

Woodrow Wilson High School LSRT Minutes
May 13, 2008

Present:

Support Staff: Hattie Moore

Vice Chair: Greg Bargeman

Faculty reps: Sandy Wright, Gloria Gibson, Erich Martel, Lisa Grymes

WTU rep: Robert Zugby

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

PTSA liaison: Sarah Whitener

Community rep: Erie Sampson

Guests: John Howe (Wilson COO), Rene Meddaugh, Art Siebens, Elaine Smith, Alex Wilson, Frank Feeney

The meeting was called to order at 4:40 p.m.

I. The minutes of the LSRT meeting of April 8 were adopted.

II. Facilities Report

Mr. Howe was happy to announce that as of today, all the rooms in Wilson (including, finally, his own) have air conditioning. The default temperature setting is 71 degrees (each teacher has a remote control to change settings), and the AC is quiet. The additional power capabilities which were added for the AC will now allow us to clean up some fire code violations such as the multiple cords in the library. The security doors, alarms and cameras are up and running. Water is still leaking from the cupola to the third floor ceiling because the cupola was not included in the scope of work with the roof. A contract is ready to go, and the cupola will be fixed by the company that did our roof (Vista) very soon.

We thought the school audit was complete, but it is still ongoing.

The letter written by Stoddert Soccer complaining about Wilson's fees to use the stadium was discussed. Some LSRT members saw Dave Repka, the President of Stoddert, interviewed on television news about it. This is unfortunate publicity because the WMC set its fees at the going rate for a first class facility. The field at Maret, which goes for less, is smaller than regulation size. The George Washington University at Mt. Vernon field is not on public transportation which makes it a problem for many players. The WMC told Stoddert that we needed to operate for a year to see how the income stream and maintenance costs compared throughout the first season, and we would revisit the fees after that. [As of May 17, Stoddert has gained access to the new artificial turf field at Roosevelt.]

All counselors should be reachable by voicemail, Mr. Howe having helped them understand the system.

We cannot get DCPS to authorize any additional phone lines to the school at the moment, but Mr. Howe continues to work on accomplishing it in another way.

III. Memo to Chancellor re restructuring

Members of the Think Tank went to Bell HS to meet with the Chancellor about our restructuring. We were prompted by the Chancellor to address functions that may need reconstitution for next year, as well as a possible partner to help us achieve AYP. With regard to the latter, we interviewed 3 possible partners: High Schools that Work (HSTW), Friendship Schools, and Talent Development High Schools. Margot Berkey and Mary Froning wrote up a brief proposal that covered

both of these subjects, which was vetted at this meeting. Consensus about the partner being High Schools That Work was reached fairly easily.

Most of the discussion centered on the functions that we wanted to be reconstituted; in other words, those specific functions which we felt were either poorly defined, or carried out by multiple people instead of one individual, or in need of examination by the new principal. Despite our desire to identify functions rather than individuals, Mr. Zugby chose to abstain from a vote because he represents all ET 15s in the building (which includes Counselors). We sent forward a communication to the Chancellor indicating that while we had not reached consensus in this area, the majority decided that the functions would be listed as: assistant principals, counseling/scheduling, and attendance.

[On May 15, the Chancellor released her restructuring plans for all the schools in which she determined that the instructional faculty would be reconstituted, and that administrators could reapply for their jobs. In addition, it called for Wilson to explore a partnership with High Schools That Work.]

IV. Summer Transition Program

A. Incoming 9th graders (testing in feeder schools, summer transition program)

Alex Wilson is starting to administer the English Department's DRP (Degrees of Reading Power) diagnostic test to incoming freshmen this Friday at Wilson, then at feeder schools in upcoming weeks. Dr. Smith asked if it was too late for her department to piggyback on this effort and said she had diagnostic tests ready to go. If this doesn't come together, the DCCAS scores of incoming freshmen will be available to Wilson for math placement.

It was stated that ideally, we would have a summertime multi-week orientation for students who are new to Wilson and behind in one or more of their core classes. [Such a Summer Bridge program is mentioned in the Chancellor's restructuring plan for Wilson, but it is unclear which summer this would occur.] If Wilson funded it, it would have to be limited to Title I students and would be premised on being able to get a funding advance from our Title I monies. It might be possible to have the Chancellor send a letter to these students requiring them to attend. Money to pay these students may be available through the Mayor's summer programs for youth. Credit recovery will be available through summer school which will be a 5 or 6 week program starting a week after school lets out. Wilson has submitted a list of students who are in danger of failing courses. Potential rising 9th graders who need to do credit recovery for classes they failed will do so at the four middle school testing sites, not at Wilson. The LSRT encourages an orientation program for all students new to Wilson, to be held right before the beginning of school.

B. Math Summer Enrichment – Dr. Smith

Dr. Smith spoke to the need for funding for the summer Math Enrichment program. It is a challenge to find funding every summer. It was originally funded by UDC, other years by our local school funds, the PTSA, or central administration. The last two years it was funded from the central administration, but the request has been turned down this year because of the focus on remediation. She said that this program is the single best way to diversify our upper level and AP math classes. One possible source of funding is the Administrative Premium line item, and another is the PTSA. The total cost would be \$13,500 for 3 teachers for 5 weeks. [The PTSA Executive Board would like to see plans for the 60 9th grade students who are failing Algebra 1 and Geometry before they fund the Summer enrichment program, who qualify by obtaining at least a C in their math courses.]

V. Professional Development

A. Math

Dr. Smith spoke of a frustrating situation where central administration approved of our purchasing geometry software for the math department, but now Dr. Smith cannot get Traci Martin of central to OK the use of in-house professional development funds so that the teachers can be trained in the new

software. [Later, it was clarified that the Math Department received the materials for and training to implement a math lab program for low performing students offered by the central office—Accelerated Math; this is part of the recently received Restructuring Plan.]

B. Other professional development for implementation of double periods for math, English and Science

Teachers need to carefully plan for the new double periods in math and English. Re: math, Dr. Smith had wanted her teachers to have 5 days of training at \$30 per hour during the summer. If this isn't possible, Dr. Smith would like to do this before school is out.

VI. 10th grade teams – proposal for partial implementation – Dr. Froning

It was proposed by Dr. Froning that 10th grade teams (part of our restructuring proposal that was adopted by the Chancellor in our restructuring plan) begin to be implemented next year by having all 10th grade students be covered by team in English and social studies (as is currently true of those in academies).

VII. Academic Committee – ideas for next year

It was agreed that the LSRT should continue to have academic committees next year, to track, by department, our progress toward meeting AYP in 2009.

VIII. Plans for next year's lunch period

There was no consensus on changing the lunch period next year. Although Mr. Whittle has been consulting with parents, teachers and students, the teachers on the LSRT did not feel that they had adequately discussed the pros and cons. Sarah Whitener reported that the PTSA Executive Board also does not feel that adequate discussion had occurred. It was pointed out that Mr. Whittle thinks that a separate 9th grade lunch looks good, but teachers said that would require a different bell schedule and might be difficult to implement.

IX. Budget – changes to formula, plus use of OTPS and Title I funds

In order to restore many of the positions important to the functioning of Wilson unaccounted for in the formula budget we were presented, we will have to offer a Petition for Change at an upcoming budget roundtable with central administration. It is hoped the roundtable will occur after the new principal is selected, so that s/he can have input into a budget with which s/he will have to live for the next school year. One of the outstanding questions is whether Academy Coordinators should exist or if they exist, have teaching loads. There has been no consensus within the LSRT on this issue as yet. Mr. Martel felt that we should not reduce our Assistant Principals from 4 to 3, saying that only an AP has the authority to evaluate teachers and enforce discipline. But Dr. Froning indicated we probably cannot justify taking teacher positions to have both a 9th grade AP and an Academy Coordinator (ET-10) for the 9th grade (the incumbent cannot qualify for an AP position, but may be able to within a year). [Our Instructional Superintendent clarified that in other schools, ET-10's do evaluate teachers and handle discipline]. Dr. Froning said the most important thing for the coming year would be continuity in the 9th grade leadership, since it will be the grade most focused on this summer and next school year.

Respectfully submitted, Sarah Whitener