

Dunwoody High School Council Minutes

February 21, 2002

The Dunwoody High School Council met in regular session Thursday, February 21, 2002 at 3:20 p.m. in the conference room at Dunwoody High School.

School Council Members Present:

Judy Port, Ann Wood, Rachel Lawson, Jerry Petrus, David Evans, Judy Womack, and Joanne Leonard.

Old business included the discussion of communication magnets that Northside Hospital is willing to contribute \$1000 for distribution which will take place prior to school next fall. Possibly in the summer mailing when the new addresses are available, and it will be necessary for Northside to receive accurate numbers of students. The election of Vice-Chairman, David Evans, was made by unanimous vote.

Concerns were expressed about the lack of advanced communication to parents about the spring semester schedule changes which involved increasing ninth grade gifted instruction from one to four subject areas but in the process changed schedules for many students within the school body. Mrs. Leonard expressed that due to the semester change and Winter holiday break, time did not permit this communication since it was not known whether or not it was possible to reorganize the master schedule.

Other concerns expressed about this issue were advanced students felt as though they were treated differently than impact students. It was explained that advanced students received the educational advantages that were promised to them (pullout model for 75% and above on standardized testing), and there were no deviations from that model.

As of 2/20/02 there were some spaces available (up to 21 students per teacher) for advanced students in the gifted classes. The decision for including which additional students was made by grade point average. Each student with a grade point average of 3.67 was asked if they would like to participate in the gifted classes. Each individual was given the option to join the new class or stay in their present class. There was a varied response among the students.

Suggestions made to enhance communication for future changes included having Parent informational meetings and posting changes on the Dunwoody High School web site in addition to the handouts that were provided. Mrs. Leonard agreed these were good suggestions for the future.

It is not clear at this time whether ninth and tenth grade will be served in this capacity next fall semester due to teacher allotment and teacher gifted certification requirements.

The 4x4 Block Schedule is still under consideration by the teaching staff but will not go into effect next fall. More time is needed to consider the pros and cons.

SPLOST II which is a Capital Outlay project to continue the 1% sales tax in DeKalb County for an additional five years was discussed. This phase would cover the renovations of older schools and add classroom space as needed. Dunwoody High School would receive an \$11 million floor to ceiling renovation which would include all new desks for teachers and students sometime in the next five years. Ideas for individual citizens to promote publicity were given in addition to making communication and coordination with PTSO.

The administrative staff has been busy working with the DeKalb County Department of Education concerning teacher allotments. This process involves a point system but some inaccuracies are being clarified at this time. The tentative projected teacher allotment for Dunwoody High School is 75 teachers including regular education, gifted education, vocational education, ESOL, and alternative instruction. Special Education is excluded in this number.

Gifted students now earn more points to enable more teachers allotted to our school. This is an advantage of Dunwoody High School in having more gifted students. This is the second year that this new teacher's allotment program has been implemented.

At this time, there are two teachers planning to retire, Ms. Spear and Ms. Miller. Mr. Congdon, the Band Director, is transferring to another school district. Another position needing to be filled is the Head Football Coach.

Dunwoody High School has been chosen to be one of the four schools in DeKalb County to apply for the International Baccalaureate Program. This program sets standards for education to eliminate discrepancies in curriculum for international students. It is different than Advanced Placement in that it includes all content areas instead of being geared to individual classes. Teachers and administrators will go on site visits to other International Baccalaureate Program Schools and will need additional training to initiate this in DeKalb County.

The Optional Transfer Program was discussed. Over utilized schools are paired with underutilized schools to balance overcrowding. Dunwoody has a capacity of 1400 students which will allow 109 spots for students from Lithonia High School to transfer. It is difficult to estimate how many students will come to Dunwoody because of the new school that is opening in Lithonia this fall.

Other special concerns discussed were the Attendance Offices responses to adults and students concerning tardiness and absenteeism. The need for more training of the office aides was also mentioned. Mrs. Leonard will follow up on the concerns expressed by parents to members of the council.

The Student Expectations excerpt from the Agenda Planner was reviewed but more discussion may be needed at the next meeting. Reviewing the School Improvement Plan Report will be postponed until the next meeting due to time restraints.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m. The next regular meeting will be March 21, 2002 at 3:20 p.m. in the conference room at Dunwoody High School.