

GT CENTER  
LUTHER JACKSON MIDDLE SCHOOL  
TRANSITION COMMITTEE MINUTES  
May 2, 2007

Attendance: Kaye Kory, Phyllis Pajardo, Ulysses Cox, Carol Robinson, Linda Washco, Gary Hinson, Denise Pensinger, Heather Brennan, Dean Shepard, Pam Miller, Deborah Gupta, Lisa Shankman, Laura Walter, Patrice Robitaille, Susan Burnell

I. Welcome and Opening Remarks

II. Updates on GT Center – Ms. Pajardo, Mr. Cox, and Dr. Robinson

A. Support for GT Center – No matter the number of students attending -

(1) FCPS will still provide the \$200,000 financial support to LJMS GT Center regardless of the number of students attending.

(2) The financial support will continue for the two years as set forth when the Board voted.

(3) Full support of FCPS and School Board to ensure that children have the GT and related services as set forth in FCPS curriculum.

(4) August Professional Development Days

a. These will be held to insure that GT teachers are up to speed and ready to go for the GT Center opening in September.

b. There will be other Professional Development Opportunities as well during the year.

(5) Books & Library Media

a. Each library develops an inventory of books and materials that matches the needs and requests of staff members and students.

b. Librarians from middle schools that have GT Centers have been meeting to discuss and share book collections and materials.

c. Some schools have polled their Center students regarding books that they would like to have in their libraries.

d. LJMS has already begun to increase its library book selection for the Center.

B. New Staff

- (1) Dr. Dan Cottle has been hired as the Instructional Coach
  - a. Currently in North Carolina teaching at a magnet school for gifted students
  - b. Teaching graduate-level classes in gifted at local university
  - c. Previous positions included responsibilities to build gifted programs in other cities
  - d. Doctoral work included a project with the FBI in Quantico
  - e. Extra-curricular activities include Quiz Bowl Advisor and TV/Yearbook Advisor; special interest in video technology
  
- (2) Mr. Thomas Jones has been hired as the English Teacher
  - a. Taught at Sandburg Middle School and Lanier Middle School
  - b. Taught after-school course "TJ Prep"
  - c. Teaching compacted math at his current elementary school
  - d. Designed and presented professional development workshops for educators.
  
- (3) Ms. Jackie Brant has been hired as the History Teacher
  - a. Taught AP History as well as History, World Geography, Government, Economics; currently teaching Civics
  - b. Teacher of the Year, 2002, Mabank, Texas; DAR Community Service Award, 2004
  - c. Sponsor of Key Club & Model UN, responsible for resurgence of both clubs
  
- (4) Mr. Joseph Adamson, who was previously the Science Department Chair at LJMS, has been hired as the Science teacher
  - a. Educational Specialist and Masters Degrees in Education
  - b. Selected for curriculum writing this summer to create lessons for Center students in Science
  - c. Will be the Team Leader for the team

(5) Math Position is still open

C. Visits to Other Schools

(1) Dr. Robinson and Ms. Washco have visited Kilmer, Frost, Longfellow, and Hughes to learn more about the programs at those schools.

(2) Ms. Washco spoke with the teacher at Kilmer who teaches a semester class for grade 7 GT Center students. Students work on modules that involve different uses of technology.

D. Other Tidbits

- (1) Is there a possibility of a foreign language in 7<sup>th</sup> grade?
- (2) Italian & Chinese are being taught in part at other feeder elementary schools.
- (3) Japanese & Latin are being offered next year for 8<sup>th</sup> grade
- (4) Electronic Reports – biweekly/monthly reports are being investigated for future implementation
- (5) Getting Kiwanis Club or Rotary Club involved with school
- (6) Ice Cream Social – an opportunity for students and their families who will be attending Luther Jackson Fall, 2007, to meet and get to know one another; June 12, 7:30, Cafeteria; families will receive an invitation with more information

### III. Organization of Transition Committee

- A. The Committee will have several subcommittees which will meet separately and then all information will be communicated to Steering Committee

Subcommittees – Please email any comments about tasks that should be included, or if you want to join a committee, to Mr. Ulysses Cox ([ulysses.cox@fcps.edu](mailto:ulysses.cox@fcps.edu)) or Dr. Carol Robinson ([carolc.robinson@fcps.edu](mailto:carolc.robinson@fcps.edu))

#### (1) Coordinating Home and School Involvement Committee

##### (a) Tasks

- i. Morning Announcements by Email
- ii. Electronic Progress Reports
- iii. Blackboard Updates
- iv. Student Responsibilities
- v. Parent Volunteers
  - a. In classes
  - b. Special Events
  - c. Career Day
  - d. Languages
- vi. Neighborhood Associations
  - a. Feeder Schools
  - b. PTA Newsletters
- vii. Supply Lists in Summer

##### (b) Members

- i. Dean Shepard
- ii. Shulamit Widawsky
- iii. Denise Pensinger

#### (2) GT Curriculum Committee

##### (a) Tasks

- i. Foreign Language in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade
- ii. Math Issues
- iii. Science
- iv. Block Scheduling
- v. Special Projects

(b) Members

- i. Kristina Sheridan
- ii. Laura Walter
- iii. Susan Burnell
- iv. Dean Shepard
- v. Patrice Robitaille

(3) Integrating GT and Base School Committee

(a) Tasks

- i. Teaming – High School Placement
- ii. Electives – Drama, Music
- iii. After School Activities

(b) Members

- i. Deborah Gupta
- ii. Heather Brennan
- iii. Denise Pensinger

(4) After-School/Enrichment Committee

(a) Tasks

- i. Math Counts (with Support Staff)
- ii. Chess Club
- iii. Odyssey of the Mind
- iv. Model UN
- v. Parent Volunteers
- vi. Drama Club
- vii. Science Olympiad
- viii. Funding
- ix. Supplies
- x. Membership

(b) Members

- i. Patrice Robitaille
- ii. Denise Pensinger

(5) New Parents Committee

(a) Tasks

- i. Activities for GTC Parents
  - a. Ice Cream Social
  - b. Pot Luck Dinner
- ii. Blackboard Training for Parents
- iii. Issues Around Phase-In
- iv. Community Newsletters

- v. List of Communication Methods
  - a. Website
  - b. Dial Outs
  - c. Newsletters
  - d. Keep In Touch
  - e. Email Announcements

(b) Members

- i. Laura Walter
- ii. Pam Miller

IV. Next meeting of the Transition Committee – June 6, 2007, 7:30, Library