

Woodrow Wilson High School LSRT  
Minutes  
December 11, 2007

Present:

Administration: Helene Miller, Alex Wilson

Faculty reps: Gloria Gibson, Erich Martel

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: Angelica Gregory

Guest: John Howe (Wilson COO)

The meeting was called to order at 4:45 p.m.

- I. The minutes of the LSRT meeting of November 13, 2007 were adopted.

## II. Principal's Report

**Staff Vacancies.** [The Wilson community was deeply saddened this week because of the death of Mr. Reginald Lewis, a 9<sup>th</sup> grade social studies teacher. At the community-wide restructuring meeting yesterday, Mr. Dickerson shared some thoughts about Mr. Lewis, and then asked for a moment of silence in his memory.]

Because of Ms. Williams' fall on Monday, she was not present. Ms. Miller reported on staffing issues. Ms. Dedo, the long term social studies substitute, will move to Mr. Lewis' classes until his position is filled. Keith Roscoe, a new 9<sup>th</sup> grade social studies teacher, did not report for work although they were expecting him. They will look into what happened. [He did report the next day.] A counselor who will be replacing the 11<sup>th</sup> grade counselor, Mr. Booker, is expected by mid-January.

## III. AP Committee Report

The faculty AP committee began meeting this week and will meet monthly. The issue of required materials fees for some AP classes was discussed, with concern expressed that some students need financial support to purchase these materials. It was recommended that the PTSA newsletter be used to publicize the AP program. It was recommended that field trips, assemblies and other activities that limit AP class participation should be minimized for AP students. With a date of March 4 for course selection, AP teachers need to plan meetings with parents, department heads, and counselors ahead of that so that recommendations for students to take APs will be in place.

Two meetings have been held with Latino families. The meetings were led by parents Carmen Carrera, at the Multicultural Center, and Beth Perry, at Mary's Center. Carmen reported that although parents seem very interested in AP courses, they and their children do not seem to know much about them. Shauna Leung, our College Board coach, will provide Carmen with materials about the AP program written in Spanish.

There will be future meetings about AP after the new year, including February 13<sup>th</sup>, before or during the PTSA meeting.

#### **IV. COO Report**

**A&E Selection Process.** The Wilson Management Corporation has chosen an Architectural and Engineering firm from a pre-qualified list to begin work on Wilson's modernization. Five proposals by A&E firms were carefully studied, and from the five, three firms were chosen to do presentations to a committee of WMC members and community experts. The three firms (Cox Graee & Spack, EE&K, and Grimm & Parker) gave their presentations on Dec. 3. Because of the high quality of the firms, it was very difficult to choose amongst them. Once a contract is signed, the winner will be announced to the Wilson community.

Mr. Samuels reported that the WMC is still trying to get an agreement with Alan Lew that if help on a facilities problem is not delivered quickly, then the WMC can hire contractors from a pre-approved list to effect the repair.

Shockingly enough, Mr. Howe actually met some repair men last fall who came out on a 4-5 year-old work order to fix something in the pool area; they had not realized that the pool was being demolished. John said it was unconscionable that our elevator was broken for approximately one month, requiring some of our disabled students to be carried up and down the stairs and making it very difficult for our disabled teachers. He stated that this is where quality of life issues meet safety and security issues. The hope is that Mr. Lew will give us a small capital fund for items we can fix quickly ourselves, but neither the amount of money nor the process has been approved.

**Plans for Oversight of Business Functions.** The Local School Plan calls for Mr. Howe to move into management of business items at Wilson, rather than being limited to facilities management. The WMC is meeting with Chancellor Rhee this Friday and will discuss how to ensure the proper authority for Mr. Howe to do so. Meanwhile Principal Williams and Mr. Howe will meet to discuss how quickly and in what direction the new responsibilities are assumed. Particularly important will be determining his role in our modernization. He will either become the fulltime project manager, or he will retain his present responsibilities and the WMC will hire an outside project manager.

#### **V. Academic Committee Reports**

**Math.** Although there was no formal report, based on a conversation with Department Chair, Dr. Elaine Smith, Dr. Froning talked about the need for more vertical teaming between Wilson's math department and the math teachers in our feeder schools. Our math teachers also need to get the proper codes so that they can access DCBAS scores for their students. The detailed data from the DCBAS testing will be very helpful for analysis of the students' needs.

**Science.** Mr. Zugby reported that the Science department meets every Wednesday and uses the information to prepare for the DCCAS test [This is the first year the Biology testing will count toward AYP.].

**English.** Ms. Grymes was not present, but it was reported that the parents of 61 students who were identified as being very close to performing at the proficient level were invited to a meeting with English teachers, but only five showed up. This led to a discussion on how to get more involvement and support on the part of parents.

Re: Improving our participation rate in the DCCAS (95% participation is required), the following were suggested and discussed:

- DCCAS could be made a requirement to being promoted to the next grade, but in the opinion of Mr. Martel the DCMR (DC Municipal Regulations) would not allow this (it defines grade level students by the credits they have earned).
- Ms. Gibson will be working with Jon Shea so that students can be assigned to teachers who will find out exactly why they aren't coming to school now, so that interventions can be made before the DCCAS test in April
- Possible rewards for students who show up to take the DCCAS: If they show up, their names will be entered in a raffle for an iPod or Best Buy gift card and/or everyone who takes the DCCAS gets a certain number of Tiger Bucks to be spent in the school store. Students might be given extra class credit for taking the three DCBAS tests and the DCCAS.

Also, teachers should also be encouraged to take the practice tests so they have a good understanding of what is required of the students.

**ESL.** The teachers are trying to get the students to focus on persuasive writing and on improving their vocabulary. All ESL students are required to take the math test. If this is their first year in America, their test score will not count.

**Special Ed.** Mr. Martel's study of the master schedule shows that PE classes are very large (some over 40), some special ed. classes have 27-29 students, and one 9<sup>th</sup> grade English class has more than 30 students. He stated that this is certainly not the best way to address the needs of our special ed or new 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. Right now we have three or four unfilled slots for special ed. aides.

**Counseling.** The 11<sup>th</sup> grade counseling position may be close to being filled (early next year?). The counselors need to have one-on-one meetings with all their students, and go over plans for the future in addition to Letters of Understanding and other basic requirements. Ms. Carrera was concerned that many Latino parents would miss the deadline for submitting LOUs, so she personally called every Hispanic family in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Many of them did not know what she was talking about.

The 50 or so seniors who took 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Chorus as a class at Deal will not have to take General Music in order to graduate. They will be given credit for that class.

There is an ongoing audit of the senior class to determine who will be ready to graduate in the spring. Some students have been placed in the 11<sup>th</sup> or even 10<sup>th</sup> grade. By DC regulations, they would not be able to participate in the graduation ceremony even if able to complete their requirements over the summer.

## **VI. Restructuring Planning**

**Report from DCPS meeting on 12-4 and Timetable.** Self-assessment forms will be available soon for completion by faculty and the LSRT. They will be due back Jan. 4. Apparently, feedback from parents and community members will occur during focus groups (dates?). On Dec. 18 Ms. Williams will receive the rubric for the Quality School Review which will take place Jan. 7 – 22 and will cover Academics, School Climate and Parental and Community Involvement. Ms. Rhee will make her decision about plans for the restructuring schools in late February.

The Wilson plan to come up with a restructuring proposal was to divide the parents and teachers who came to the Think Tank meeting yesterday into three focus groups and have

them work on their subject. The next ThinkTank will be on Monday, Dec. 17, which would continue the small group work. The coordinators for the groups are: Mary Ball – Academics; Mr. Da Silva-Olaghere (Coach G) – School Climate; Janathel Shaw and Mary Giffin – Parental and Community Involvement. The Monday meeting will begin at 3:30 p.m.

**Process for Vetting Proposal.** The small working groups will report out at a ThinkTank meeting on Jan. 9. The proposal would then go before the SCAC, the LSRT and PTSA the second week of January. The next LSRT meeting and faculty meeting is Jan. 15. We discussed whether or not the faculty needs to vote on which option we are choosing. Although most seemed to think the general consensus was that we were writing a proposal for Option 5, it was decided that a vote was needed, and Mr. Zugby said that he would organize a vote, probably for Friday, Dec. 14. Mr. Martel and SCAC member Mr. Zugby will work on determining the definition of passage (simple majority for choice of option, some level of supermajority for the passage of a proposal). With regard to the LSRT, everyone hoped that we would be able to gain a consensus on the proposal, with Mr. Samuels suggesting that failing a consensus, we would simply report to the Chancellor what the sense of the LSRT was and she could make of it what she wanted.

#### **VII. Report from Principal Selection Committee**

There is a meeting next week for the committee to see the resumes that DCPS has. The committee keeps asking to hold interviews themselves, without the candidates having already passed through three levels of review with DCPS. The committee may try to get more resumes. They have received about 20 so far, of which eight or nine look promising. While the Wilson community is encouraged to recruit good principal candidates, the committee wants to remind anyone who does so to work directly with the committee to set up tours, etc.

#### **VIII. Budget Committee Report**

Mr. Martel showed copies of the budget to the LSRT, highlighting his concern that although the summary of the section of the budget that includes ET-15s (faculty) says there are 83 teachers, there are only 82 actually named in the official Schedule A. He was encouraged to do a check-off of faculty members to make sure everyone who is in the building is included on the Schedule A. If an anomaly continues to exist, the LSRT would support further investigation.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Sarah Whitener, Secretary