

S.H.A.P.P.E. Newsletter

Senior High Alliance of Parents, Principals and Educators
A coalition of the District of Columbia Public Senior High Schools
Working together since February of 1998;

June-July 2010

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Important Upcoming Dates:

August 11-13: New teacher orientation

August 16: Start of school for teachers

August 18th: Candidates Forum on Improving Public Education – Sumner School; 17th and M Streets, NW – 6:30pm

August 23rd: Start of school for students

August 24th: SHAPPE Meeting 6:30pm

September 6th: Labor Day, no school

September 17th: No school for student

October 11th: Columbus Day, no school

October 18th: Parent Teacher Conferences; No school for students

October 28th: End of first Advisory; Records Day- half day for students

October 29th: Prof Develop. Day: no school for students

For more information about the Senior High Alliance of Parents, Principals and Educators (SHAPPE), please contact Cathy Reilly at 202-722-4462 Cathy.P.Reilly@verizon.net or go to <http://shappe.org> – the S.H.A.P.P.E. website

Register for School Now

Students must re-register every year to attend a DCPS school. Schools are funded based on these registrations. Please go to your school as soon as possible to fill out the necessary forms. Information is available in 6 languages at

<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/Learn+About+Schools/Enroll+in+a+School/Enrollment+Forms+for+DCPS#1>

Welcome DCPS High School Principals

Ancostia HS will welcome Mr. Ian Roberts as principal of the Frederick Douglas Academy which serves students in the 11th and 12th grade.

Roosevelt HS welcomes Mr. Ivor Mitchell as principal. Mr. Thomas Whittle will be acting principal at Woodson HS. Eastern HS will be just a 12th grade this year; they have not yet selected the principal to open the school to 9th graders in the fall of 2011. Dunbar HS has not yet selected a principal.

Office of Secondary School Transformation

The OSST finished up the first phase of their community engagement effort around secondary school transformation early this summer. They held meetings in each ward of the city. They received a lot of feedback from these meetings and will be posting the notes from each meeting on the website. OSST has said that DCPS will be adding a section to their website specifically on secondary schools:

www.dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/secondaryschools

The plan is for community members to be able to share their thoughts on this site going forward.

The OSST will continue to engage the community for each phase of the process.

The next phase is sharing some of what we have learned from other districts as well as in DC.

Youth Engagement Academy becomes the Washington Metropolitan High School

The Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) has announced an action to change the name of a District of Columbia public school, pursuant to Title 5, Section E3510 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations.

The school previously named “Youth Engagement Academy” will now be called “Washington Metropolitan High School.”

This action is to bring the school name into alignment with other schools across the country that are implementing the same programmatic model. YEA is a DCPS public school created by MOU with Big Picture Learning (for more information of the educational design visit www.bigpicturelearning.org) The school was previously co-located at the Eliot Hine Middle School building at 1830 Constitution Ave. NE. As of the 2010-2011 school year, the school will be located at the K.C. Lewis school facility at 300 Bryant St. NW. That building does not currently house any other DCPS programs.

Graduation Rate and Drop Out Rate definitions

The drop out rate and graduation rate are used as important benchmarks in the calculation of the data that affects a school’s status for No Child Left Behind. For that reason we include the current definitions below.

Test scores have been officially released yet on the OSSE website.

<http://www.nclb.osse.dc.gov/>

Dropout rate: the drop out rate is calculated as the percentage of students who were withdrawn with a withdrawal code of work, voluntary withdrawal and non- attendance (these are the designated drop out codes) among all students who have enrolled during the school year. If 600 enrolled and 200 withdrew and it was coded as one of those designated as identifying drop out - the drop out rate would be one third or 33 and one third percent.

Graduation rate:

The formula for figuring the graduation rate for 2009-10 is: Total Graduates (Total Graduates in 2009 + 12th grade dropouts in 08-09 + 11th grade dropouts in 07-08 + 10th grade dropouts in 06-07 + 9th grade dropouts in 05-06)

Example

188 students graduated from a school in 2009. In the same school year, 27 12th grade students dropped out. The previous year, 26 11th grade students dropped out. The year prior to that, 33 10th grade students dropped out, and in 2005-2006, 45 9th grade students dropped out. This school's graduation rate is $188 / (188 + 27 + 26 + 33 + 45) = 58.93\%$.

This is different than the way the graduation rate was calculated in 2008-2009.

Following is the way it was calculated formerly:

* Determine the total number of students who graduated with a regular diploma in 2009.

* Determine the total number of dropouts over the Class of 2009's four years in high school.

* Add the number of dropouts across all four years plus the number of graduates. This is the total cohort.

* Divide the total number of graduates by the total cohort number. This is the graduation rate.

DDOT Announces School Transit Subsidy Program Fall 2010 Registration

Registration Starts Monday, August 9

(Washington, D.C.) The School Transit Subsidy Program will begin accepting 2010/2011 applications on Monday August 9, 2010 at the Reeves Center, which is located at 2000 14th Street, NW.

The following is important information about the program for students and parents

* All students and/or parents must obtain a Student Travel Application from their school before coming to the District Department of Transportation (DDOT). (Travel Card Applications are no longer given out in DDOT's School Transit Subsidy Office.)

* Have your Student Travel Application signed, dated and stamped by your school principal before you arrive at DDOT.

* Bring all completed applications to the following address for processing. Please note we will be serving customers from a temporary location on the 1st floor of the Reeves Center.

Address: 2000 14th Street NW 1st Floor
(near DC Lottery Office)
Telephone: 202-673-1740
Hours: Monday - Friday 8:15 am - 4:45 pm
Wednesdays 8:15 am - 7:00 pm (August-October)

Please note: due to space conflicts, September 13-16 customers should go to the 5th Floor at the above address, by using the rear elevators near the DC Lottery Office

As we prepare for the registration for the 2010/2011 school year, we would like to remind you of the following: District law mandates that in order for students to receive discounted travel on Metro bus and Metro rail they must meet all of the following three qualifications:

- * Under 19 years of age with the exception of student with disabilities who are eligible until 22 years of age;
- * Resident of the District; and
- * Enrolled in an elementary or secondary public, charter, private or parochial school that is located in the District of Columbia.

If you meet the above criteria, please follow the steps above and bring your signed, dated and stamped application to DDOT's School Transit Subsidy Office. If you have questions or concerns please call 202-673-1740.

Education and Youth Development Plan

The Education and Youth Development Plan (EYD Plan) will be a comprehensive assessment and articulation of current education and youth development policy and practice within the District, as it pertains to children and youth from ages 0-24. The EYD Plan, to be submitted to Council in September 2010, will also outline recommendations for future policies and regulations. The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education will be working with an array of stakeholders from across the public, private, and not for profit sectors. Please see the links below for additional information about the development of the EYD Plan and check back to the website often for updates,

announcements, and how you can get involved.

<http://dme.dc.gov/DC/DME/Programs+and+Services/Education+Youth+Development+Plan>

The Healthy Schools Program is an initiative of the Alliance for a

Healthier Generation, a national non-profit dedicated to inspiring young people to make healthy, lifelong habits. The Healthy Schools Program is committed to helping schools create healthier environments for students and staff to learn, work, eat and play. In the past two and a half years, over 50 DC public and public charter schools have joined the program and we are excited to announce that we now have the capability to support at least 30 additional public and charters across the city!

The program is best described as a process that helps empower school communities to create a vision of systematic, positive health change and move towards that vision with implementation guidance, support and technical assistance offered through the Alliance's extensive resource database and through direct interaction with the Alliance staff. We help schools organize their efforts to become more effective, realize and achieve their vision for health and wellness and share their individual stories of success, both nationally and locally, around improving health and wellness in their communities. Washington, DC already has a number of schools that are doing extremely well in achieving and sharing their successful health changes through participation with the program. River Terrace Elementary, MC Terrell Elementary, Tree of Life Public Charter School, Duke Ellington

School for the Arts, Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary, Collegiate Senior High, Friendship Public Charter School and EW Stokes Public Charter School, are just a few.

Schools participating in the Healthy Schools Program have access to many ongoing benefits including:

- * Access to new and innovative ideas for creating healthier school environments
- * Opportunities to achieve national and local recognition as a school community
- * Help getting started with resources such as an initial template action plan developed specifically for Washington, DC schools (provided as needed)
- * Opportunities to connect with other schools working to become healthier
- * A team of more than 60 health and education professionals in 38 states working directly with schools and school stakeholders to help them implement healthier policies and practices in schools and districts around the country.
- * Support and tools to help schools implement best practices for increasing access to physical activity and healthier foods before, during and after school. Examples of tools include online toolkits and Web-based trainings on making schools healthier for students and staff.
- * An extensive resource database that includes quality resources and grant opportunities to assist in implementing healthy policy and program changes at school.
- * Electronic newsletters containing school success stories about healthy eating, physical activity and staff wellness to spark ideas in other schools.

* Any school or individual in the U.S. can enroll in the Healthy Schools Program at no cost at www.HealthierGeneration.org.

* Additionally, any individual who is passionate about helping school in his or her community become a healthier place may join the Healthy Schools Network for immediate access to tips and tools

If you have questions or want to know how to get started, please feel free to contact Precious Calloway, Alliance Relationship Manager for Washington, DC at (202) 905-3095 or email: precious.calloway@healthiergeneration.org.

S.H.A.P.P.E. July Meeting Notes

Attending: Representatives from Dunbar, Roosevelt, PIRC, Anacostia, STEP UP DC, Wilson and the 21st Century School Fund

This summer meeting with many people out of town we focused on the priorities for S.H.A.P.P.E. in the coming year.

We looked at the Office of Secondary School Transformation documents; the Deputy Mayor for Education Youth Development Planning on college and career readiness; a presentation on early indicators for students that are off track for graduation and the interventions that have evidence of success. The research that we looked at highlighted Attendance, Behavior and Course Failure rate as the ABC's of understanding high school students at risk of not completing high school successfully and being able to design appropriate interventions

Attendance: This is a struggle at each one of the comprehensive high schools. This

year it will be good for the high schools to share ideas on what is working and what has not worked: look more carefully at the research, look into putting students at risk for poor attendance into first period classes that they may look forward to; music and PE were cited. Successful students feel there is a reason for them to be there. While notifying families and parents is always the first intervention and should be continued, for many older students in particular this has often not helped as confirmed by members of STEP UP DC. More strategies that involve working directly with the students are recommended.

Certainly one of the issues with attendance and behavior has to do with the difficulty the schools have with being welcoming. SHAPPE will work with others (STEP UP DC and 21st Century School Fund) on doing surveys with parents and students and working with MPD on the metal detectors – and creating a more positive tone when you enter the school. As one member said, immediately when you walk in the door the expectation is that you have brought something to hurt another member of your community. This is not a good beginning. Any changes proposed would have to have the full support of the student body and staff and would be piloted initially. A survey was conducted at Roosevelt last year that can inform us going forward.

Truancy: Every indication is that these rates are much higher than the average daily attendance figures indicate. It may be that it is not the same students that are absent every day, but a revolving group. The figures on DC Stars for truancy – 25 days of unexcused absences are quite high – over 45% at many of the high schools. The student support teams are inadequate to respond. Our discussion at this meeting focused on trying to address attendance and prevent truancy.

9th Grade Academies:

- Schools that were able to physically separate the 9th grade classrooms so they had proximity to one another reported that made a big difference.
- Doing a diagnostic in 8th grade allows for the students to be placed more strategically in classes; the DC CAS is not a diagnostic
- Re-examine the 4 by 4; it seems to be a one size fits all approach; Dunbar went back to the seven period day this year; magnet schools have the modified block.
- Create a culture of support in this academy including socio emotional support
- Staggered first day of school allowing for an orientation for 9th graders to the building

Counselors

The Youth groups have worked hard to increase the counselor student ratio. It has been difficult to hold on to any gains however as evidenced in the Reduction in Force that took place last fall and affected many high school counselors.

Their time is often completely taken up with scheduling and transcript issues. The records again seem to be in some disarray after a full audit was conducted three years ago.

According to those present transcripts still have errors and Bridges has been challenging for people. The function of counseling on socio emotional issues has to be addressed. Either social workers or psychologists need to be assigned to the high schools or enough counselors to address these issues. Making this a particular priority for 9th graders is important; they are handling the transition from an elementary or middle school as well as the challenges of high school. While the Dept, of Mental Health seemed to have a contract with DCPS three years ago the

additional personnel associated with that were gone after the first year.

Ensuring Academic and Career Opportunities

It was clear from our June meeting that there are widely different course opportunities at the different high schools. All students should have a selection options that includes more than one foreign language and the chance to learn about different career paths. This is critical in connecting students to school and in ensuring equity.

Going Forward:

1. Provide for a way to share strategies on proactively influencing attendance
2. Share surveys on helping schools understand barriers students and families experience in attending school for students and in making contact with the school for parents.
3. Advocate for more counseling, social work support for socio emotional stress that contributes to behavior, attendance and course failure problems; targeting 9th graders.

Thank you to Mr. Mitchell, the new principal of Roosevelt, Ron Hampton the PTA president, Angela Johnson the STAY parent coordinator and Pam Harris Roosevelt alumni parent for hosting this summer meeting. The next meeting will be in Tuesday, August 24th.