



MAURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LOCAL SCHOOL ADVISORY TEAM

1250 Constitution Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20002 • (202) 698-3838 • mauryelementary.com/lSAT

Meeting Minutes

October 12, 2021, 4:00 pm via remote teleconference

School Leadership Present: Helena Payne Chauvenet, Andrew Lardell, Patrick Koontz

LSAT Members Present: D'Ann Lettieri, Richard Parker, Alison Schwartz, Kenyon Weaver, VanNessa Duckett, Katie Jondal, Becca Sanghvi, Shanna Williams-Carr, Tess Winters (Lora Nunn filling in for Ross Kyle), Elizabeth Nelson

LSAT Members Absent: Ross Kyle, Angela Stover

- 1. Previous Meeting Minutes.** Minutes of the September 14, 2021, meeting were unanimously approved by a roll call vote. The motion to adopt was put forward by Richard Parker and seconded by Alison Schwartz.
- 2. Community Comments.** Elizabeth (“Liz”) Campbell, Maury parent and Senior Director of Legislative and Government Affairs at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, commented on the national school nutrition program and strategy and the role nutrition standards play in preventing hunger and improving academic outcomes, health, and equity. A key point: when participation is low, revenue is low. School nutrition programs are separate from school budgets, and drops in participation directly result in decreased budgets for those programs. Importantly, there has been a significant decrease, nationwide, in participation in school nutrition programs during the pandemic. As a result, programs are in crisis. Liz is seeking acknowledgement that school nutrition can play a bigger role in reaching school-wide goals in health, academics, and equity. She is also encouraging the community to discuss how it can support the school nutrition program and address challenges it is facing this year, including supply chain issues.
- 3. Membership Updates.** During the last meeting the voting members of the LSAT elected: D'Ann Lettieri as chair (there will be no teacher co-chair this year), Elizabeth Nelson as the community member, and agreed to have the secretary position rotate among the parent members.

4. Whole School Update.

- a. *Literacy.* Maury student reader assessment data (K-2) is strong at the beginning of the school year with 64% at grade-level proficiency. There is a gap, on average, for students with special needs and Black students, and there will continue to be a focus on closing gaps. These gaps are not unique to Maury and are a nationwide issue. The PARCC test was not given in 2020 or 2021 due to virtual schooling, but the PARCC is scheduled to take place this school year, and results from that will be another source of useful data.
- b. *Tiered Intervention Supports.* The school has ways to intervene to fill in gaps for both reading and math: small group instruction, specific programs, computer-based, and using teachers. A new tutoring program was instituted about two weeks ago using extra funds to pay teachers to work with students. The current program utilizes small groups of 2-4 students per grade in grades K-5, meaning there are about 15-20 kids in the Term 1 tutoring program. The students selected for tutoring were identified by teachers as performing below grade level based on testing results (e.g., iReady). There appears to be strong parent interest in the program, and after Term 1 finishes, the school will look into expanding this kind of tutoring. The school plans to start a waiting list for students, by invitation based upon data, for the program in Term 2. An online tutoring program called FEV, which allows online 1-on-1 tutoring, is also available. Principal Payne Chauvenet clarified that tutoring intervention is distinct from *enrichment*. The tutoring program is for students who are below grade level whereas enrichment programs are for students who may be at grade level but would like to improve. There were a number of questions with respect to communications to the Maury community, including managing expectations of parents, guardians, and caretakers interested in the tutoring program for their children.
- c. *COVID Protocol Update.* Questions were taken by Principal Payne Chauvenet. The discussion included:
 - Testing done outside of school by families is usually not reported to the school from any source other than the families themselves.
 - Testing done through a spit sample continues at school. The spit test continues to be an issue for the younger kids.
 - If children are out sick (not due to a positive Covid test result) they are not required to provide proof of a negative Covid test upon return. Yet, per the attendance policy, they are required to show why they were sick as proof of an excused absence. Symptomatic testing at home is not required.
 - When a student is found to have tested positive, the close contacts are identified as soon as possible. But, the contact tracing system does take time to determine who was a close contact. Once close contacts are determined, a staff letter goes out first, then a close contact letter, followed by a class letter, and then a whole school notification. All communications are usually made on the same day.
- d. *Library Access.* New Maury librarian Mr. Ashraf Feraz joined the meeting to explain that all students have access to the library (except for PK as the librarian visits their classrooms instead), starting this week. Classes will visit the library

once a week. This week students were allowed to check out one book, and upon the return of that book next week, students will be allowed to check out two books at a time going forward. Dr. Kevin Washburn, Director, Library Programs for DCPS, also joined the meeting and explained that DCPS is excited to bring back physical library access after 18 months. He noted the availability of many programs for readers of all kinds. These include SORA Overdrive with 50,000 books, and a new service for students with learning disabilities called Learning Ally. In addition, there are resources like Brain Pop and PebbleGo available via Clever. In all, these are or will be provided by the school library and library programs. RazKids is also available to students through the school, but DCPS no longer supports Epic! as it is no longer considered an equitable program. The site does not provide access to students after 3pm on school days or on weekends, and access after those times and for many of its resources requires a paid subscription. DCPS attempted to negotiate a district-wide contract with Epic!, but it did not work out. Epic! is no longer available via Clever, although teachers may still choose to use the program in individual classes.

- e. *Building Maintenance Update.* Multiple ongoing issues remain. The accordion door used to divide the large multipurpose room (cafeteria) still cannot be closed. The HVAC was supposed to be finished this month, but it is not yet fixed. It was noted, however, the weather is now cooler, and the classrooms aren't as reliant on the HVAC system to cool down the rooms. Patrick Koontz continues to escalate these issues with DGS.

5. Playground, Parking & Outdoor Learning/Lunch Update.

- a. The playground expansion is nearly complete (the space will be painted at some point). This additional outdoor area has already improved crowding during PE and recess.
- b. The school has received some neighbor complaints as the new metal bridge makes a very loud noise when kids run across it. In an attempt to be good neighbors, students are being asked to walk - not run - across the bridge. Students are learning.
- c. Some items ordered for outdoor lunch and learning have been received while other items have not. For example, some tree stump seating was delivered, but cafe tables are not due to be delivered until mid-November.
- d. It was noted that it would be helpful to get volunteers in place as the school expects to expand outdoor learning and lunch soon and will need volunteer support during those times.

6. Volunteer Update & Security Clearances.

- a. Patrick Koontz provided an overview of the school volunteer situation. Given that DCPS does not provide a list of cleared volunteers to the school, Patrick needs a list of volunteers' names and birthdates to verify security clearances in the DCPS

database. It was agreed LSAT/parent volunteers would create such a list for the school.

- b. It was noted that the clearance process may be a bit unclear. There are a large number of volunteer applicants across the city, including Maury parents, guardians and caregivers, who submitted applications over a month ago but were not informed that a “step 2” was necessary, therefore, their clearances have not yet been completed. A “how-to” list is going to be created for individuals interested in volunteering to make the process more understandable.
- c. Fingerprinting/testing done two years ago (during the first big push) is now likely expired for many individuals (and this might not be known). Volunteer security clearances last for two years, so those who were cleared then need to go through the process again if they want to volunteer.

7. New Business. There was no new business. The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 pm.

The next LSAT meeting will be held at 4pm, on Tuesday, November 9, 2021, via teleconference.