

Tyler Elementary Local School Advisory Team (LSAT) Meeting Minutes March 6th 2018

Attendees:

LSAT Board Members: Capricia Albritton, Lee Berger, Patrick Jackson, Maria Elena Moreno Rivas, Alicia Meyers, Amanda Swift, Narissa Cooper, Patricia Wilkins, Joseph Burno

Other Attendees: Denise Dantley (admin designee)

Minutes

- Meeting started at 08:15AM

- First order of business was voting for the Chair of the LSAT:
 - Capricia Albritton and Lee Berger were nominees (self-nominated).
 - Voting was done by paper ballot, votes were counted by Denise Dantley.
 - Lee Berger elected to Chair.

- Second order of business was voting for the Secretary, the only nominee was Patrick Jackson. Patrick will act as the Secretary.

- Discussion around how long this LSAT board will serve since the LSAT is convening 6 months after the beginning of the school year:
 - Discussion was between staggering the school years, so the election for the new LSAT board would happen mid-way through next year (but well before Feb.) vs new board election at the end of the year: The consensus was that Lee will reach out to the OFPE and ask for their guidance or suggestion on how to move forward, and we will continue this discussion at another meeting.
 - Most in the room seem to be on-board with staggered terms since this LSAT is forming so late in the year, and also considering that Tyler has not had a full LSAT for several years, the effort it would take to hold another election so soon seems wasted.
 - Lee will seek OFPE input for the board to consider before making a final decision.

- LSAT key focus areas this year: The next item of business was to go around the room and gather every member's input as to what the key focus areas should be. Round table discussion led to the following key areas of focus being raised, These are the items that were raised by the board members:
 - Expanding the Dual-Language program for the entire school, improving the DL program at Tyler (Note: the terms "Spanish Immersion" and "bilingual," were used- the program is technically titled a Dual-Language Spanish Program)
 - Increase instructional time at the beginning of the day, noting that other schools start earlier in their day, and this is something that we should look into more.

- “We need better understanding of the details of the budget. The high level view that is provided does not give us enough insight into the staffing details, how the internal budget is being allocated, and what the goals of the allocations are. And organizational chart would be very helpful. And insight into where else is money being spent.”
- “Positive behavior intervention system, years ago this was rolled out to the school, the question is - what is the policy being followed?”
 - Note: It was raised during a discussion about PBI that it is currently against school policy to give candy to students (this was raised by staff), and if teachers are in fact doing this it is against school policy.
- “Specials programming, and how to improve the resources available for specials. Questions exist around how is it done currently, could additional resources help with providing specials throughout the school?”
- “Understanding the World Language vs Science special decision and discussion around that. If Science is being added as a special, what is the goal and how is it being evaluated?”
- “Since line items in the budget are high level, it would be helpful to have more insight into what the actual roles are within the school. It would be helpful to understand which employees are paid from DCPS school budget, versus the DCPS Headquarters budget, or other sources. This would help when we are discussing the specifics. Right now there are potentially DCPS staff within the school that aren’t accounted for in the DCPS school budget?”
- “Policy of “fairness” between the programs, as opposed to what would best serve the students in each program. Tyler of course has stranded programs, there have been several cases in the past in which an activity requested, or provided, for the dual-language program was prevented or shut-down because it was seen as unfair to those not in the dual-language program (ranging from field trips to speakers, to events, etc. specific examples are documented). The LSAT should address what the actual policy is for the school regarding this, and the vision.” In the conversation around this topic, the discussion of equality vs equity came up, as well as other conversation around this topic.
- “We need more information about the curriculum being used, if there are updated curriculum for ECE curriculum and K-5 within the school, are there areas of improvement here.”
- “Evaluation of DL children’s in Spanish. Right now everyone in both programs uses the same standards, could there be better evaluation of SI Children.”
- “Facility improvements, everything from cafeteria standards and facility, to bathroom stalls that don’t lock.” It was also raised that “many doors are installed backwards at Tyler, which results in them opening into the hallway and hitting people who walk by.”
- “We should look at what is being put towards new technology, iPads, Smartboards, Laptops, etc. We need to know more about what is being spent on technology and the budget for tech and how it can be improved” and “Seconding the need for technology, science, and math, improvements throughout the school.”
- Food quality in the school (Sodexo/DCPS issue)
- Road safety (DDOT issue)
- It was noted that more time is needed by the rest of the team to come up with items that they would like to see the LSAT focus on as we go forward. This topic will be continued at the next meeting to collect any remaining topics.

- **Summary of LSAT Key Focus Areas raised:**
 - Instructional time at the beginning of the day
 - Dual-Language Program Expansion to serve more students – program vision for Tyler
 - Specials Programming
 - World Language vs Science decision and communication
 - Positive Behavior Intervention and the Culture and Climate Committee
 - Greater visibility and transparency of data and information about the programs, metrics, and budget decisions, and organizational information
 - Policy on fairness between programs and the impact that has on student opportunities
 - Updated curriculum descriptions to better understand the vision of Tyler
 - Better evaluation of Dual-Language students to address the needs of the program
 - How does school budget impact facility improvements, if at all
 - Technology budget- Tyler badly needs more investment in technology
 - STEM investment- Tyler needs more investment in science, tech, and math educational resources

- **Supporting materials needed from the principal (or designee) (data, budgets, DSPS policies and mandates, etc) to be requested by the Chair:**
 - 2017-2018 internal school budget, with an accounting of current spending against the budget
 - 2018-2019 internal school budget, not the high-level budget posted online
 - Details regarding the technology budget
 - An organizational chart, showing each of the roles of school employees and other DC government employees or volunteers working at or servicing Tyler
 - Positive Behavior Intervention System policy and any other disciplinary policy (it was raised in this meeting that “PBIS should be coupled with Culture and Climate Committee, as it was brought to LSAT’s attention that Tyler has that committee in place to assist with PBIS as well as other items.”)
 - Standards and benchmarks for Spanish Language acquisition for each grade in the Spanish Immersion Program
 - Goals, benchmarks, and adaptations or additions to the Tyler curriculum for the Creative Arts Program in furtherance of a creative arts focus
 - Policy regarding equity or equality between the three programs at Tyler, or other policy that requires the denial of out-of-classroom Spanish Immersion programming in Spanish because it excludes Creative Arts students, even where Creative Arts students are offered similar activities in English
 - Cafeteria discipline policy or other policy that requires the lights out / silence at lunches

- **General Discussion:**
 - “Communication is key with so much of what is being discussed- improving communication between the teachers and parents is critical to getting so much of the reasoning for why things are being done a certain way.”

- “Regarding parents being able to visit students in the classrooms and early in the classroom time with teachers, it can often be obstructive to instructional time to have parents in the school prior to school starting. Even though many parents are not pleased with no longer being able to take their children to class, we should consider how obstructive it can be to do so.”
 - “It would be great to know how parents can help more at Tyler in ways other than financially, resource-wise, with either a better understanding of what parents need to better support teachers, or how they can help maximize instructional time.”
 - “Communication needs improvement. (Narissa note: we need to remember that parents need to keep expectations within reason, realistic). In summary the recommendation of the LSAT board is that communication needs to be improved across the board, and the school needs to invest in communication.”
- **Next Meeting:** Tuesday March 20th at 08:00AM sharp in the same location (2nd floor SPED room). Agenda to be provided by Chair continuing this discussion.