

## Ludlow Taylor LSAT Meeting

**Date:** 11/21/24

**Time:** 6:30 pm

**Location:** Zoom

**In Attendance:** Penelope Miller (Principal); Beth Ward-O'Connor (Parent Rep, Co-Chair); Sandy Watson (Assistant Principal); Channing Cooper (Teacher Rep, Co-Chair); Elisabeth Golub (Teacher Rep, Secretary); LaQuontinesha Atchinson (WTU Building Rep); Yakeema Blackstone (Teacher Rep); Chris Hanley (PTO Co-President); Shoko Satoh (Parent Rep), Janice Casimir-Joseph (Teacher Rep), Quiana Hooker (Parent Rep), Lynette Davis (Aide Rep), Josiah Barnes (MSL)

\*About 14 other community members on the call\*

## Planned Agenda

1. DCPS-Provided Technology & L-T's Current Device Shortage -- *Joined by DCPS Technology Director*
2. Enrollment projections
3. . Staffing Updates

## Notes **[action items in red]**

### **1 DCPS-Provided Technology & L-T's Current Device Shortage -- *Joined by DCPS Technology Director***

- LSAT Co-Chair stated that the school is missing approximately 30 devices **(slide 4)**. Parent rep asked Dr. Miller & Mr. Barnes if the school's Tipweb portal accurately reflects the schools' device count. Dr Miller replied that historically at LT there has not been a system for inventorying and assigning devices. At the end of last year, working with Mr. Bruno, she realized that the school had many devices "out of system." When Mr. Barnes came on board over the summer, he began to go through all the devices over the summer. He found that out of approximately 525 devices, around 200 devices were not working. Once those devices became inoperable, we should have moved them out quickly to get replacement. Mr. Barnes is working on making sure that Tipweb is up to date, and that we get devices out of our system that we don't have or haven't been working. To the best of our knowledge, everything in the Tipweb system is now accurate.
- A parent rep asked: "As of what date, was Tipweb up to date?" Dr. Miller replied "yesterday." The parent rep asked why it has taken so long. Dr. Miller explained the school had to put a system in place. Going forward, she believes we have a system in place and the turnaround should be quick.

- Mr. Verrani, DCPS Chief of Data and Technology, began to speak. He explained that inventory management tends to be the biggest barrier to technology access at the school level. He applauded Dr. Miller & the team for recognizing there was a problem and putting in place a process moving forward.
- Mr. Verrani spoke about how DCPS handled device allocation. He explained that the District purchases enough devices for schools to account for between 10-20 % loss (i.e. when devices break or go missing). One of the goals is not just to invest in initial volume of the devices, but also to maintain a 4-year life cycle for devices. Schools keep their device inventory up to date in Tipweb, and when his office knows that a school is short devices, new devices are delivered within 1-2 business days. He added that schools are asked to maintain a contingency of 5% at the school level.
- A parent rep asked Mr. Verrani when LT could expect to receive missing devices now that Tipweb is accurate. A teacher rep asked what the turnaround time would be to get the devices to students once they arrived at the school. **Mr. Verrani stated that the devices should be delivered to LT next week (e.g. Monday or Tuesday before the Thanksgiving Holiday). Once they arrive at the school, ready to be deployed and used almost immediately**
- A parent rep asked Mr. Verrani if DCPS will also replace accessories. Mr. Verrani replied that this is the final year the District will be using the Microsoft Surface devices, but that they can replace any keyboards that need to be replaced. **Keyboards do not need to be put into Tipweb, the school just needs to let Central Office know how many are needed.**
- A parent rep asked if Mr. Verrani knew whether DCPS had considered accessibility when selecting I-Ready as one of the online learning programs. Parents have shared that I-Ready doesn't work on Android tablets or Amazon Fire tablets, which many families have since they tend to be more affordable. Mr. Verrani replied that is a separate department at DCPS, the Office of Teaching & Learning. I-Ready is a browser-based app so it should work on Androids, might not work as well on Fire tablets. He added that OTL would like I-Ready to be used primarily during the school day. If it's assigned outside of school that raises equity concerns.
- A parent rep asked if it would be helpful for parent volunteers to assist with inventorying accessories (e.g., checking classroom tech carts to see how many replacement keyboards were needed). A teacher rep said she would ask

3-5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers who would like parent volunteers to support with an inventory.

## 2. Enrollment projections

- Co-chair provided an overview of the enrollment/budget process **[slide 11]**. A parent rep asked if the new ECE classrooms (the current addition process) should be ready for next school year. Co-chair replied that DCPS's official position seems to be that the addition will be open, but the enrollment projections don't account for those classes. Dr. Miller added that she is trying to meet with folks in Central Office to figure this out.
- Co-chair reviewed the subsequent slides, while laid out DCPS's enrollment projections for LT: enrollment by grade **[slide 12]**, enrollment of multi-lingual learners **[slide 13]**, and enrollment of special education/at risk students **[slide 14]**.
- Co-chair noted that the projection for multi-lingual learners might be important, since half of the Spanish teacher's position is currently paid as an ELL teacher position. The Spanish teacher/ELL teacher was on the call, and she stated that the school currently has more ELL students (15) that DCPS found on count day.
- A teacher rep asked how DCPS projected enrollment sped. Co-chair responded that there's a formula, based on 3-year historical average.
- There was a brief discussion of the projections for "at risk" student enrollment. A co-chair noted that DCPS seems to over project this number. This was the case last year.
- A parent rep asked what happens if the DCPS projections are wrong. Dr. Miller explained that there are certain times of year and circumstances where the school can go back and forth with the District about funding based on enrollment. During these periods, the questions asked are: 1) Does the school meet criteria for receiving extra funds? and 2) How high a priority is the school given all DCPS schools in need of extra funds?
- Co-chair discussed the information presented on **slide 15**, projections for dedicated classrooms (self-contained special education classrooms and pre-k-3/pre-k 4 classrooms). A parent rep asked what was meant by "priority seats." Dr Miller explained this refers to seats set aside for kids identified for early IEPs through Early Stages. If these seats aren't taken after a certain amount of time, the school fills them from the wait list.

- Dr. Miller explained that last year she put a lot of work into explaining what her rationale was to request lowering the lottery spots for out-of-bounds students, but DCPS didn't take this into account when opening up lottery seats for LT. . **Dr. Miller reiterated that she needs to meet with folks from Central Office to seek clarity around ECE projections. She also needs to confer with AP Watson to ensure that the projections for Sped students seem accurate.**
- A parent on the call asked if the new ECE classes added as part of the addition mean a concern for over-enrollment in all the grades in the coming years. Dr. Miller responded, yes. The initial proposal was for 4 ECE classrooms, but there's no way the school building could accommodate that many students.
- One of the Paren Reps noted that on the Ward 6 PTO call a few nights ago, it seemed like the consensus was that next year's DCPS budget will be flat. Meaning, schools do not anticipate receiving more money in next year's budget.
- A second-grade teacher on the call asked if 74 student projection in second grade means the school will be able to get another teacher at that grade level next year. Dr. Miller explained that there are certain funding categories that are fixed in the school budget (e.g. Sped teachers, Related Services Providers, ECE teachers, Principal and Librarian). Other positions are not, so it's up to the school to allocate their budget.

### 3. Staffing Updates

- Dr. Miller shared that the school was NOT granted the funds to hire an additional 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher. There was a process to request additional funding. We didn't qualify on count day. Given the priority list, our request didn't meet the criteria to be part of the funds that DCPS had. Dr. Miller shared that she was surprised, as our Instructional Superintendent was confident that we were going to get it.
- Dr. Miller explained there is now a schedule for folks who will be supporting the 1<sup>st</sup> grade teachers. This includes Ms. Penn (literacy specialist), Ms. Truss (part-time math interventionist) and Ms. Bowlding (kindergarten aide).

- Co-chair asked if this information has this communicated to first grade families. Dr. Miller responded that she has communicated to the teachers, but the school needs to work out to get this information out to families.
- A parent rep asked when Dr. Miller learned about this, and whether there is an appeal process. Dr. Miller replied that she learned the request was denied about 4 weeks ago, and that **she is committed to communicating with 1st grade families before Thanksgiving Break.** ?
- Co-chair asked if any 1<sup>st</sup> grade teachers on the call could share how they felt about the school's plan to support the 1<sup>st</sup> grade classrooms. One teacher shared she is happy w the plan and feels supported. She added that Ms. Penn has been very consistent with pulling groups. Ms. Truss has started pulling her groups this week, and Ms. Bowlding will begin pulling after Thanksgiving break. Another teacher shared that the first-grade team heard that LT didn't receive funds for another teacher around Halloween, and that the team met yesterday (11/20/24) to come up with the support schedule.
- A parent rep asked if the extra funding that LT received over the summer could be used to fund the additional 1<sup>st</sup> grade teaching position (the plan had been to use these funds to hire an additional sped inclusion teacher). Dr. Miller responded that she thinks this could be possible. The school still hasn't hired for this position, though they had an interview with someone this week, and the candidate is scheduled to come in and do a model lesson. Dr. Miller added that if the school did try to hire another 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher, there wouldn't be any place to put this 4<sup>th</sup> classroom. A parent rep added that if the school changes course and doesn't hire another sped teacher, that could be detrimental to students down the road.
- Co-chair asked if this is a situation where Central Office would place a teacher in that role (additional sped inclusion teacher). Dr. Miller responded that usually if there is an open position, if it has not been filled in a certain time frame, DCPS will step in. Sometimes the teachers that are placed have been excessed (i.e., there was under-enrollment at their previous school), sometimes it's a result of another issue. Dr. Miller added that someone earlier this year was placed at LT by Central Office and they refused the position.
- A parent rep shared that on the Ward 6 PTO call there was an update about DCPS's teacher retention work. Parents on that call were also told that DCPS has received a record number of applicants for next year. How does LT tap

into that when hiring for vacancies? Dr. Miller responded that there is a central warehouse for this information. Also, just because someone applies to DCPS doesn't mean they are qualified.

- A teacher rep asked if families of students with IEPs have been notified if they are not receiving all their service hours **(note: this was an action item from last month's LSAT meeting)**. **Dr. Miller stated that AP Watson sent initial letters out to families of affected students, and they are hoping to share an update with families before Winter Break.**
- Dr. Miller shared additional hiring updates. The school hired an aide for the self-contained ECE classroom, and there is a long-term substitute in the other Pre-K classroom with an aide vacancy. Dr. Miller added that the music teacher position is now posted, and the school received their first resume. **Dr. Miller will share the link to the Music teacher job posting with the PTO/LSAT, so parents can also circulate that information.**

**Draft meeting notes from October LSAT meeting approved. Meeting adjourned.**