



MINUTES

Maury Elementary

Date | time 4/30/2020 6:00 PM |

Held virtually via Zoom

Committee and Teacher Announcements

Amy Toner provided an update on teacher appreciation week activities.

Liz Lyons, Maury at the Market. Maury at the Market will be online and will run from Sunday, May 17th to Sunday, May 24th at 10PM.

Exec Board Update

Sarah Hais announced PTA election candidates. There is one candidate for each open position: President (Ross Kyle), Treasurer (Andrew Lyons), and Parliamentarian (Ebony Burton). We will have a virtual election during our May meeting. We only need to do a voice vote since there is only one candidate for each position.

Principal's Update

Principal Payne Chauvenet provided an update about distance learning. We're out of the crisis response phase we were in on March 13th. What we've now tried to do is have a comprehensive program, with some recorded and some live content. Your child's experience may differ greatly depending on grade. The younger kids are doing a once-a-week check in and doing more packet work, because their stamina and ability to use computers is not as good. The older kids are doing daily live check ins with both ELA and Math teachers. Since the content is tougher in the upper grades, there are more teacher check ins. The school's goals have been to make sure everyone has access and ensure sure teachers are checking in with families regularly. If we have to start off this way for the next school year, we will be continuing to refine the process.

Mrs. Winters gave a second grade teacher perspective. Second grade has been refining its process. The teachers have been putting all content and assignments on Google Drive, which they have found to be the easiest to use. The teachers have been asking families to send teachers two completed assignments a week. The teachers just started book clubs. The classes are split into book club groups and are doing shorter zooms three times a week, in addition to full class zooms a couple of times a week.

Questions about Distance Learning

Q: Is it possible to have more of the Specials teachers jump in on some of the zooms?

Principal: Yes, there are some specials teachers who have started to do that. Ms. Wang and Ms. Bomba have been doing this a bit. What we decided to do with specials is to get homerooms off the ground first. Now some specials teachers are joining teams to be able to collect work. We're trying to prioritize so we don't overwhelm parents in the beginning.

Q: In planning for next fall, is there a plan to streamline what format we will use for the school, or will it be up to each individual teacher or grade?

Principal: When it comes to an online platform, we will go with Microsoft Teams if we need to do this in the fall. To a certain extent, we do need to respect teacher preferences, but Microsoft Teams is the dominant platform being used. The challenge is communicating via Teams. Zoom is better so we will continue to use it as long as we are allowed to. Microsoft is working to increase the number of participants who can be viewed simultaneously.

Some concern was expressed about inconsistency across classrooms. For example, one parent noted that there has not been any live instruction in her child's first grade classroom. There hasn't been any live instruction for first grade. Ms. Cooper explained that each first grade teacher is handling their classroom differently. Principal Payne-Chauvenet noted that consistency is something that the school will work on if we are still virtual in the new school year.

Q: For 3rd graders, should my teacher be on Zoom every day?

Principal: We would love to have kids there everyday since teachers are taking the time to do the sessions. We want everyone to participate 100% of the time if they can, but we also know we are in a pandemic and we need to be flexible.

Q: Are there any thoughts to what will be happening in the summer? I would love to have learning support so they are continuing to learn and not going into the next grade without finishing the grade before.

Principal: We are starting to think about what the beginning of next school year will look like. For summer, that's still part of what the mayor is planning. This is tied into the budget. It's always the case that kids slide a bit during the summer. This just may be a bigger challenge at the start of next school year than it has been previously.

Q: Will we still be able to access online tools?

Principal: It depends on what the contract says and who is paying for it. This is information we can get to families before the end of the year.

Q: What is the best source of information for what students should have learned by the end of the year?

Principal: The best source is the student's report card.

Q: How quickly do 2nd grade enrollments need to happen to increase our chances to get an additional teacher for next year? And, what are the alternate plans moving forward if we don't get an extra teacher.

Principal: Based on the proposed budget, the school expects to be able to hire a fourth kindergarten and a fourth 1st grade teacher for the fall. Changes will be made to the budget, given the pandemic, so there currently is no guarantee we will have the additional teacher for second grade. As a result, early enrollment is critical so that we can make a strong case to DCPS for a fourth class.

Enrollment Update

Ms. Coco provided an update on enrollment, which will be different this year. Ms. Coco noted that some families have been experiencing a glitch with the enrollment system. If the system times out when you submit your child's enrollment, please do not worry. The school is receiving these enrollments. Additionally, the enrollment site has been displaying a security message regarding linking to the DC Office of Tax and Revenue site, but it is perfectly fine to access the site.

In Attendance

The meeting was held virtually due to the ongoing DCPS closure, and attendance was not taken.

Next Meeting

5/21/2020 6:00 PM, Virtual Meeting (link to be circulated on Maury Listserv)