Thomas, Joy Carroll Wallis, Stuart Weiser, Tysan Williams, Claudia Withers, Gwen Wright

Absent: April Payne-McMillian, Courtney Tolbert, Lisa Woods

Start time: 6:00pm

1. Welcome, thank yous, and review of agenda (Kelley):

2. Presentation by Melissa Kim, principal of Deal JHS, with Questions and Answers: Today Deal hosted an open house for prospective families and Ms. Kim strongly encourages Eaton families to visit the school to get an authentic idea of what Deal has to offer. Prospective parents with specific questions or concerns can contact guidance counselor Benjamin Santiago at Benjamin.santiago@dc.gov. Parents can also check out www.dealpta.org to get an idea of how Deal's parents are active and support the school.

Deal follows an academic middle school program. All students are assigned to a team, formed by Ms. Kim herself. One set of teachers (English, Math, Soc. Studies, Science) works with each student team and these teachers work collaboratively. In addition to the four basic subjects, a student's daily schedule includes either physical education (PE) or music (1/2 year of each) and an elective, such as foreign language, musical instruction, technology or art. Deal is in the process of applying to participate in the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IBMYP). Among other attributes of the IBMYP, the curriculum has a global focus.

Questions and Answers:

How does math placement work? In April or May, Deal staff comes to Eaton and tests 6th graders for math placement. The 7th grade math classes in which a student can be placed are:

- 7th grade Math – at grade level
- 7th grade Intensive Math – at grade level plus some abstract concepts
- Algebra – 8th grade level

How do Eaton kids typically perform on the math placement exam? Not as many as we would like test into Algebra, though a good number test into 7th grade Intensive. As a result, Deal math teachers have worked with Eaton's 6th grade teachers this year to communicate in advance the math skills required of 7th graders. Ms. Kim emphasized that students need to be able to perform simple addition, subtraction and multiplication in their heads and not need charts or other aids.

How does English placement work? Placements are based on teacher and parent recommendations. There is no placement test.

7th grade science classes are heterogeneous by design so that children can mix as they do in their earlier years. By 8th grade, students do get placed into different levels, usually based on math ability. Placements for 6th graders will work the same way as above when 6th grade transitions to Deal.

What are some uses of technology at Deal? Teaching teams communicate with parents via regular e-mails. Classrooms either have SmartBoards or LCD projectors. Quick-grading technology

allows teachers to show parents assignment-by-assignment how their child has performed throughout an advisory period.

What is the overall grading philosophy? Revision of work is encouraged to make students practice the continual improvement of their work. Grading is not done on a curve.

What is the typical class size? Main classes have about 24 - 27 students. Overall, class size ranges between 12 and 28 students. Deal has 560 students total in grades seven and eight. Class sizes have been kept down due to extra grants written by the PTA and LSRT, which provide for extra teachers during Deal's middle school transition years.

How can Eaton teachers better prepare Eaton students for Deal? Ms. Kim emphasized writing and research skills (a 5th grade standard). For example, such skills are needed for the National History Day Fair (a major project in which Deal students participate).

Eaton alum experiences:

Joe Dullea – Active on the debate team, which is strong at Deal. As part of debate, students are required to debate on local, DCPS, national and international issues.

Dakari McAdoo– Active in student council, recycling club, debate club, ski club. His French class will travel to France this year. Says his workload went from 30 mins. to 2 hours a night.

Annie Berman – Active in drama club, golf club. At first she only had two classes with Eaton alums, but all 7th graders go on an outdoor bonding trip at the beginning of the year to meet others outside their usual groups. Last year, 7th graders attended school the day *before* the official 1st day, and walked through their class schedules.

1. Approval of the HSA Minutes of November 13 Meeting: Stratton Penberthy moved to approve the minutes and Mark Boss seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

2. Treasurer's Report (Stratton and Matt):

\$28,000 has been brought in so far from tree sale (not reflected in Profit & Loss statement).

Stratton circulated the Profit & Loss statement, but he had not received the bank statement yet, so the figures are not reconciled with the bank's. In response to a question at last month's meeting regarding Miscellaneous expenses, Stratton learned that our IRS tax form 990 was not filled out properly last year, so we had to pay the IRS \$3,000 in July 2007. Matt reported that our auditor has been delayed in her work due to family problems; however, there is a meeting scheduled with her next week.

1. Principal's Report (Principal Gartrell):

1. Brief Reports on Recent Events:

a. LSRT meeting held December 11(Claudia): The LSRT discussed a strategy for Eaton once 6th grade is transferred to middle school. The Community Survey results were presented (see agenda item #7).

b. Fundraising (Sheri):

ENF - \$65,610 has been pledged with \$18,025 yet to be collected. Pledges are slowing down. We could have a phone-a-thon to solicit pledges and/or prompt pledgers to pay in full. Kim Bayliss and Rose Audette had done a phone blitz in a previous year, which was effective in getting pledges paid in full. Kim emphasized that room parents have a great effect in influencing the families in their classes.

Annual Fund – Janelle Rynes is chair. Letters were due to be ready today but there was a delay. Someone reminded those staffing the tree sale to capture the addresses from checks and enter them into the annual fund database. Laura Bowman is looking at the tax payer data to see if it is worth purchasing for the annual fund mailing.

a. Principal's Breakfast and Snack, December 5 (Mark/Ms. Gartrell):

b. Dinner with Mayor Fenty (Kelley): Kelley had purchased a dinner with Mayor Fenty at last year's auction, and the dinner took place last week. Eaton's own Nash family hosted a dinner last week, where Chancellor Rhee was present.

c. Instructional Support (Kim): Due to budget concerns, the HSA had to offer Ms. Khambatta, the

music teacher for grades one through six, a reduced salary this school year. She accepted the arrangement at the start of the year, but subsequently has requested in writing that her salary be reinstated and that the HSA provide her back-pay to compensate for her weeks at reduced salary this year. Since our budget situation has not improved, Kim and Kelley have communicated to her that we are unable to meet her salary request. Meanwhile, Kim asked that a subcommittee form to do some research towards proposing a long range direction for Eaton's music program.

- d. Grocery Certificates (Kelley): Thirty-five hundred dollars' worth of grocery gift cards/certificates have been sold to-date, making Eaton a profit of about \$148. Grocery cards/certs will be distributed the 2nd Thursday of January. This Thursday, we will sell *Yes! Natural Foods* cards in the morning and maybe in the evening at 6pm.
- e. LaCore family update (Marianne): The sign-up for contributions of meals is not full for next week. Firefighter LaCore is continuing to progress but will need to rehabilitate for another year or so. Meal contributions are needed until holiday break, but then meal contributions will no longer be collected.
- f. School Directory (Kelley): Directory is at the printer's. Kelley and Lisa Woods sold \$1300 worth of ads, which covers the cost of the directory. Way to go, Kelley and Lisa!
- g. Newsletter (Katherine, Steven, Christina):
- h. Box tops (Mark): Flyer went out in backpacks last week promoting the Box Tops fundraiser. Enter our school ID #382813 when on-line shopping for Eaton to earn a profit. Between \$300-400 are due us from the last submission of box tops in October. Also Schoolpop.com and Escript.com are on-line shopping websites that will enable Eaton to profit from purchases.

1. Presentation of Principal Selection Survey Results (Jeanie and Marianne): A slide presentation was given on the results of the Community Survey (see attachments). Overall, the rate of response was deemed a success, and survey responses show that school community opinion of Ms. Gartrell is excellent. The information garnered from this process has fortified the HSA board to make some decisions about the direction to head in regarding selection of a permanent principal. Based on survey responses, the board can also see where we can better communicate with the community about the principal selection process so that we are all operating on the same assumptions.

Someone asked what the risks are of doing a national search. Another issue of concern was whether/how the principal selection process has changed under the Chancellor, as many were dissatisfied with the current DCPS protocol, feeling that it did not serve the best interests of the school. Members of the LSRT are due to have a conversation with John Davies in the Chancellor's office about the selection process and how Ms. Gartrell fits with the Chancellor's criteria for principals of high-performing schools.

Meanwhile, the presentation slides, which summarize the survey results, will be available on the Eaton website and on the bulletin board. The detailed 15 page report, containing the complete survey methodology and analysis, is available upon request from Jeanie Mah (202) 363-6885; jcmayu@verizon.net.

1. Possible new items/projects to consider:

- a. Car raffle (Tysan Williams): Four days left in sale! Tysan believes we can potentially sell enough tickets to make a target of \$50,000 by then. Tysan will call people who still have raffle tickets outstanding.
- b. Tree sales (Dan Blanchon): Additional volunteers are needed for Saturday to augment the class schedule. Nearby competition has put our sales \$7,000 behind where we were last year. Next year, we will have to consider raising prices due to costs. Last Saturday, 150 trees were sold. This Saturday there should be 85 trees left to sell. Rather than order more trees from PA, we may take on Deal's excess trees to sell if we are selling well.
- c. Auction (Joy Carroll Wallis): The Finnish Embassy is no longer an option as a venue. We are searching for another option, including McLean Gardens Ballroom. Major push for auction will not proceed until January when the car raffle is over.

1. New Business:

2. Baskin Robbins fundraiser?
3. Suntrust fundraiser?
4. Phonathon?

10. Meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.

Submitted by

Jean C. Mah