

Woodrow Wilson High School LSRT Minutes
February 12, 2008

Present:

Administration: Jacqueline Williams

Faculty reps: Gloria Gibson, Erich Martel, Lisa Grymes

WTU rep: Robert Zugby

Parent reps: Mary Froning, Carmen Carrera, Chuck Samuels, Vanessa Stroman

PTSA liaison: Sarah Whitener

Additional Member: Eileen Plumb

Community rep: Erie Sampson

Student rep: Patricia Liverpool

Guest: John Howe (Wilson COO), Wanda Samuels (Special Ed. teacher)

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m.

I. The minutes of the LSRT meeting of January 15 and the emergency meeting of February 5 were adopted.

II. Principal's Report

A. Staff Issues. Music. Mr. Duberry will not be returning as a long term sub. The students who had him every day Period 4 will still earn the music credit. Mr. Douglas has taken over that class and will bring in a friend who can instruct the students in drums. Mr. Dickerson has also said that he will instruct the students in drums when he has the time. For periods 1-3, the administrators are trying to locate the woman who subbed for Lori Williams, and Principal Williams has asked HR to send her resumes.

ELL and Special Ed. Wilson was out of compliance for ELL and Special Ed and will be receiving 2 ELL teachers, 2 Special Ed. teachers and 2 aides for our visually impaired students.

B. Read 180 Implementation. Ms. Grymes reported on the Read 180 orientation meeting and projected implementation. This year the 60 10th graders who are on the cusp between levels will be targeted. The typical Read 180 class is divided into 3 groups, and each group goes to a station: silent reading, small group work, and computer work. A similar program at the Johns Hopkins Talent Development High School in Baltimore was observed and seemed to be an ideal situation for the teacher and the students. The teacher could easily handle the students, and the students were on task the whole time and moved through the stations without losing focus. The program will start at Wilson the week of Feb. 23, after additional training. Four teachers will be involved (including Wanda Samuels), and there must be a separate room equipped with computers designated for it.

C. Faculty Accessibility. All teachers have access to the dc.gov email system. However, not all are using it. Our student rep today, Patricia Liverpool, said that she emails 4 of her teachers somewhat regularly, and only one of them uses a dc.gov email address. Ms. Gibson said that any information coming from the Teachers' Union or DCPS comes to the dc.gov address. Teachers can access their dc.gov mail from anywhere in the country. Mr. Zugby and Ms. Williams will explore the use of the dc.gov

addresses with the faculty. Dr. Froning suggested that it is easier for parents and students to use an email system that uses just the teacher's name and dc.gov

Mr. Evans and Mr. Benitez are looking into electronic Gradebook and whether that part of DC STARS could be turned on.

III. Facilities Update.

Mr. Howe reported that we signed a contract with the architect, Grimm+Parker, and they will meet with the WMC Feb. 15 and the faculty Feb. 19. They are also setting up trips to visit some of their other school projects such as Washington-Lee HS which is similar in size to Wilson (350,000 sq. ft.), but was built new, not as a renovation. They also hope to visit Luke Moore Academy. It would be ideal if staff and faculty would participate in these visits. Grimm+Parker will be creating educational specifications to help them design the building by working with each department.

There are now phones in both faculty lounges. If this doesn't adequately meet the need, Mr. Howe will look into buying phones for the faculty to sign out of the School Bank. Ms. Sampson mentioned that the counselors still do not have voicemail or long distance service on their phones. Mr. Howe will look into the voicemail problem, as the capacity is there; it may be a problem with software that can be corrected.

Plastering and painting has started in earnest, beginning with the College Bureau, and including bathrooms and hallways. Mr. Howe says that all areas in need will be addressed with this initiative. The new security system on the doors is on target to be completed by the end of February. Air conditioning has been inventoried in all classrooms, so that we know exactly how many units to request for the spring-promised acquisition of air conditioners for each classroom. We may not have enough power, so Mr. Howe is looking into what can be done.

Since the beginning of our on-site facilities management, the speed of repairs has increased tremendously. Since May 1st of last year, there were 45 outstanding repair requests, some of which were 5–6 years old. Only 14 still remain. Some of these repairs include: the floor of the cupola which causes leaks in the 3rd floor ceiling; and wiring in the library, a potential fire hazard (he is waiting for approval on a contract). The heating in the gym has been repaired.

IV. Class Size and Course Issues

Jon Shea will do a survey of the different departments to see what the ideal class sizes and minimum class sizes should be. There was consensus among the faculty on the LSRT that classes should have 10 or more students, and any class with fewer students should require a waiver from the principal. If students drop out and lower the class size below 10 during drop/add, a waiver to continue the class would also be required.

Office Assistants. In the first advisory there were 145 office assistants, and about 65 of them were not assigned to a teacher. All OAs should have been assigned to a teacher, with attendance taken and grades given. There was a consensus to eliminate the OA "class." Ms. Williams said it would be extremely helpful to the school if some of the OAs could be trained in running the copiers, but would only receive community service hours for that, not course credit. Ms. Gibson asked for a revival of Lab Assistants who would be helpful in setting up labs and cleaning equipment. Ms. Williams agreed to work with the Science Department on having a limited number of Lab Assistants. In

addition, Dr. Froning talked about seeing if there is a Teaching Assistant category for upper level students to help in beginning courses (e.g., World Languages), saying this would be helpful to the language teachers and be good for college applications. Again, these positions would be limited and need approval from the principal. Mr. Martel expressed concern that we not let these positions balloon in numbers again. In addition, it was agreed that so many students in OA hides our real scheduling and staffing needs.

One reason so many students sign up to be OAs is that they need required vocational credits. Wilson needs to offer other alternatives to students, such as Life Skills courses. Ms. Stroman pointed out that many parents and students do not know that several of the courses in the Business and Finance Academy count as vocational courses and teach important life skills. Mr. Martel read from the Master Schedule that there are many openings in the vocation courses we already have.

In the new requirements, career/college credits have replaced vocational requirements. Ms. Williams and Mr. Shea will work on the assistant issues and will ask the departments what they need.

V. Advanced Placement Committee update

The parent and teacher AP committees have been working with Alex Wilson and Shauna Leung to plan Wilson's first AP Night for parents and students, and AP Fair for students only, which will occur on Feb. 13 and 14 respectively. At each event two or three students from AP classes, and in some cases the teachers, will sit at tables in and around the library and will show books and class outlines and discuss the classes.

Mr. Martel reported that students in current AP classes had 7th grade reading levels according to the DRP test given by the English department. Ms. Gibson reported that a larger number of 10th graders are taking APs in the sciences: 2 in AP Chemistry and 1 in AP Biology. She has developed a student-friendly handout asking the students to look carefully at themselves as students and figure out if they are ready for APs. Mr. Martel and Ms. Gibson agreed that students should get signatures of the sending teachers before they sign up for an Honors or AP course. This recommendation will be discussed with Ms. Williams.

VI. Academic Committee Reports

A. English. Ms. Grymes will be meeting with other English teachers this weekend to develop a curriculum for teaching students to write. Composition will be on the DC CAS this year.

B. Math. Dr. Stroman reported from Dr. Smith that measurement and geometry are weaknesses so the math teachers are focusing on them in the 10th grade math classes. Too few workbooks were sent and more are being sought.

C. ELL. Ms. Carrera has not been able to get a sense of how the ELL department is preparing its students for the DC CAS. Ms. Venetta Sloane-Akwara, chair of the department, and Mr. Spadafor have not returned her messages.

D. Special Education. Neither Ms. Lee nor Mr. Bargeman were present to report on efforts by the Special Ed. teachers to prepare their students for the DC CAS .

E. Counseling. The junior class was without a counselor until January before we were given permission to replace Mr. Booker. HR is sending us resumes. Ms. Williams was told that once someone is hired, if Mr. Booker were to return he would be placed in

another school. Mr. Merlos is covering the needs of the juniors with the help of Ms. Hansen. [*Mr. Booker returned to Wilson @Feb. 18.*]

VII. SBMC Update

Dr. Froning passed out a 2-page memo about Discipline and Attendance (will be posted with the Minutes on the Wilson website). In it, Dr. Siebens details the situation at Wilson where the SBMC (Student Behavior Management Committee) has developed policies on behavior and tardiness, but there has been little follow-through by the administration—parents are not called, students are not given Constructive Detention, or they are given CD and no one has documented whether or not it was carried out. It was agreed that strong educational leadership will be necessary to make an impact on student behavior.

VIII. Principal Selection Update

The Selection committee has written to every high school principal in the DC area asking if they or any of their assistant principals are interested in leading Wilson. The committee also contacted educational award winners in the area. Mr. Samuels reported that the respondents to the national ads taken out by the PTSA were not very inspiring. Ms. Reilly reminded the committee that there were not very many strong candidates when Dr. Tarason was selected.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Whitener