**HARTSFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**School Advisory Council/Title I Meeting Minutes**

Date: January 15, 2014 Time: 5:30 PM

Location: Media Center

**Members Present:** Erin Rosati, Lee Parker, Judi McDowell, BJ Van Camp, Katherine Solz, Rich Templin (co-chair), Michael Landrum (co-chair), Vernisha Howard, Will Hanley, Bridgett Birmingham, Faydre Hawkins-Brown, Ava Williams, Elizabeth Roach, Kia Rhymes, Marie Claire Leman, Sarah Strom, J. Alexander, Jason Strom, Kara Yancey, Amber Golden, Sandy Neidert, Jennifer Wimberly, Daphne Holden, Mary Jo Peliter, Danielle Ross, Tene Newman, and Nicole Littleton. Mr. Templin presided over the meeting.

**Welcome and review of the December 9, 2014 minutes – Mr. Templin**

As suggested at the end of the December meeting, Mr. Templin proposed a change to the SAC rules of procedure, for this meeting only, in respect to the amendatory process of the 2014-15 School Improvement Plan (SIP). Proposed rules of procedure Option 1 (similar to the Florida Legislature) and proposed rules of procedure Option 2 (more like the Green Party) were discussed, and Ms. Solz made a motion to use Option 1 with Ms. Howard seconding it. Ms. Roach had an objection, but the motion passed.

**21st Century/EDEP Updates - Ms. Rosati**

**DAC, PTO, and Parent Involvement Updates were summited prior to this meeting for participants’ review.**

**Principal’s Update – Ms. Van Camp**

The Leon County Health Department’s Molar Express provided our second graders with dental exams, hygiene instruction and referrals, if necessary. The United Way of the Big Bend funded this event, and Hartsfield had the highest response, more than any other school they visited.

Ms. Van Camp reserved the remaining time to the continuation of the amendatory process of the SIP.

**2014-2015 School Improvement Plan (SIP) – Continuation of amendatory process and possible vote on final plan.**

Mr. Landrum thanked the subcommittee for outlining what recess means: “a time when students can break away from academics in their classrooms and engage in unstructured play” (for example, playground time or use of “recess” kits that were furnished by the proceeds from the 2014 Nene Fest 5K). He stressed that teachers do understand the importance of recess and the value it brings to the classroom. He hoped parents would understand the need for teacher discretion and flexibility on its implementation. Mr. Strom asked what the final definition of recess was, and Mr. Landrum repeated his reply. Ms. Leman wanted to return to the ongoing amendment process of the SIP.

Mr. Templin said that **Amendments 1 and 3** are tabled at this time and can be handled at a future meeting.

Ms. Leman wanted to read a statement to the group. A motion was made that her statement be included in the minutes by Ms. Roach and seconded by Ms. Rosati. The motion passed and the statement is included below:

*After our last SAC meeting, a month ago, I (Ms. Leman) wrote an email to all of you for the purpose of bridging some gaps that I perceived in this conversation. Last week, after our meeting, those gaps seemed wider than ever...so many misunderstandings seem to remain.*

*I would like to try to make a few things clearer:*

*1- Parents at Hartsfield know that the greatest strength of this school is its teachers. We say it all the time to prospective parents. If they ask me whether they should request a given teacher for Kindergarten, I always say I wouldn't know who to suggest as they are all excellent.* ***Trust in you as teachers is not the issue.*** *The issue is that the educational system that we are in demonstrates less and less trust in your professional judgment: instead every year we see an increase in mandated instructional time, an increase in testing, an increase in the data that you are asked to keep track of, and that results in less and less freedom and independence for you in the classroom and in the course of the day. We know and trust that you believe in the benefits of recess, we know and trust that you wish to have daily recess. We are here to help you achieve that. We don't trust that the people at the state and district level who mandate the 360 minutes of daily instructional time understand the importance of recess. If they did they would require every class in every elementary school to have recess daily. From the beginning, it has always been our intention to push for change that would support you in doing what is best for the students: to provide daily recess to promote physical health, social development, and most of all, cognitive performance and the development of executive functioning skills.*

*2- As far as I am concerned, we never did reach an understanding on the* ***definition of recess*** *at our subcommittee meeting last week. As we were adjourning we were still discussing this. When I (and other parents, and teachers I'm sure as well) talk about recess, we are talking about unstructured play. That is not to say that we don't applaud and support all your efforts to enrich the school day with curriculum and activities aimed at teaching social skills, such as walk and talk, or giving kids a chance to refocus and re-energize with brain breaks. As valuable as these things are, they don't count as recess in my opinion. This is the definition that I propose:* ***recess is a regularly scheduled period within the school day for unstructured play and social interaction.***

*3- Parents have noticed an* ***increase in unstructured play*** *at Hartsfield this year and we do recognize the effort that many of you are making to include recess in your day. Again, we are trying to support that and* ***see access to recess expand to all grades and all classrooms*** *– and when outsiders ask about whether students get recess at Hartsfield, we want to be able to say YES, unequivocally.* ***We want parents to be able to take for granted that their children are having the benefits of recess daily.***

*4- This leads me to my last point. Why the* ***School Improvement Plan****. When the issue was first raised at SAC in 2012-2013, it was not part of the School Improvement Plan discussion. Efforts were made by SAC members to present the research, conduct a survey and make a recommendation, but ultimately, they were told that the SAC's only purview was the SIP. Across the country, non-profits helping schools include recess in their day, recommend adding it to the SIP as a strategy for improving cognitive, social and emotional learning, improving behavior, improving attendance, and promoting school engagement. Ideally, this would be a given and already in place. Ideally this would be legislated at the State level as it is in some states. Hartsfield has already shown that it can be a leader in its approach and achievements: we are the first school in the district to incorporate trauma-sensitive care in our approach. To support you, many parents are willing to go to the District, the School Board, the Legislature, and demand for a better policy for recess. In the meantime, I really think that Hartsfield can and should lead by example.*

Mr. Templin requested that Ms. Roach, who offered **Amendment 2** (providing training and support for teachers and other staff on how to manage, support, and prevent test taking anxiety), explain its purpose. She said that with more testing more anxiety is created for the students, school staff, and parents. Ms. Roach wanted us to be proactive in managing stress and wanted to know what currently is in place to address these situations. Ms. Ross said she thought something could be implemented without adding this amendment to the SIP. Ms. Solz said this topic could be addressed in the Morning Meeting curriculum written by Ms. Peilter and the Positive Behavior Support committee and implemented daily by the teachers. Ms. Frances and Ms. Neibert wanted the amendment in the SIP making the plan richer by having SAC “think out of the box” and not to stick by the numbers-opening the group to think of other ways to address situations. Mr. Lee commented that anything put in the SIP may have to be quantified in some manner possibly to explain to the state how this amendment relates to the increase in test scores, etc. The state may evaluate us on these ideas. Mr. Hanley noted there may be a place in the SIP where achievement may not need to be quantified. Ms. Van Camp made a motion to add Amendment 2 to the SIP with a second by Mr. Parker. Motion passed.

**Amendment 4** was offered by Mr. Hanley, who provided a brief summary to the group. It is proposed that a SAC member be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the additional hour placed on the school day. This change would be in the SIP (Page 10) under *Strategy type: Extended School Day, Person(s) responsible for monitoring implementation of the strategy*. Mr. Templin said that he thought having a SAC person as the monitor would provide a level of insulation of any critique of the extra hour and that person can issue a report. There was a broad discussion about who this person should be, what measure s/he would use to evaluate (the SIP states *this information is to be collected by the after school director and shared with SAC during the bi-monthly meetings*), and how this monitoring would help eliminate the extra hour next year. Ms. Solz suggested the principal just include it in her Principal’s Update during the SAC meetings. Ms. Williams clarified that the extra hour of reading was not placed at the end of the school day, but reading instruction was dispersed throughout the day. Ms. Roach wanted a clarification of who would be responsible for monitoring the additional hour effectiveness other than Ms. Van Camp. The question was called, without objection, and Amendment 4 was adopted.

**Amendment 5** was offered by Ms. Leman, who provided a brief summary to the group. It proposed that under *Family and Community Involvement* (page 5 of the SIP) a list of the data to be shared and a schedule for sharing this data be added, including mention of the data that will be collected but not shared and the reason for these decisions. There was no discussion, and Amendment 5 was adopted with no objection.

**Amendment 6** was offered by Ms. Leman, who asked for the amendment to be tabled at this time since she has not seen the 2014-2015 Parent Involvement Plan. The motion to withdraw the amendment was met with no objection.

**Amendment 7** included adding an additional goal, “to include the share of all students zoned for Hartsfield who enroll in and attend Hartsfield,” was offered by Mr. Hanley. Mr. Hanley noted that the “neighborhood talk” is not always positive about Hartsfield, and if this amendment was part of the SIP, it would become the work of SAC to promote the school to parents who are zoned for Hartsfield. Mr. Templin said the school already has meetings at local daycare centers and provides tours of the school which encourage parents to send their children to Hartsfield. Mr. Hanley, Ms. Leman, and Ms. Neibert each mentioned the impact of charter schools, school choice and the possibility of Hartsfield closing due to underemployment on Hartsfield. Mr. Hanley noted that the SIP is the only formal task of SAC mandated by the state, and with the inclusion of this amendment in the SIP, the state would know this is a task Hartsfield SAC is undertaking. Ms. Strom mentioned that bringing in more students from our zoned neighborhoods may increase the school’s academic levels resulting in a higher school grade. Ms. Solz and Ms. Williams thought this amendment would be better addressed in the Parent Involvement Plan not the SIP. Ms. Van Camp questioned where this data would come from. Mr. Parker said the White Pages; Mr. Templin said he had ideas on where to acquire this information. Ms. Van Camp suggested there should be further discussion on this amendment. A vote was taken on the inclusion of Amendment 7 into the SIP; the vote was nine yes to ten no. The amendment failed.

A motion was made to extend the meeting time 15 minutes. The motion did not pass. Meeting adjourned at 6:49 PM.

 Judi McDowell, Secretary

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Date minutes were approved by the SAC