

**Minutes of the Dunwoody High School
School Council Meeting
March 8, 2016**

The DHS School Council met in regular session on Tuesday, March 8, 2016 from 4:00-6:00pm in the Media Center at Dunwoody High School.

Attendance

School Council Members present: Mr. McFerrin, Heather Carter, Mike Berry, Kelly Clinch, Ashley Doolittle, Ann O'Connor, Chad Griffith and Renate Herod.

CATS member present: Hitanshu Pandit

PTSO: Libba Morris and Peggy Stecker

Welcome and Housekeeping Issues

Chairperson, Ashley Doolittle called the meeting to order at 4:05pm. Ashley welcomed the council members and introduced the Principal's Student Advisory Council member, Hitanshu Pandit. February council minutes were approved as they stand.

Guest Speaker – Hitanshu Pandit, CATS

Hitanshu said the 16 member student advisory council meets once a month to provide student feedback to Mr. McFerrin, School Council, and the administration. He said he and the council have seen lots of improvements in the school climate in the last year and are excited about them. Mr. McFerrin said the county is very impressed that DHS has a Student Advisory Council and wants more information about the structure and implementation so they can possibly duplicate it in other schools. Hitanshu says he and other council members talk to students before the monthly meetings about the concerns and ideas they want brought to Mr. McFerrin, and he says there is more dialogue and conversation in the meetings now with lots to discuss.

Principal's Report – Mr. McFerrin

Attendance – Enrollment is down slightly at 1670. We have 736 total absences (excused and unexcused). Presently there are 108 students at DHS with 6 or more unexcused absences. Of those students, 38 have now withdrawn from school. Mr. Johnson is following up with these remaining 70 students' families.

School Safety – We received a 99 on the recent safety audit. Discipline referrals remain down, with only 35 students in ISS the entire month of February. 95% of those only had to serve one day.

Schedules/Instructional Needs – Course request forms are in and counselors are still working on inputting them and building the master schedule for next year. Students should receive schedules in early May to allow time for changes if necessary. Mr. McFerrin attended the county points meeting and learned he can hire 5-6 new faculty for next year.

Teachers/Staff Issues – Hiring in Science is a priority. Other hiring areas will depend on course requests and enrollment. Teachers receive their intention letters next week, but so far, Mr. McFerrin has not heard of anyone planning to leave or retire.

Construction and Plant – The front signage should be done after Spring Break. Mr. McFerrin is still working on the intercom system replacement. Ashley asked about the county matching funds that we raise in fundraisers. Mr. McFerrin says it is his understanding that the funds we raise as a community will be matched by the county, according to the COO. He says the feasibility study for the Wildcat Fund Capital Campaign is complete and they are now talking directly to potential donors. Chad asked

about the fundraising meetings and the timeline. Mr. McFerrin says they are hoping to officially start the capital campaign this spring. It should be a three phase process. School Site Budget and Expenditures – Mr. McFerrin has purchased all the supplies needed so far and has spent the FTE money we have. He also commended the Dunwoody community for giving money to PTSO to support teacher grants as they are really seeing the benefits of that money for teacher training and classroom supplies. He also said they found an extra \$10,000 for STEM initiatives. He worked with math and science teachers to identify the needs they could meet with this money.

School Improvement Plan – Math Bootcamp is going well, with 10-15 students attending regularly. They are trying to think of incentives to encourage more attendance, especially with EOCs coming soon. They are seeing improvement in math in the students' math grades.

Current Issues – Mr. McFerrin reported that our AP pass rates went up last year to 67% passing with a 3 or higher. That's an increase of 7%. Council expressed concerns that DCSS only pays for one exam. Kelly mentioned that other counties (FCS in particular) pay for all of them, which encourages more students to take the exam. Lack of funds could discourage students. Ashley asked if teachers ever discourage kids from taking the tests. We discussed the benefits of taking the AP exams as well as the need to encourage more students to take AP classes, especially minority students.

Teacher's Report – Heather Carter and Mike Berry

Mr. Berry and Ms. Carter said the teachers were thrilled to have a professional development day held on site this Friday. Teachers who have attended recent training sessions are re-delivering the training to their colleagues. Ashley asked about graduation and why we have it Dekalb Stadium. Mr. McFerrin went through a list of pros and cons and we discussed different options. If we want graduation in Dunwoody, it really is the best option for the number of people and low cost (free). Mr. McFerrin has tried to move the time back to 7pm to alleviate issues with traffic and heat.

New Business

Council Elections -- Ashley presented the timeline for council elections this spring. Both Ashley and Kelly are rolling off this year. On March 28 nomination forms will go out with nominations due April 14. Mr. McFerrin will then contact the nominated candidates and ask for their bios by April 19. Bios posted on April 20 and remain up for 10 days. Elections are then held on May 4. Newly elected council members will be announced on May 6. New members attend last council meeting on May 10. We do not have an April council meeting.

SPLOST – Renate asked about how council can support SPLOST. We will look at ways we can best inform the community about how SPLOST can benefit our school so Dunwoody can cast an educated vote.

Unfinished Business

Nutrition and Wellness – Mr. McFerrin reported that the senior gift is right along the lines of our nutrition initiatives, which is very timely and exciting. He also shared that Dr. Wemberly from DCSS came to assess our cafeteria and our needs. She said we could get a hot/cold case from the county next year to allow for another line. Mr. McFerrin also hopes to visit other schools to see their cafeteria setup. The county is working to get these improvements in their budget for us for next year. Ann again mentioned checking the school's water quality. She shared information with Mr. McFerrin on how to get it tested. She also suggested getting APES involved as a class project. Mr. McFerrin has put together a Wellness Committee and asked Ms. Phelan and Coach Flores to lead.

They are planning to incorporate some healthy changes to benefit both faculty and students starting next year. We are also planning to add a smoothie machine in the cafeteria.

SAT/Writing Center – Kelly shared that Brian Eufinger of Edison Prep has offered to come to DHS to teach SAT/ACT prep classes. We will look into how to structure that. She also shared the concept for a Writing Center used at Riverwood HS presently that has seen great success. The center is structured around an English teacher and trained peer tutors who are available during all lunch periods for students to receive one-on-one help with writing. Mr. McFerrin is interested in observing the center at Riverwood to learn more. Kelly will set that up and share more information directly with Mr. McFerrin.

Public Comment – Peggy Stecker asked about parking issues.

Ashley adjourned the meeting at 5:35pm. The next meeting of the Dunwoody HS School Council will be held in May in the Media Center.

Dunwoody High School
5035 Vermack Road
Dunwoody, Georgia 30338
<http://www.dunwoodyhs.dekalb.k12.ga.us/>
Main Office: 678-874-8502
Tom McFerrin, Principal