

CSC Meeting Agenda

Lowry Elementary

8001 E. Cedar Ave.
Denver, CO 80230



Date: September 16, 2021 *Time:* 5:00- 7:00 pm

Meeting Link: Online Zoom Meeting

Members Present:

Zed Jemison-Interim Principal, Adler Dacunha-5th grade Parent, Lisa Davis-4th grade Parent, Committee Chair, Merlin Holmes-5th grade Parent, Courtney Riordon-Kindergarten Parent, Secretary, Barbara Volpe-Community Member, Lexi Higgins-1st grade Teacher, Dave Miles-Special Education Teacher

Absent Members:

Adrienne Nault-Principal (on leave), Janice Spearman-Administrator on Special Assignment, Dindi Wade-5th grade Parent, Kelly Tasky-3rd grade Parent

Additional Members:

None present

Discussion Items

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

2. Public Input: no additional members
 - 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. Adler Dacunha seconded the motion. All members present voted to approve the minutes.

4. Principal's Report
 - a. What is currently going well?
 - i. Staffing:
 1. Health Room: A Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) and a Registered Nurse (RN) have been hired for the school. The LPN will be there every day, the RN will be there on Mondays.
 2. Dr. Jemison is only looking to fill one more staff position. The last paraprofessional position was hired on September 16.
 - ii. Volunteer Reading program: Community member Paul Vranas is working with Dr. Jemison on establishing a reading program at the school. They are looking for 15 volunteers to read to individual students; the volunteers will read to the students in Amy Morin's and Beth Sprake-Jones' classrooms in order to maintain Covid

protocols (Ms. Morin and Ms. Sprake-Jones are our two Reading Interventionists). Mr. Vranas is putting together an article for the community newsletter, *The Lowry Aviator*, to solicit volunteers. Dr. Jemison will communicate about the program with the front office staff. In addition to the reading program, Mr. Vranas is also working with Dr. Jemison regarding a volunteer coordinator position for the school.

- iii. Denver Public Library (DPL) Bookmobile: The bookmobile will be on campus every other Friday. Students will be able to take these books home to keep, as opposed to the school library books. Students will be able to complete their Accelerated Reading tests with these books.
- iv. iStation: All students have completed the monthly testing.
- b. What are current struggles/pain points?
 - i. Communication: Dr. Jemison is working on streamlining communication with the staff. Covid has made meetings/in-person communication challenging.
 - ii. Trauma: Some students are dealing with trauma being back in school after being out during Covid, especially our younger students who may not have had consistent time in ECE or Kindergarten to learn the routines and requisite skills. The staff recognizes that some students are struggling with transitions, cognitive readiness, and social-emotional learning (SEL). The school staff is working on getting more parental support. Dr. Jemison is going into the community to work on partnering with families and finding the supports to help them; the first community visit is planned for October 6.
- c. Updates
 - i. No additional updates at this time.

5. Fall Budget Adjustment Discussion

- a. Classroom enrollment breakdown
 - i. Dr. Jemison will email the exact classroom numbers to the CSC. Lowry's student goal is 25 pupils/class (DPS caps at 35/class). 2nd and 4th grades have the lowest student numbers (2nd grade: 18, 19, and 19 students; 4th grade: 20, 21, 23 students).
 - ii. DPS has a full-time demographer that works on projected enrollment. DPS creates a survey that is given to school leaders and then provides feedback to help the individual schools address enrollment. Dr. Jemison will continue to work with them regarding enrollment.
- b. Discussion of proposed use of carry forward
 - i. Lowry needs to pay money back to DPS due to the decreased enrollment (the school was projected for 476 students [516 total with ECE], but enrollment is down by 54 students from that projection). In order to repay DPS, Dr. Jemison will be using the Carry Forward funds (savings account from previous years). He met with the school's budget partner and Kevin King (Instructional Superintendent); the overall budget is healthy and we will not have to go without or make cuts in other areas of the budget. Dr. Jemison did apply for financial assistance from DPS but it will not be approved because of our status as a Title I school and the current budget. In addition to using the Carry Forward money, Dr. Jemison will be able to use some PTO funding to make up the balance due to DPS.
 - ii. Dr. Jemison recognizes that using the Carry Forward funds is not best practice, but feels this will help us be in a better financial situation at the end of the year.

Dr. Jemison feels strongly about not having to RIB teacher positions, so utilizing the Carry Forward funds allows him to maintain his staffing.

- iii. In order to help funding for future years, it is important that school families complete the lunch applications. Dr. Jemison and staff members are going into the communities with school computers to help families complete the applications; they will be going to Blue Spruce, Alton Way, and VOA Boulevard One. Dr. Jemison will also send out communication to all families about the importance of completing the form or opting out.
- iv. Dr. Jemison is confident that community involvement, visibility, and academic progress will help the school's enrollment.
- v. Members of the CSC recognize the challenges Dr. Jemison and the team had to face while deciding to utilize the Carry Forward money.
- vi. CSC has a unanimous consensus that we support the use of Carry Forward and PTO funding to repay the enrollment overage to DPS.

c. Brainstorm ways to leverage funding

- i. Solicit businesses for sponsorship: Dr. Jemison recently met with local realtor Paul Witmer, who will be paying for celebrations and making a donation to the school auction. Mr. Witmer will be tapping into other business contacts to help support the school.
- ii. The PTO is working on grants to support other school funding opportunities.
- iii. The CSC is encouraged to think about other ways to raise money for the school.
- iv. The Lowry Foundation donates money, which gets funnelled through PTO in order to support the backpack program and food support.

6. Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) Status Update: The UIP is mandated by state laws. It outlines the goals for each school in SEL and academic areas; the goals are called Major Improvement Strategies and they are driving goals for the school, including budget and staffing.

a. Summary of 2020-2021 Results

- i. New Vision and Mission Statement: These were developed by the Lowry Elementary faculty and staff:
 1. Vision: Unstoppable learners who embrace inclusion and achieve their full potential
 2. Mission: Fostering a joyful school family that is committed to authentic belonging and personal excellence in our diverse global community
- ii. DPS UIP: DPS' priorities are accelerated learning, equity, and transformative social emotional learning. The "goal is to ensure that all students exit the K-12 education system ready for post-secondary education, and/or to be successful in the workforce, earning a living wage immediately upon graduation."

b. Summer UIP Development Summary

- i. The goals for 2021-2022 were selected because last year's data on SSP were focused on SEL. Engagement was low because of remote learning and the administration wants to address engagement for this year.
- ii. Data-driven instruction was difficult to assess during remote-learning.
- iii. Final data showed that the Black Excellence Plan needs to be addressed; most students of color were learning remotely last year.
- iv. 4th and 5th grade Second Language Learners (SLL) had tremendous growth.
- v. CMAS was evaluated on participation, not achievement, but the staff can still evaluate learning gaps and provide supports based on achievement. Lowry's participation was high (69% literacy, 65% math) compared to the district data.

c. Major Improvement Strategies for 2021-2022

- i. Elevating Rigor and Productive Struggle--Students will be given daily opportunities to engage in rigorous tasks and discourse around their thinking
 - 1. Analysis of the Leading Effective Academic Practice (LEAP) evaluation tool showed that some teachers did not utilize rigor in the past year. Teacher planning time includes time with the Instructional Leadership Team to help incorporate rigor into their teaching and assessments.
- ii. Increase Student Engagement by asking them to demonstrate their understanding by formulating higher-level thinking questions--LEAP Tool: LE.1 Teachers are engaging in best practices that demonstrate highly equitable and culturally responsive teaching
 - 1. The focus will be on the SLL for the equitable practices.
- iii. Data-Driven Instruction School-Wide--ALL teachers will engage in monitoring students' weekly progress by utilizing a schoolwide system that is based on mastery of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and/or Colorado Learning Objectives (CLO)
 - 1. Teachers are now looking at data weekly to analyze and address learning gaps and provide the appropriate supports for students.
- iv. Dr. Jemison asked for feedback on the plan. Members suggested incorporating SEL into the Major Improvement Strategies, in addition to the academic focus (possibility to include it with the second strategy). Members appreciate the incorporation of rigor, especially in regards to the community survey that was completed during the 2020-2021 school year. Dr. Jemison will have the final UIP for the next meeting.

7. Unfinished Business Items:

a. Increasing Enrollment

- i. Brainstorm ways to market to neighborhood families
- ii. Tours (will start virtually in November)
- iii. Lowry Aviator articles
- iv. Photos/videos to showcase the school and teachers
- v. Opportunities for families to connect with school community members (virtually or at a park)
- vi. Finding ways to celebrate what makes Lowry special (library, A/C)
- vii. Dr. Jemison or another faculty/staff member to participate in the DPL story time at Sunset Park.
- viii. Flyers mailed to homes
- ix. The new website is almost ready to relaunch. Dr. Jemison is asking the PTO to get parents to speak about the school on the website.

8. New Business Items:

- a. none at this time

9. CSC Member Training: Members participated in DPS Family and Community Engagement "Building Effective Collaborative School Committees" training

10. Review By-Laws

- a. The CSC reviewed the new school mission and will indicate that we have approved the bylaws. They will then be submitted to DPS.
- b. CSC ground rules and norms were established: presuming positive intent; balancing advocacy and inquiry; start and end on time; share, but share the air

c. CSC has a unanimous consensus on adopting the bylaws.

11. Additional Discussion: None

12. Setting of agenda for next meeting

- a. Black Excellence Plan Update
 - i. Plan Development Update
 - ii. Goals for 2021-2022

13. Date for next meeting - October 21, 2021, 5:00 pm

14. Meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm

Upcoming Dates:

9/16, 5:00 pm - Fall Adjustment Count Submitted to DPS

9/20 - Fall Budget Adjustment is due

9/21 - Fourth Grade Back to School Night

9/22 - GT Back to School Night

9/23 - Fifth Grade Back to School Night

9/27 - No School (Teacher Professional Development)

10/6 - CDE Fall Count Day

10/15 - No School (Conference Comp Day)

10/18 - No School (Teacher Professional Development)