Hearst LSAT Meeting
Thursday, September 24, 2026

Administration/DCPS: Andral Hills (principal), Larin Rottman (assistant principal), Andria Caruthers (instructional superintendent)

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

Parent representatives: Bre Heslin (co-chair), Sem Anthony, Andrew Paciorek (secretary), Sara Rastegar (PTA co-president), Shari Rose, Glenn Stanley (PTA co-president), Darria Turner (community rep)

Observers: Kate Bowers, Sara Cherkis, Katie Chowdhury, Julia Krahe, Emily McVeigh, Mia Olsen

Election of chairs

- Over the weekend prior to the meeting, Trianna Downing from DCPS facilitated an online election for LSAT chair, under the provision allowing for one co-chair each from among the parent and from among the staff representatives, consistent with traditional practice at Hearst. Bre Heslin and Dawn Gray were elected co-chairs.

Meeting norms and logistics

- After introductions, the LSAT agreed on a set of norms for the school year:
    - Assume positive intent.
    - Members feel heard and respected.
    - Questions & concerns within LSAT's scope and be raised openly
    - Constructive feedback shared thoughtfully and received in good faith.
    - Decisions are communicated clearly.
- Meetings will be recorded and, consistent with LSAT guidelines, will be available upon request within seven days
- A parking lot will be used to record future meeting agenda items
- Action items will be recorded, noting the timeframe and responsible party
- The co-chairs will work with the principal to develop an agenda two weeks prior to each meeting. The agenda will be sent to the LSAT one week prior to the meeting.

LSAT roles and responsibilities

- The LSAT reviewed the responsibilities of the LSAT itself and of the principal, which are included in DCPS guidelines

Secretary

- Andrew volunteered to serve as LSAT secretary for at least the first half of the school

year. Shari also volunteered, perhaps starting halfway through the year.

After-school enrichment

- Background: Hearst is offering fewer enrichment classes after school this fall than in past years.
- Principal Hills explained that, during the previous school year, the building was over-capacity in the after-school hours, in particular because outside community groups were using the space in addition to CLS (the aftercare provider) and Hearst-specific enrichment classes.
    - Allowing outside use of the gym is particularly problematic because it is the largest space and can hold multiple enrichment activities or CLS classes at a time.
    - Custodial coverage is also a problem, as there is only one custodian available to clean after 6 pm and close the building.
- Going forward, Hearst will decline outside group requests to use the building, particularly the gym.
- Accordingly, the principal expects 5-6 additional classroom spaces to be available on a daily basis after school, starting in the winter. These additional spaces should allow for an expansion of enrichment classes back close to traditional levels, although the exact configuration and class availability will need to be coordinated with the spaces.
    - The LSAT noted that the community values classes at different price points, since some (Minecraft, chess, etc.) are appreciably more expensive than others.
- Shari raised the possibility of using PTA funding to provide extra cleaning support, if DCPS rules allow

Schoolwide assemblies

- Background: Principal Hills and the 2025-2026 LSAT had discussed increasing the number of assemblies with outside guests, particularly those from the performing arts. A $15k line item was added to the PTA budget for this school year.
- Principal Hills noted that increasing student exposure to the performing arts is one of her top priorities.
    - Last year Hearst had a writer in residence to collaborate with Ms. Bourbon and work with students.
- She has confirmed Step Afrika for February and has been working to secure others. Suggestions from the community are welcome.
- The PTA will send over names of parents who are willing to help identify and lock down assembly performers.

Beast Academy and math enrichment

- At the end of last year, AP Rottman worked with DCPS and two other cluster elementary schools to organize a small math enrichment pilot program for six students, who were invited based on DCPS performance data and teacher input. The program was based on the Beast Academy curriculum and was designed for 3rd-5th grade students. It is formally known as the Upper Elementary School Math Enrichment Program.

- This year the program is expanding to 15 students, again on an invitation-only basis, starting in October. It will be led by LaToya Hutchins.
    - The program is designed to be experiential and involve collaborative problem solving, in some cases with kids working together across grade levels.
    - Most of the students gave very positive feedback.
- Andrew noted that many families would be interested in math enrichment for their kids and recommended being transparent about the existence of the program and how students are identified to be included. He praised the handling of math acceleration at Deal in 6th grade, which (while operating at a much larger scale) is handled in a highly transparent way. Deal clearly communicates how the program works and the iReady thresholds for students to accelerate. He said that this transparency is widely appreciated and helps to cut down on resentment and perceptions of favoritism.
    - AP Rottman noted that Hearst has a lot of high-performing math students (perhaps 70-80 who are above grade level in the upper grades), which means that many students who are doing very well cannot be accommodated at the program's current size.
    - Members suggested that the LSAT and administration should discuss other opportunities for advanced math students in October, as part of the Comprehensive School Plan discussion
    - The LSAT agreed that it would be valuable for the school to send out a short description of the program, noting that it's a pilot program and in general how kids were identified. This approach will help manage community perceptions in a positive way rather than letting rumors fill the gap.
- Micro math grant: DCPS is offering a small grant to run a math academic night. The school needs a DCPS teacher to serve as the point of contact before applying for the grant.
    - The teacher reps discussed whether to combine the math academic night with a previously scheduled literacy night or keep them separate. The group leaned toward keeping them separate.

Next meeting

- October 15, 2026 at 4 pm
- Primary focus will be on the Comprehensive School Plan, which was developed by the Hearst administration and will have been approved by DCPS. Admin will share beginning-of-year (BOY) testing data.
- Action items (owner):
    - Pan for recording LSAT meetings and making them available to the community on request, per LSAT guidelines. (Andrew and LSAT chairs)
    - Connect with CLS and Naveen on next steps for winter CLS enrichment. Use data from last year, and potentially a survey, to decide on priorities for enrichment. (PTA co-presidents)
    - Send community suggestions for assemblies to Principal Hills (Sem)
    - Reach out to teachers for a Math Grant sponsor, apply for grant once sponsor is in place (Principal Hills)