Janney Elementary School

Local School Advisory Team (LSAT)
September 11, 2024 Meeting

2024-2025 LSAT Members

Staff Representatives- Robyn Nelson (Co-Chair, WTU Representative), Danielle Singh, Nicole Ugel, Mike Barnhart, Morgan Parent, Luke Kovacs, Jason Jones (AFSCME Union Representative)

Parent Representatives- Melanie Douglass (Co-Chair), Matt Bricken, Christopher Clements, Rebecca Fertig Cohen, Maureen Perrone, William Theodore II

PTA Parent Representatives- Bethany Rose Hanna, Elizabeth McAdam

Members in Attendance- All except Jason Jones.

Agenda

- Welcome/ agenda overview + call for additional topics
- Our LSAT This Year
  - Establishing LSAT Norms
  - Need a secretary for LSAT who will take minutes at our meetings
  - Recording meetings?
  - Making LSAT meetings more accessible?
  - Goals for the School Year
  - Lunch and Learn
- Updates from LSAT Collective & W3EdNet
- School updates:
  - Updates from Principal Singh
  - Building Updates
- Committee Work
  - Budget
  - Culture of Achievement
  - Community Engagement
  - Building/Facility/Operations
- Action Items

Minutes

Welcome/ Agenda Overview

LSAT members were presented with the opportunity to introduce themselves and their connections to J.E.S. after which the agenda was reviewed and a call for additional topics was made. No suggestions for additional topics were brought forth.

Our LSAT This Year

A call for LSAT norms was made. Suggested norms included:

-What is said here, stays here; what's learned here, leaves here. We acknowledge each member is deserving of the space to share their opinions in confidence; importance is placed upon our collective findings and these are what should be presented to the community at large.

-Listening to Understand. Priority should be given to realizing the foundation of an individual's position to better understand their ending position.

-Go hard on topics, not people. We acknowledge that we will be addressing subjects of passion. Our passion must remain centered on these subjects rather than the individuals expressing their positions.

-Reach consensus. Decisions should be made as a collective before moving on.

Secretary

Christopher Clements volunteered to take the minutes for LSAT meetings during the 2024-25 school year.

Making LSAT Meetings More Accessible/ Open Meetings Act

The District of Columbia Open Meetings Act requires that any gathering of a quorum of a public body where members consider, conduct, or advise on public business offer the opportunity for the public to observe the meeting.

As recommended by the LSAT Collective, Janney's LSAT will, to the best of our ability, record our meetings and save them for at least five years. We acknowledge that some meetings surrounding sensitive topics will need to be closed to the public (while still being recorded and saved). LSAT meeting minutes will continue to be made available through Janney's website. Attention to LSAT and where the community can find additional information will be made in an upcoming newsletter.

Goals for LSAT

Continuing on the prior topic, a major goal for LSAT this year will be for the team to be more present in the community, to educate community members on the collective and its function, and to present greater opportunities for the community at large to be involved.

This year, Janney LSAT aims to offer a range of avenues and events to educate the community on the collective and offer space for community input. Suggested offerings included spotlights in the Janney Newsletter, a shout-out at Back to School Night, Lunch and Learns- in person or virtually, after-drop-off coffee drop-ins, LSAT tables at Janney events and/or drop off, and a dedicated email address for questions and suggestions.

Updates from the LSAT Collective and Ward 3 Education Network (W3EdNet)

The Ward 3 Education Network is a group made up of Parent/Teacher Organization Board and LSAT members, as well as other community members. It works together to support schools in the local High School feeder patterns, host community events of common interest, and advocate for better schools across the city.

The LSAT Collective is a volunteer-run group open to LSAT members from all DC public schools. Its mission is to create a larger community of LSAT serving members to be a resource and support system to help all DC LSATs understand their role, fulfill their designated tasks, operate effectively, represent their full school communities, and achieve their goals.

Each group meets monthly- regrettably at the same time as one another. Janney LSAT attempts to have at least two of its members at each meeting to share their learnings to the group at large.

W3EdNet Meeting 9/10/2024

This meeting consisted of an introduction to W3EdNet and its function. “Shine” was given to the Ward’s principals for their hard work. Councilmember Fruman, who was in attendance, shared that a new staffer, Nora Charles, is taking over advocacy work as his prior staff member is attending graduate school. Fruman’s team will begin working with schools in October regarding enrollment and final numbers in an effort to secure more funding for our schools. Attention will also be given to fixing the timeline for budgeting to allow schools greater flexibility and preparedness.

LSAT Collective Meeting 9/10/2024

This meeting consisted of an introduction to the LSAT Collective and its function. Resources included the LSAT Collective website and newsletter were shared, as well as a google group for LSAT members across the city. Discussions included Community School Plans, how they’re created, who’s responsible for the goals set, and how LSAT can interact with and influence these goals; LSAT meeting agendas, how to set them and who determines agenda items; and DC’s Open Meetings act and how to make school communities more aware of LSAT meetings and agendas, and how the community can offer input into LSAT meetings and agendas.

School Updates
Presented by Principal Singh

The school has exceeded its projected enrollment (690) and is currently at 718 students. Despite exceeding the projection, no class size is currently above 25.

Because our enrollment goal was exceeded a budget petition for additional funds have been submitted to DCPS. Decisions will be made by DCPS by the end of the month.

A need for additional staff support, particularly in our lower grades was expressed.

There are currently two staff vacancies within our current budget, a Kindergarten partner teacher for Ms. Xavier and a part-time Assistant of Strategy and Logistics (front-office position). With additional funding/PTA funding additional support is being sought for these lower grades. Interviews for these positions are ongoing.
Principal Singh expressed thanks to the community and parents for their advocacy surrounding budgeting during the last budget period during which significant cuts had been proposed by some members of DC/DCPS leadership. Principal Singh expressed optimism for a more normal budget period this school year.

Progress on the Comprehensive School Plan has been made and will be shared via slides at a date in the near future.

Building Updates
Presented by Mike Barnhardt

Operational growth areas within the school with a focus on two major projects:

-A leak from a toilet in first-floor, atrium restrooms has affected L12, Ms. Chetrit's Pre-Kindergarten classroom which sits on the basement level beneath these restrooms. Ms. Chetrit has been relocated to the science lab and, as a result, Ms. Simon, the science teacher for grades Pre-K- 3 is conducting her classes within home rooms. The first floor atrium restrooms are currently closed with students being redirected to the restrooms in the basement level.

The Department of General Services is currently working to identify the problem and remedy the issue. Plumbers have been working during night time hours, opening walls and removing tiles to find and fix the leak. Administration and our WTU reps have been working with Ward 3 Councilmember Matthew Furman to address the issue and expedite a resolution.

-Yesterday, 9/10 work began on replacing the heating and cooling units for the "old-side of the building" – mostly defined as those parts of the building with original brickwork (front entrance, cafeteria, and surrounding classrooms). These unit have been malfunctioning for years resulting in a need for window and spot units within the classrooms.

Work is scheduled to take place overnight over the next four weeks during which workers will need access to the roof as well as piping and electrical/refrigeration lines within the walls. This work should be restricted to hallway walls only (no classrooms) and the workers have assured that any openings made will be covered during the school day. Administration plans to hold these workers accountable for student safety; portions of the hallway may be closed in the event they do not.

-Space for questions will be made during the next LSAT meeting

Committee Work

With time running short, LSAT members were asked to give thought to which of the four committee groups within LSAT- Culture of Achievement, Community Engagement, Budget, and Building Facility Operations- they might want to participate in. Further details regarding these committees will be made over email and discussed further at our next meeting.

Action Items

-A blurb will be created for the next school-wide newsletter with information on LSAT's function and ways in which the community can learn more and participate.

-Principal Singh will be sharing a slide deck on the school's community action plan

-Further details regarding the LSAT committees will be shared.

Next Meeting Dates

Our next LSAT meeting is scheduled to take place October 9th, 2024 at 6:30 pm. Meetings for the LSAT Collective and W3EdNet will take place the prior evening, October 8th, 2024 at 7:00 pm.