

Hartsfield Elementary School
School Advisory Council Meeting
October 15, 2015 / 5:30-6:30
Minutes

Michael Landrum chair.

Roger Penholster, Marie-Claire Leman, Shayla White, Steve Mills, Ava Williams, BJ Van Camp, Erin Rosati, Gregory Holloway, Wendy Davis, Cindy Roy, Vernisha Howard, Jason Strom, Grace Frances, Kara Yancey, Mary-Jo Peltier, Michael Landrum, Stephanie McGriff, Lee Parker. Judi McDowell sent her regrets.

1. Meeting Called to Order: 7:36
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Moved Roy, Seconded Strom. Carried.

Introduction of Steve Mills, new community member of the SAC. Mr. Mills worked with Joy, the previous community representative, and is now replacing her on the SAC. He works at the Center for Leadership and Social Change at FSU, and has spent time volunteering in Ms. Kirn's class. An observer at the meeting, Roger Penholster, former Fairview principal running for school board, also introduced himself.

3. **PTO Update:** The PTO signaled its appreciation of all the help received at Carnival, which was a big success. There were no questions on submitted reports concerning Community In Schools Update / Parent/Community Involvement.
4. **EDEP Updates / DAC Update.** It is working well to have the school day ending an hour earlier than last year. This gives time for lots of new activities, such as Mr. Harmon's percussion group and Mrs. Singleton's chorus. We hope to do even more with the time bonus. Next Thursday, 5:30-7:30, is Lights On at Rickards, offering a chance to see what other schools' EDEP are doing. Hartsfield's chorus in participating in Macy's national acapella competition. Mrs. Singleton and the chorus put their drive, passion, and ambition on display for all of the children at Hartsfield.
5. **Principal's Update.**
 - One quarter down, three to go. Principal van Camp discussed reading in particular. We have 42% proficiency among 3rd graders in their first STAR assessment; 4th grade is at 34% and 5th grade at 22%. During the second quarter, teachers will spend several full day on CIA (Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment).
 - The beginning of the year math tests, which evaluate all of the material that will be taught this year, showed about 30% proficiency for all of the grade levels, which is in line with expectations.
 - Next steps in FSA: student scores are coming next few weeks; these will include raw score, percentile ranking, and T-score. The Commissioner, legislature, and the DOE are figuring out the cut score; school grades are coming in December or January.

- A classroom support specialist position has been released for Hartsfield, search closed today.
- There is a trauma informed training tomorrow, led by a SEDNET representative. The first half will focus on Hartsfield's needs; a Dr. Susan Craig book study being led by a district specialist.
- So, Principal van Camp is hoping that achievement gap will be closing when she presents data in January.

Discussion

Ms. Frances expressed her excitement to hear about the support specialist hire, and asked who's on the hiring committee. It consists of Jenny Jenkins (district support specialist), Principal van Camp, and Vice-Principal Williams. Ms. Frances asked if we could add someone involved in trauma informed work, such as a parent or Ms. Peltier, to the committee. Principal van Camp said this was possible.

Ms. Leman noted that the State Board of Education was meeting in Orlando shortly. We are all encouraged to write to superintendent with support for his position to suspend school grades. Might the SAC write to him? We should point out that what's particularly hard for Title I schools this year is that we can't factor in learning gains. The Board should not be able to get away without making some gesture to compensate for removing a factor so important to evaluating Title I schools. We should remind the superintendent of this fact, and he can remind the BOE and general public.

Ms. Peltier noted that the extraordinary work we can do gets skewed in public perception through simple letter grade.

Ms. Leman asked where can we ask for more of the resources owed to us as Title I school. We should remind higher-ranking administrators that class size is an especially important issue. We should advocate for Title I funds to come quicker in the year, to provide teachers to address class size early on. Might we expect that Title I schools could have lower class sizes to begin with, to plan for the class expansion that inevitably comes at a high mobility school? Should we aim for a class size of 15 at start of year, rather than 18, so that we don't overflow later? We want to delay crossing the 18-student class size threshold, and the SAC could push for quicker reaction from district when class size does pass that threshold. We should also consider how to improve mobilization for kindergarten parents, who don't realize that they should push for things such as resources to address class size overruns.

Principal van Camp said that these issues should be discussed at the district Title I advisory group.

Ms. Frances noted that our kindergarten class sizes are at 20, 2 students over the constitutional limit of 18 and 5 over 15, which seems like a good number to start the year at. Who could we ask right now, to get funds released? When is the next Title I advisory group meeting? (The answer given was November). That group, which is a new initiative, has representatives from every school.

Mr. Mills suggested that people could show up and speak at that meeting.

Mr. Hanley wondered whether we should write a letter (like we did in spring on the topic of FSA grades) for both of the school grade question and the Title I resources question.

Principal van Camp suggested that while a letter could work in the former, she'd rather pass on the request in the latter case. There are procedural issues in the second case.

Ms. Leman will draft the letter to Board about school grades.

Ms. Roy is happy that parents and community members will put effort into this letter.

Ms. Williams stated that the issue of learning gains is very important; it's the song she sings when she's talking about school grades. We don't have any students who start and finish the year at level 3; we have no choice but to move children up. Could we get other schools involved?

Mr. Mills asked what is the administrative and political logic behind the decision not to include gains. Ms. Leman and Ms. Frances answered that it's a statewide decision, justified by the fact that because this is the first year of FSA testing, there's no FSA baseline score (though one could be generated from the FCAT2.0). The powers that be are fighting the perception that it's a bad test, and want to avoid comparison and exposure. The political will is to drive kids into charter schools. Various parties offer the obfuscating argument that school grades are "without penalty" this year; this argument is false, because a low grade *is* a penalty.

Motion (Roy/Frances): that a letter be written and sent to superintendent. Ms. Leman will draft the letter, and Ms. Peltier, Ms. Williams, and Ms. McGriff will chime in. It will be circulated to the SAC by email, and we will take silence as approval. Passed without objection.

Motion (Hanley/Roy): we will generate talking points on Title I by next month, for use at district meetings and in lobbying. These points will be reported to the SAC. Ms. Leman, Ms. Peltier, Ms. McGriff, Principal van Camp, and Mr. Mills will work on this. Passed without objection.

6. SIP Writing Group Report

Principal van Camp gave an update on this work. She highlight the larger changes detailed in the template, which is appended to the minutes. The committee reached consensus on these changes. The online template for School Improvement Plans is currently locked, so these revisions can't be implemented into the document just yet.

Ms. Leman stated that the revision had two main aims: to integrate trauma sensitive language, and to better articulate how we're using volunteers and mentors to do more one-on-one work. To this effect, the revision introduces a key new barrier: "Many of our students lack self-regulation skills which affects their capacity to stay focused in the learning environment." The group added this barrier in multiple sites in the document, because it applies everywhere and encourages the trauma-sensitive work.

These changes were approved by the SAC without objection.

7. Announcements and/or Other Information for the Good of the Order

8. Adjournment

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 19, 2015, 5:30