

Hearst LSAT Meeting

Thursday, April 23, 2026

Administration/DCPS: Andral Hills (principal), Larin Rottman (assistant principal)

Teacher/staff representatives: Dawn Gray (co-chair), Skyelar Haith, Jonyce Cole, Beth Prince (WTU rep), Latoya Hutchins, Timothy Leonard

Parent representatives: Julia Krahe (co-chair), Andrew Paciorek (secretary), Sara Rastegar (PTA co-president), Darria Turner, Bre Heslin, Shari Rose (PTA co-president)

Observers: Mia Olsen

Enrollment

- We have 157 kids re-enrolled plus 30 new students = 187 enrolled to date
 - 8 or so students have indicated they are not returning
- DCPS target for May 1st is 237, out of the 395 budgeted for the school year, so we need to increase enrollment substantially to hit the target
 - Only Pre-K4 lottery matches actually lose the ability to enroll on May 1, but it is important for the school to hit the target
 - OSSE has gotten more rigorous about documentation for re-enrollment
 - Implications of missing the target are unclear, as it has not happened in recent years
- Need to continue to message community about re-enrollment
 - PTA will send a standalone message, and Principal Hills will include in her weekly update
 - Mrs. Cole offered home visits if needed
 - The first grade to hit 100 percent re-enrollment (or confirmations of departure) will get a party thrown by Principal Hills, to include her slushy machine

Likely grade configurations and staffing/resource planning

- Discussion postponed to May meeting when enrollment numbers are known

PTA support for PE aid

- Like this year, Hearst will have 1.5 PE positions for 2026-2027
- PTA has been in discussion with CLS about contracting for a part-time position (3 hours per day) to help supervise PE classes in the afternoon, when only one PE teacher is on site
 - PTA has approved money for this contract in their budget
 - Might be different people on different days (Monday-Wednesday-Friday vs Tuesday-Thursday, e.g.)
- The discussion then turned to CLS aftercare enrollment
 - CLS pauses enrollment over the summer, with delayed start for those who don't

enroll until August (except for pre-K students). This allows them to plan staffing to have the required adult-child ratios

- General agreement that better messaging about aftercare enrollment might help, as some parents are usually surprised when they get to the fall and enroll, but cannot start using aftercare right away
- Discussion of whether CLS might be willing to be a little more flexible, especially for new students to the school outside of pre-K

Community communication around major changes

- General discussion of how to communicate with the community if there are material changes in operations for 2026-2027 (changes to inner core schedule, e.g.)
- In prior years, classes lined up on the playground, now students proceed into the school on their own. Teachers find it easier to transition into the school day this way, but some parents miss the community aspect and seeing teachers.
 - Bre: Is it worth revisiting aspects of the morning routine? For example, line up on the playground on Fridays?
 - Principal Hills: Admin has met with Academic Leadership Team to discuss possible changes
 - Shari: Family engagement is desirable, some built-in structure can help with that
 - Dawn: Would be good to set expectations about start-of-year communications, which were a little disjointed last year because of the principal transition, Bloomz being down in August, etc. Let families know in advance when they should expect to hear from teachers.
 - Julia: More communication in advance about what to expect as the school year approaches. For example, class lists won't be available until DCPS rolls over Aspen for the new school year. Could also acknowledge that some things didn't work as intended last year.
 - Beth: There used to be planning over the summer for school events, among teachers (on a volunteer basis), PTA, etc. Meeting and planning over the summer makes the transition into the school year more smooth, and makes it possible to provide a calendar to families for planning.
 - AP Rottman: Victoria Ouellette led a planning process for this year's events. As a starting point, we could roll that calendar to next year, with adjustments. There will be discussions at the end of this school year about the upcoming year.
- The assignment of kids to classrooms in Bloomz can be confusing, especially starting in third grade when team teaching starts.
 - Bre and Julia: For third grade last year, there were a lot of parent discussions on the side because it wasn't clear who was in which class
 - Mrs. Cole: Some teachers (3rd grade) prefer to have a single grade-wide "class" in Bloomz to ease communication, while others (5th grade) have separate "classes" in Bloomz to align with actual homeroom assignments. The latter approach requires posting communications more than once.
 - One possible solution is to start with all kids assigned in Bloomz to their homeroom teacher, then combine Bloomz "classes" a bit later for communication purposes, for those teachers who prefer to do it that way

Step-up meetings

- There have been requests for step-up meetings for parents, similar to those done at times in the past.
- Skyelar: Family step-up meetings used to be paid through an outside program (Flamboyant Foundation), but no longer. Pre-K to K still does one voluntarily.
- Principal Hills: Students do have the opportunity to do step-up meetings, for example by visiting next grade's classrooms during morning meeting. But parent meetings make more sense in the fall, at open house, with the students' actual teachers. In the spring, teacher assignments have not yet been made, and some teachers in a grade may not return for the fall.
- Bre: The requests for step-up meetings may be specific to current third grade, which has had a hard year.
- Sara: Current kindergarten cohort would also like to have step-up meetings
- Prince: Past step-up meetings for parents were funded through Flamboyant, which allowed teachers to be paid for time outside of the school day, but Hearst graduated from the program. Those step-up meetings were about expectations for first six weeks of school, how to have a successful summer, etc., rather than focusing on specific teachers (since those are not known in the spring)
- Darria: There could be communication to families about what to expect in next grade and how to set kids up for success, to complement what students get through classroom visit step-up meetings.
 - General agreement that such communication could provide information as well as giving a touchpoint for family engagement.
- Julia: This conversation links to discussion of "summer slide" from the past meeting, when the data presented indicated that students fell back by less from 2024-2025 to 2025-2026 than in the past. Communications in the spring could provide suggestions on how to maintain academic momentum through the summer and answer questions like whether iReady is available over the summer, what Hearst's Responsive Classroom approach is, etc. Parents can be a partner if they know what to focus on.
- Bre: Telling parents that summer slide was minimized last year could be appreciated and helpful, and also create momentum to repeat that success
- Principal Hills: We want to focus on helping parents understand the logistics of the first few weeks and the relevant terminology. For example, what "BOY" (beginning of year) means. Also want to communicate about the goals and value of testing over the course of the year to assess student success.

Playground and building maintenance

- Email from DPR on April 9 indicating that they will be addressing the deep hole in the turf soccer field, as well as the decrepit netting that is supposed to keep balls from going down the hill or onto 37th Street
 - Deadline for repairing hole and nets on upper field: May 31
- DPR did not address other requests like exposed wiring in light posts on basketball court
- Darria noted that requests in the DPR system from different sources for the same repair

may be bumping older requests.

- General agreement that this is a bad system, but it's what appears to be happening
- It may be worth coordinating repair requests through Mr. Sidhu or someone else, to minimize multiple requests so it is clear how long the request has been in the system

Schoolwide Assemblies

- At past meetings, the LSAT had discussed forming a parent-teacher committee (perhaps with student participation) to help schedule and plan for assemblies, especially those bringing in outside speakers or performers
- Principal Hills requested to table this discussion. She said she wants to expand on performing arts assemblies. Before a committee is assembled or too much planning is done, she wants to talk with inner core teachers.
- Julia: Some outside assemblies book up early, so there are benefits to starting early.
- Dawn: Put a date on it. Perhaps have the conversation with teachers soon and then convene the committee soon after
- Shari: The committee can plan assemblies with expectation that PTA will likely be willing to fund requests. Some money is approved in the budget for 2026-2027 and that can be increased/adjusted going forward.
- Julia: Could treat next year as a pilot, trying out some different options, and then do more planning for following year
- Dr. Leonard: We should also be interested in what parents think
- Dawn: That's the value of a committee.

LSAT elections

- Per DCPS rules (as implemented at Hearst), the LSAT comprises four parent representatives, two PTA co-presidents, four teacher representatives, one non-instructional staff representative, the WTU rep., and one community member (often used for a parent representing CES families) who is appointed by the other LSAT members
- Parent elections will be held on May 14, concurrent with PTA elections
 - Darria Turner will not stand for election but is intended to be voted in as the community representative in the fall
- Teacher elections: Nominations due 5/1, election on 5/4
- The June LSAT meeting will involve both outgoing and incoming members, and the outgoing LSAT will sign off on the Comprehensive School Plan.

Next meetings

- May 21 at 4pm with the current LSAT
- June 11 at 4pm with outgoing and incoming LSAT members