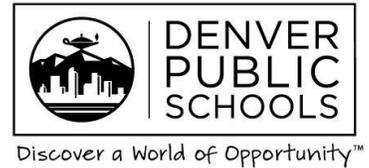


# CSC Meeting Minutes

Lowry Elementary

8001 E. Cedar Ave.  
Denver, CO 80230



*Date:* April 15, 2021 *Time:* 5:00- 7:00 pm

*Meeting Link:* Online Zoom Meeting

## **Members Present:**

Adrienne Nault-Principal, Lisa Davis-Parent, Merlin Holmes-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, Chanel Harper-Parent, Mahmoud Kharif-Parent

## **Additional Attendees:**

none

## **Discussion Items**

1. Call to order, welcome
  - a. The meeting was called to order at 5:02 pm.
2. Public Input
  - a. There were no additional attendees present to provide input.
3. Approval of minutes from previous meeting
  - a. Barb Volpe made a motion to approve the minutes. Lexi Higgins seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of approving the minutes.
4. Principal's Report
  - a. What is currently going well?
    - i. With some of the COVID and cohorting restrictions being lifted, some of the small group work/pull-outs are starting to happen in-person. Adrienne is also now able to do some informal walks of the building to check in on classes.
    - ii. Live streaming to remote students is going as well as it could be. It's not ideal, but compared to what other schools are struggling with, we can celebrate our success.
    - iii. We are almost fully staffed for the fall with little staff turnover. The only open position is an Amharic Native Language Tutor.
    - iv. Staff is starting to have conversations about the master schedule for the fall. It is exciting to feel almost normal again.
  - b. What are current struggles/pain points?
    - i. Adrienne feels it is important to name and acknowledge that we are on a journey of owning our identity as a school, our mission, and our values as we continue to

work on being an equitable and welcoming school to all. As part of the journey it is important to name uncomfortable pieces such as privilege and entitlement. This journey feels difficult right now as there are differing opinions on what the school should be and we are in a period of flux/change as we identify and own who we are.

1. The question was asked how we get from here to there. Adrienne is glad to be working in a district that values equity. She and Zed are having conversations with our Operational and Instructional Superintendents to help guide them. The staff is embracing who we are as a school family and being open as to what we can do. The next step is to work side by side with families to engage in conversations and interactions. This is difficult and uncomfortable work and Adrienne is asking staff and the community to have honest conversations. Some of these initial steps will be part of the Black Excellence Plan in the fall. There will be many steps along this journey and we have many partners to assist us.

#### c. Updates

- i. DPS has announced consolidated start and end times across the district to better facilitate transportation logistics. Starting next school year, Lowry's school day will run from 7:30-2:30. They are currently working through the logistics of this school day and the implications it has beyond the school day to work hours, child care, Discovery Link, parents and families, etc.
- ii. Adrienne has had some preliminary conversations with the Gust Foundation, a non-profit based in Chicago who works with schools on inclusive education practices. They currently work with a handful of DPS Schools. If we were to work with them, they would provide facilitation, coaching and feedback on how to be a more inclusive school.
- iii. Our ECE and Kindergarten classes are full for the fall and as enrollment changes occur, we have been pulling from waitlists.

#### 5. UIP Status Update

- a. A formal progress monitoring check-in will occur next month. We have essentially met and completed the first and third goals. The second goal centers around the student survey. These results have come in and Adrienne and Zed will be diving into the student surveys in the next month to get a better understanding of whether students feel they belong at the school.

#### 6. Black Excellence Plan Update

##### a. Plan Development Updates

- i. After conversations with CSC, SLT, ILT and staff, a set of Action Steps have been developed. There is one set of Action Steps for the remainder of this school year and a different set of Action Steps for next school year.
  1. This Year: (All Action Steps are on track)
    - a. All Students will be tested in iStation for April and May.
    - b. Staff will engage in Foundational Skills training and begin to implement a Foundational Skills block in K-3 classes.
    - c. Staff will engage in Culturally Responsive Teaching professional development.
  2. Next Year:
    - a. There will be a formal launch of the Black Excellence Plan to ensure investment and awareness of goals.

- b. There will be an intentional focus on parent and family engagement and intentionally setting a tone that Lowry isn't just a white space.
- c. Grade level math data will be tracked monthly along with literacy data.
- d. Behavior data will continue to be tracked with stronger plans and intervention where needed. Staff will be supported on how they can support social emotional learning for black students.

b. Goal Updates

- i. iStation data for April will not be completed until tomorrow. Therefore no updates on progress towards an increased number of students reading at or above grade level are available.

7. Unfinished Business Items:

a. Parent Survey

i. What are the biggest takeaways?

1. Overall it feels as though we are hitting the mark in places. COVID has definitely caused challenges, but most parents acknowledged this as the cause for their dissatisfaction, not Lowry directly.
2. Strengths of Lowry: diversity, communication, teachers, social emotional supports with Conscious Discipline, low staff turnover, safety
3. Ways we can improve: communication, fewer School Deets, more extracurriculars, PTO not representing student population, stronger reading programming
4. Specific programming that could be added: more inclusive GT programming (push-in), school family meetings once a week, Spanish classes, less screen time, too many movies/cartoons/videos played through the school
5. 68% of families are satisfied with Lowry
6. 53.6% of families feel connected to the school, 30.4% feel somewhat connected
7. 76.8% of families are satisfied with communication this year.
  - a. Ways we can improve communication include less repetitive and more timely School Deets.
8. There were five surveys whose anonymous open ended comments expressed strong dissatisfaction with the administration. None of this dissatisfaction has been presented directly to Adrienne or Zed. While we do not want to push down this input, these concerns are better addressed directly with the administration team. Adrienne and Zed have an "open door" policy and would encourage dissatisfied individuals to have a conversation with them directly to address their concerns.

ii. Action items

1. We need to continue to find a balance in communication. This can be accomplished by limiting the number of contributors for communication on School Deets and having standards in place for School Deets posts (length, redundancy, etc.)
2. The multiple choice results weighed higher on satisfaction, there were few individuals who said things like they liked our diversity but focusing on our at-risk students takes away from others. Hosting parent nights to have conversations in our community about race, poverty, and equity is a good next step. We will bring in outside/DPS facilitators for these sessions

b. Website Reworking Update

- i. Merlin Holmes has met with Adrienne and Zed to begin brainstorming changes. Adrienne and Zed are currently working on collecting new content from groups and brainstorming what our website can include. Merlin has been looking at the infrastructure of the website and there are no major issues to get it tuned up. They will be meeting again in a couple of weeks.

8. New Business Items:

a. New Member Nominations/Elections

- i. Four current parent members will be reaching the end of their two year term or moving on after one year of their term from Lowry. One parent member will continue to serve the remainder of their term next year. We will be electing five new parent members this year in order to reach our goal of six members that was established last year.
  1. A call for nominations (parents can self-nominate or nominate another person) will be issued on School Deets on Monday April 19. Any person interested in participating on CSC will need to submit a nomination form/agreement that outlines the responsibilities and commitments no later than Friday April 30.
  2. The parent election will take place online from May 3-10.
- ii. Teacher nominations will be collected following a similar process/timeline with a vote taking place in early May.
- iii. Community Members are nominated by CSC Members and will be voted on by CSC members.
  1. Barb Volpe has expressed an interest in serving another term, but if another candidate comes forward, she is happy to let someone else have a term.
  2. We have some feelers out to people who represent the communities at Renaissance, Blue Spruce and Boulevard One Residences to serve as a second community member.
- iv. We plan to make a concerted effort to recruit individuals who will better represent the diversity of the Lowry Elementary Community.
  1. Amy Morin pointed out that regardless of the committee makeup, we must embrace the committee as a brave space and be willing to talk about things that make us uncomfortable.
- v. All new members will be invited to attend the May CSC meeting.

b. Parent Volunteer program

- i. The vision for this program is that all parents will be highly encouraged to volunteer a minimum amount of time at the school. This expectation of community involvement will hopefully become part of our school culture. This requirement aligns with aspects of Conscious Discipline including The Power of Unity (we're all in this together) and Acts of Service.
- ii. Adrienne and Zed are planning to kick this program off at Family Registration this summer.
- iii. Committee members brainstormed ideas on how to introduce and implement the program. Ideas included:

1. It is important to build relationships with our families and not just ask them to do something. Reaching out to families and understanding who they are should be part of this.
    - a. A video on our website that outlines our commitment to families and holds our work accountable to families.
    - b. Non-traditional back to school night that truly engages families and provides insight into classrooms.
    - c. Seminar series for families
  2. 2 hours per semester (4 hours per year) seems like a reasonable request.
  3. A document outlining the program should have a list of all the options for volunteering and families can pick their preferences. Then the people overseeing those opportunities can reach out to families. Follow up from school should be important, rather than relying on families to just do it.
  4. A monetary alternative should be given, but not stressed upon.
  5. There should be a staff person in charge of this program. We have previously discussed the possibility of a Family Liaison position, which would be a good fit for this. As PTO evolves in the coming year, they could also be responsible for this.
9. Setting of agenda for next meeting
- a. Welcoming new members - overview of work to come next year
  - b. Website Redevelopment Update
  - c. Parent Volunteer program
  - d. Business meeting will occur from 5-6 pm.
  - e. CSC Members will conduct their annual principal review from 6-7 pm.
10. Date for next meeting - May 18, 2021, 5-7 pm
- a. This date has changed due to a conflict with We Are Lowry night.
11. The meeting adjourned at 6:59 pm

**Upcoming Dates:**

- 5/11 - PTO Meeting, 6:30 pm
- 5/17-5/19 - Field Day
- 5/20 - We Are Lowry night, 5-6 pm
- 5/27 - Continuation
- 5/28 - Last Day of School