

Alice Deal Middle School LSAT
October 6, 2023 @ 730a, by zoom
Minutes taken by Patricia Balestra and Liz Stuart

<https://jh.zoom.us/j/97053245339?pwd=ZTJ3V0F6OE93WjJPdVdRVUtxTjRoUT09>

Attendees:

Principal Diedre Neal

Parents:

Michael Dannenberg

Josh Hertzberg

Elizabeth Stuart (chair)

April York

Amanda Provost (ADCA)

Faculty/staff representatives:

Adam Kirschenbaum

Patricia Balestra

Britney Cuffee

Ebonee Dillard

Stacey Gathers

Sandi Baer

Patrick Rottman

Nzingha Bamayangay-Massaquoi

Michael Donaldson (WTU)

Absent:

Raymond Cummings

Meeting called to order at 7:33am

I. Welcome and introductions

Skipped because everyone was at meeting last time.

II. Principal's Report (Principal Neal)

Things are going relatively well.

Most often asked question: how are Yondr pouches doing? Huge reduction (almost elimination) of cell phones. Some students have reported that they support it.

Progress report grades are due today. Grades will be sent out once everything is confirmed in system.

Received paper copies of PARCC scores for last year's students. Separating school copy from family copy. Will be sent out today or Tuesday. Incoming 6th graders PARCC scores should be sent out by their elementary schools.

CSP: DCPS review went well. No changes at all. Academic Leadership Team were able to present their specific goals and strategies. Able to present MOY step back data. Can now measure growth in MOY.

Very happy with the work Deal did last year, especially in key subgroups.

III. Comprehensive School Plan (Principal Neal)

Conversation continued from previous topic. Discussion of strategies for ELA, math, and multi-language learners.

Mr. Rottman: BOY Reading Inventory done this fall; gives us a lexile number for each student. Trends are following previous years. Plan for tiered support: ELA - additional time for writing instruction this year given changes to DCPS curriculum. Explicitly teach students how to write full sentences, etc.

All grades are finding opportunities to use supplemental texts. This was not done in the past. (we've gone from 4 units to 3 units which gives more time for the supplemental texts and more explicit writing instruction).

Increasing use of Tier 2 supports: regular opportunity for ELA classes to have stations work. Independent, unit-based work, small group instruction.

Mr. Kirschenbaum highlighted for the work going on in his classroom. Different stations that provided students to work right at their level. Independent and collaborative opportunities. Time for Mr. Kirschenbaum to work with a small group.

Tier 3 supports: Students who need explicit support to build their comprehension and decoding skills; now providing some reading support classes, where students get 2 ELA/reading classes each day.

Questions: (L. Stuart): Was there not writing instruction in the past?

A: Now, we have more time and space for it. This time was not available in the past. In the past reading and writing units were together. This year the writing unit is separated from the reading unit, so writing can be more of a focus and explicitly taught. (Mr. Kirschenbaum)

Q: Parent conversations: Do kids read full books?

A: Yes. (Kirschenbaum)

Q: How do the logistics work; do kids have two reading classes in the day?

A: Yes. Students will attend their ELA class and a reading class. DCPS no longer allows students to give up PE (and thus art/music) and so these students give up their world language for the year.

Q: What WL class do they go into if they no longer need reading supports?

Ms. Neal: they do not rejoin a WL class. No option to continue world language on their own at this point (e.g., no virtual course). DCPS recommended reaching out to the community colleges in the area.

Mr. Donaldson: Concern about students who have been placed in WL classes but are then removed. Work needs to be done earlier so that students are appropriately placed. Students that need support because they are so far behind should not be in WL classes. As a professor at UDC, he does not think middle schoolers enrolling in a college class is a good idea because of levels of accountability. He does teach high schoolers who are in a dual-enrollment program. How do we support WL teachers who have students that are multiple grades behind in English reading?

April York: Most students are a few grade levels behind because of COVID.

Mr. Rottman: BOY data shows that we are *not* in that predicament at Deal. Every kid who is 2 or more levels below is receiving reading support.

Ms. Neal: Last year our math PARCC scores were 1 point above where they were pre-pandemic. We have decreased the gap.

Ms. Lewis-Samuels (instructional coach for math):

Students took iReady in mid-September.

Grade 6 - 81 students who were 2 or more grade levels below, 88 one level below, 329 on grade level

Grade 7: 77 2 levels below, 93 1 level below, 230 grade level

Grade 8: 89, 74, 44 on grade level [note challenge with interpretation because many kids are above grade level and so no longer taking this test]

Planning now being done by class rather than grade (e.g., 7th grade math, algebra, etc.), which has been helping coordinate.

Fridays, teachers look at data and teachers re-teach specific topics as necessary.

Weekly iReady homework for all students. Teachers can do teacher-assigned lessons to push above grade level.

Tier 2: iReady Fall Sprint will likely start on October 17th; will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays. Goal to increase scores by

10%. Entire curriculum must be learned by March 1st. Parents must enroll students.

They will be assigned lessons. Teachers will support (this is an after-school activity).

Tier 3: 2 or more grade levels below

In process of approval from parents to give math support. A class will begin on October 10th. 13 students whose parents have said yes. We need to have more. Thinking of iReady Spring Fling for these students.

High-impact tutoring for 7th-8th grade multi-language learners (MLL). Constantly in dialogue to make sure our students are getting the support they need. Co-planning is key to moving students forward. We must close the gap.

Ms. Baer: MLL at a Tier 1 level - focus on differentiated assignments. Questions/guided notes/adaptive materials. Scaffolds for these students are provided (sentence starters, vocab cheat sheets). So students are receiving core information with help. All of these students are in co-taught math classes.

Level 1-2 MLL: receive additional class in place of a WL class. Reading support (System 44 or Read 180)(research based and strategic). Roughly 40 students receiving this.

For those new to this country: Dept of Health is providing therapists for once/week group session. Can speak just about the challenges of being new to this country (12-15 students in 6, 7, 8 grades).

Ms. Cuffee: what supports are provided for world language classes, especially since they are for high school credit?

Ms. Neal: More conversation is needed. This is important and could probably be a whole meeting.

Ms. Cuffee, Mr. Donaldson: Discussion of need to pay attention to world language classes, especially since the grades show up on high school transcripts. How can we prioritize this topic? Lots of resources going into supporting math and ELA; important to remember other classes. Especially given IB expectations.

Ms. Neal: Acknowledge the frustration and will work together to brainstorm how to put supports in place.

Ms. Cuffee, Mr. Donaldson: Need to work with the WL teachers to figure out how to support students – how to identify those with challenges early in the year, and give them supports. May be useful for Principal Neal to visit some classrooms and see what it's like.

Ms. Neal: We will figure out the time to do the work to create supports for WL. We will work for this to change.

Ms. Lewis-Samuels:

Summer programs:

Last year, SMAC was offered, as well as SMILE. Offered for 7 and 8 students. Based on this year's data, wondering if we could have it for incoming 6th graders, based on MOY from 5th grade. Considering 100 invitees for each grade.

IV. Updates / initiatives

- a. Summer programming recap and evaluation (Principal Neal) [covered above]
- b. BOY testing and academic enrichment planning (Principal Neal) [covered above]
- c. Green Ribbon school designation process (April York)

Needs to be a team effort. Ms. York is willing to spear-head the project. Needs the team on board to help. (Science dept. and Ms. Neal) If Deal chooses to move forward, application is due January of 2024. Follow-up: Ms. York and Principal Neal will meet to brainstorm this and identify possible people to be involved.

- d. Blue Ribbon school designation process [not covered due to time constraints]

IV. Reports

- a. W3EdNet Report (Liz) [presented mostly in the chat due to time constraints]
 - i. September meeting focused on general school updates. Things generally stable; some maintenance and security concerns.
 - ii. Our next meeting on October 17 at 7pm via Zoom will focus on the District's Boundary and Student Assignment Process (<https://dme.dc.gov/boundaries2023>). We are lucky to host several guests -- Jen Comey and Rebecca Lee from the Deputy Mayor for Education's office, as well as Anna Johnson, who is a Ward 3 parent on the advisory committee. We will hear from each of them on their perspectives and have an opportunity to ask questions and share our own views. We also welcome any other members of the process to attend and provide their own thoughts. **You can [register for the meeting using this link](#).**
 - iii. Survey about technology needs at the start of the year
Being done by the Digital Equity Team. 1-1? Are there challenges?

Ms. Dillard will get this info to Ms. Stuart

Ms. Balestra: Concerns that access to technology still not equitable. Many don't have devices or printers at home, which can make it harder for them to access materials, assignments, etc. Also challenges with the DCPS firewall, with many useful websites blocked.

- b. ADCA Report (Amanda) [skipped due to time; no urgent updates]
- c. WTU Report (Mr. Donaldson)

Union contract has expired (again).
DCPS is just now getting ground rules back to WTU after having received them in the summer.
We do not want to strike because kids need to continue learning.
Specific to Deal: Struggles with having enough paper. SCAC has determined a plan to distribute paper to teachers so that paper access is equitable.
- d. SIT update (Josh) [skipped due to time]
- e. Student behavior management committee (Mr. Donaldson)

School has decided to *not* use High Five platform. Identifying another tech solution.
Also working with a few individual kids who need significant additional supports.

V. New/Other business

No items.

Meeting adjourned at 8:33 am.

Next meeting: THURSDAY November 2, 7:30am

Future agenda items:

- Supports for Tier 1, 2, and 3 supports for world language