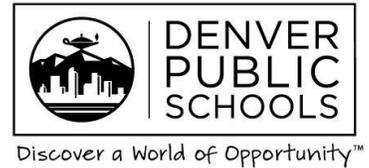


CSC Meeting Minutes

Lowry Elementary

8001 E. Cedar Ave.
Denver, CO 80230



Date: February 18, 2021 *Time:* 5:00- 7:00 pm

Meeting Location: Online Zoom Meeting

Members Present:

Adrienne Nault-Principal, Lisa Davis-Parent, Chanel Harper-Parent, Amy Holthus-Pera-Parent, Barbara Volpe-Community Member, Paul Vranas-Community Member, Lexi Higgins-1st grade Teacher, Dave Miles-Special Education Teacher, Amy Morin-Literacy Intervention Teacher, Susan Rayburn-Special Education Teacher

Absent Members:

Zed Jemison-Assistant Principal, Merlin Holmes-Parent, Mahmoud Kharif-Parent,

Additional Attendees:

none

Discussion Items

1. Call to order, welcome
 - a. The meeting was called to order at 5:03 pm.

2. Public Input
 - a. There were no additional attendees present to provide input.
 - b. Amy Holthus-Pera let us know that as part of the 2020 Bond, all 6th-12th graders in DPS will be receiving new chromebooks. Their current chromebooks will be collected and redistributed to K-5 students. This will allow DPS to officially utilize 1:1 Technology District-wide.

3. Approval of minutes from previous meeting
 - a. Dave Miles made a motion to approve the minutes. Barb Volpe seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of approving the minutes.

4. Principal's Report
 - a. What is currently going well?
 - i. Professional Development is getting back on track. This is helping staff to feel back to normal.
 1. Wednesday morning sessions offer three strands based on the book *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain* by Zaretta Hammond. Most staff members are able to participate in these sessions.
 2. Tuesday mornings, staff are meeting to work through the new required READ Act Professional Development. This is an intense training that requires 75 hours of training broken into 8 hour modules. CDE is requiring that this training must be completed by all K-3 teachers by January 2021.

- ii. School is going as smooth as it can given the health and safety guidelines, but it is not without its challenges.
- b. What are current struggles/pain points?
 - i. There are more chronic attendance issues this year compared to years past. Staff is meeting weekly to strategize and are working with families to support them in getting students to school (in person or remote) daily.
 - ii. The MTSS process is getting off the ground, but it can't move fast enough. Letters went home today to 30 families about starting reading intervention.
 - iii. Staff and administration is working to balance the school event calendar with the health and safety requirements. This means that not everyone is happy, but right now we just cannot hold these events. Staff is working to develop creative and safe alternatives for Field Day, Continuation and other events.
- c. Updates
 - i. Adrienne met with the ECE Department and staff administering the 2020 Bond Funds. Part of the bond is to expand ECE. While Lowry is not in a position to add an ECE classroom next year (but will reevaluate for 2022-2023), this funding might be used to add an Outdoor Classroom to the ECE/Kinder playground. While this isn't finalized yet, it sounds promising.
 - ii. Staff is moving forward with CMAS planning and determining what it will look like to conduct testing in person while maintaining the health and safety guidelines.
 - 1. It is likely that some Asynchronous Learning Days will be added to the calendar to accommodate the testing process. These will be announced as soon as possible to allow families time to plan.
 - a. A large number of staff is needed to facilitate the testing process without mixing cohorts. During the asynchronous days, staff from all grade levels may be needed to help administer the tests.
 - 2. We are expecting an above normal number of students to opt out this year.
 - a. While this will not affect Lowry's ranking or funding this year, parents should be advised that individual CMAS scores from 4th and 5th grade are used in middle school class placement, which in turn determines high school. CMAS scores are also frequently used in GT Identification and without CMAS scores, the identification process could take longer.
 - b. In-person students who opt out will likely be given work to complete in a separate location during the testing times.

5. Budget Update

- a. The final budget development was smooth and the budget was accepted as CSC discussed at the January meeting.
- b. Following submission, Adrienne met with the SPED team to discuss the best way to utilize the stimulus funding allocated for a full time SPED Para. They determined that the addition of a one-year part time SPED teacher would be helpful in transitioning students from MTSS to SPED and catching up with the identification and paperwork process. If a large number of students are officially identified for SPED services, more funding might be received from DPS to allow this position to be ongoing. Our official budget now reflects this change. All CSC members were in consensus that this was an appropriate modification to the budget.
- c. Adrienne will provide Lisa with the necessary paperwork to complete that says CSC has recommended the budget.

6. UIP Status Update

- a. Progress Monitoring update
 - i. A full update will occur next month.
 - ii. Adrienne provided an example of how each grade levels' guiding questions were being compiled so that all staff have access to this. This is shared with teams at-large so intervention teachers can align their pull-out groups with the guiding conceptual questions from the classroom.
 1. The guiding conceptual questions get deeper by grade level. They are built on rigor and ensure we are providing high quality instruction and are consistent.
- b. Paul asked for a clarification on the second goal. He was interested in what the baseline (previous years) results were on the Whole Child Survey. Since DPS has eliminated the Whole Child Survey this year, the goal has shifted to the Health and Safety survey. As a result there is no baseline data to compare to. We will talk further about the goal at the March meeting.

7. Black Excellence Plan Update

- a. A draft version of Lowry's Black Excellence Plan has been developed and has had one review by our Culturally Responsive Partner. This is intended to be a living, breathing document and will change as needs dictate it.
 - i. The plan highlights specific goals and an action plan.
 - ii. Based on feedback from our Culturally Responsive Partner and SLT, some action steps have been added to include outreach to black families including home visits, phone calls, and empathy interviews in an effort to understand the needs and unique perspective of our black families.
- b. As part of a recent PD, the team specialists put together data to build rationale for our work towards Black Excellence.
 - i. The data on iStation reading scores show that more black students than white students (as a percentage) are in Tier III (needs support) and there are fewer black students than white students in Tier I (on grade level).
 - ii. This gap between white and black students has been present for the last three years.
 - iii. It was asked if this same data had been broken out by socio-economic status. While we have the capability to break it out this way, the Black Excellence Plan calls us to look at our impact to black students regardless of their socio-economic status.
- c. As part of the Black Excellence Plan, staff will be looking at our ability to present learning that reaches black students in their identity and ways of learning and connecting.
 - i. The use of historically responsive literature and new ways to frame the curriculum being taught will be explored. This will allow us to reach black students in a more equitable way.
- d. It was questioned whether there is a community engagement aspect to the Plan. The Empathy Interviews that will be conducted in Fall 2021 will serve to engage our black community. We will also be looking for non-traditional ways to reach out to families.

8. Unfinished Business Items:

- a. Constituency Group Updates
 - i. Community

1. The Aviator Magazine, a full color magazine distributed to Lowry residents, will feature a schools issue this fall. Barb will work with Lowry staff to have kids write articles, submit artwork and tell stories about our school in order to tell the story of Lowry Elementary to the community.
 2. They have created a survey for community members to better understand how Lowry Elementary is viewed by our community. This survey will be distributed in a coordinated effort by The Lowry Foundation, LCMA, Lowry Facebook groups and the community newsletters for Blue Spruce, Alton Way and Boulevard One VOA.
- ii. Teachers
 1. Summer Academy will be happening this year. This is an invitation-only program that targets students based on their READ Act status. The Intervention and ELD staff is working to ensure that invited families can get through the lengthy and complicated registration process. While invitations have not gone out yet, they are expected soon. Summer Academy is just for K-3 students, but siblings of attendees can attend a complimentary care program at the same time.
 - iii. Parents
 1. PTO and Coffee with the Principal continue to be attended by the same group of parents each time. The latest PTO meeting had large amounts of frustration over the cancellation of Cotillion.
- b. Parent Survey Responses
 - i. 67 parents completed the survey. Overall the responses were positive.
 1. 68% of parents are satisfied with Lowry
 2. 54% of parents feel connected, 31% maybe feel connected.
 3. 76% of parents felt the communication this year has been adequate.
 - ii. People were understanding of the limitations in our ability to connect and communicate given the pandemic.
 - iii. Many parents responded with how great the teachers at Lowry are. This was the most prevalent theme in the survey.
 - iv. Other themes from the survey included:
 1. School Deets need to be fewer, not as repetitive and more succinct.
 2. More options are needed to challenge students who are bright, but not identified as GT.
 3. The administration should be more present
 - v. Staff will go over the survey results in more depth and identify ways to address the concerns brought up in the survey. CSC will discuss this in more depth at the next meeting.
 1. It is important to recognize that we cannot make everyone happy and that it is okay if everyone isn't happy.

9. New Business Items:

a. Enrollment Trends

- i. Paul and Barb identified that there is an overall trend of more boundary students choosing out of Lowry (going to another DPS School, not those leaving the district) over the past five years. They questioned whether or not this rate is important to Lowry.
- ii. Committee members reviewed the choice out numbers from the Enrollment Snapshot published on the DPS website.

1. In 2016-2017, 187 students choiced out. In the current year, 263 students choiced out. We saw an increase of 54 students choicing out this year over last year.
 - a. Due to the pandemic, students at other DPS schools left their school leaving openings which Lowry students took.
2. Choice In numbers have remained relatively stable over this time period.
3. With the exception of this current year, due to the pandemic, overall enrollment is not decreasing. (Enrollment has decreased at schools across DPS and the nation.)
- iii. Adrienne feels that we cannot be everything to every person and if a family feels that Lowry isn't a good fit, that is their choice. Lowry will continue to offer the best education to all students no matter who they are. As long as our overall enrollment is not decreasing (pandemic decrease aside), this is likely not a concern.
- iv. Committee members will continue the conversation on enrollment trends at the next meeting.
- b. Enrollment Updates
 - i. The first round of choice for the 2021-2022 school year ended on Tuesday evening. As of Tuesday morning, there were 251 applications with Lowry listed somewhere in their priorities. Of these, 87 listed Lowry as their #1 preference. Included in these numbers were 23 existing Lowry families who are planning to stay at Lowry and did not need to fill out a choice form, therefore more accurate numbers are 228 applications and 64 #1.
 - ii. Kindergarten had 159 applications, with 42 listed as #1. ECE had 92 applications with 17 as #1. Other grade levels had 8-22 applications. These numbers are slightly lower than a typical year, but this seems to be the trend across DPS.

10. Setting of agenda for next meeting

- a. Revisit Parent Survey Results
- b. Continue discussion on enrollment trends.

11. Date for next meeting - March 18, 2021

12. The meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm

Upcoming Dates:

- 2/24 - Coffee with the Principal
- 3/9 - PTO Meeting
- 3/10 - Coffee with the Principal
- 3/13 - No Go Gala