

JOHN EATON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Washington, DC

Local School Restructuring Team (LSRT)

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, May 1, 2007

Minutes

Members in Attendance: Jocelyn Drakeford, Lucy Mallan, Margot Berkey, Laura Broach, Alex Wilson, Carolyn Barnhart, Noah Steinberg, Emily Blakeslee, Paul Basken, Karen McAdoo

Visitors in Attendance: Doreen Moses

Guest Speakers: Sandra Johnson, Supervisor for Early Childhood Special Ed and Arlena Fleet (sp?) Educational School Support for Special Ed services

I. Welcome & Introductions of Guests

II. Good News & Community Concerns

1. Auction on April 28: The Auction was a huge success. Everyone had a great time and the Volunteer crew worked extremely hard. We haven't yet heard a total on amount raised, but it should be pretty strong.
2. Dress Code: There have been some questions on the listserv about this. After Principal Drakeford responded with a letter sent home and a message on the listserv, there have been no further questions from parents about this.
3. Ms. Blakeslee ran the Boston Marathon and placed 1500 overall, 70 in her age group, and 79 for women. Congratulations!
4. Girls on the Run: Girls on the Run are finishing their first season and will run a 5K on May 19th.

III. Community Forum on April 26

The forum featured a workshop by Wendy Luvic of the Parent Encouragement Program. We had over 20 attendees; everyone was actively engaged in discussion. Ms. Luvic linked her program to the concept of Responsive Classroom. A big thanks to Paul Basken for organizing this event. Outgrowth: Eaton could provide the space for a 8 or 10 week long evening PEP class for parents, if 15 parents committed. Interest in this seemed strong. ACTION: Pursue having PEP host a class here.

IV. New Chinese Teachers

- a. Miss Rhonda has arrived and has been kept busy (by the DC office downtown) visiting schools and attending dinners. She will begin at Eaton this week.
- b. Miss Maggie (staying with Margot Berkey) won the raffle at Deal for a \$4,000 plasma TV.
- c. The down-payments and security deposits for apartments are proving burdensome for these two teachers, so they might ask for a loan from the Eaton, Deal, and Wilson HSAs.
- d. Initially we expected Miss Rhonda to teach Pre-K – 6 in a two-year program. We might want to extend the program. For now, she will concentrate on grades 4 – 6. (This change is partly to ensure a greater chance of student success in learning the

language.) The curriculum will include Chinese language arts, math, and social studies. Also, Miss Rhonda will be teaching two classes of summer school: 5 weeks of daily 30-minute classes of mixed aged groups.

V. ELL Position Update:

Our weighted student formula increased for next year, so we are able to fund one teacher position, which will be one of our current ELL teachers, Ms. Foote. This puts us at 3.5 full time ELL teachers, which we have had this school year. Our number of ELL students is 69.

VI. Enrollment Projection & Strategy

1. Our waiting list is very strong, even though we didn't have that many openings in upper grades. The phones have been ringing off the hook. We have been asked to wait till we finalize our numbers of current students before we move to the waitlist. We will get 8 students from Hearst who have already been contacted.
2. Parents on the waitlist will be called again in week or two once some paperwork has been finalized.

VII. Loss of Two Fifth-Grade Teachers

Our two fifth-grade teachers are not planning to return and, because of the lack of communication, some parents are beginning to express concern. It was noted that last year, though under quite different circumstances, some parents were upset about the lack of communication from the school about staffing changes.

ACTION: We will assist Principal Drakeford in getting out a general assurance that the school will work pro-actively to hire the very best teachers when necessary, and that Eaton is always a draw for desirable, highly qualified candidates.

VIII. Election of LSRT SY 2007 – 2008

ACTION: Coordinate with HSA for elections.

IX. DCPS Special Education Early Childhood Program

Sandra Johnson proposed that Eaton house two classrooms for students ages 3 – 7 with developmental delays.

Some of the issues discussed included:

1. **Students:** These students would come from Ward 3. Currently students with these needs are transferred out of Ward 3, at great cost, to schools in other Wards of the city or to private schools. These students are ambulatory and have serious, but not severe, disabilities that have not yet been classified. They would most likely receive Level IV services (the highest level offered at a non-specialized school) and may also require other services, such as speech, occupational, physical, etc. There would be no more than 8 students in each classroom (i.e., total of 16). They would require one teacher and two full-time paraprofessionals in each classroom.
2. **Space at Eaton:** Eaton has two classrooms (currently used for resource classes) that would be the right size for these classes. (These rooms are the smaller ones that are located between the larger corner classrooms.)
3. **Funding:** These two classes would be completely funded from the Special Education Early Childhood Program. Their teachers and equipment would all be completely funded outside Eaton's yearly budget. In addition, Eaton would receive per-pupil funding for these students, and this amount (which we calculate to be about \$160,000) could be used at the discretion of the school.

4. This is a complicated issue and many questions were raised. Here are some of the ideas discussed:
 - a. These students would be integrated within the school (would go to music, recess, lunch, etc. with other typically-developing peers
 - b. At the conclusion of their participation in this program, the students could return to their “home” schools for inclusion, or have the option to stay at Eaton, if in boundary for Eaton and/or desired by the parents and school.
 - c. There would be one teacher and two para-professionals per classroom.
 - d. There are other “model” programs similar to this in place in the city
 - e. The Early Childhood Program could provide training, materials, etc for all Eaton teachers, if desired
 - f. There is a concern that part of this decision is based on “bad” data about Eaton’s current enrollment. The graph titled Planning Zone G indicates that the current number of students at Eaton is 379 and the projected enrollment for next year is 334. These numbers are grossly incorrect.
 - g. There is a question about the weighted student formula and that this plan indicates a change in the practice of allocation of the WSF to local schools. Formerly, funds for children with this level of need were in the central office budget since they provide the staffing. Local schools did not receive additional WSF for these students. There may have been a change in the allocation of funding that needs to be confirmed. Another related concern is that the extra per-pupil funding might not actually be delivered (as might be the case currently at Hearst).
 - h. This program needs a decision in the next three weeks.
 - i. ACTION: The LSRT needs to meet very soon to discuss this matter further and to reach a decision.

Minutes submitted by
Laura Broach
Secretary
May 6, 2007