

MURCH ELEMENTARY LOCAL  
SCHOOL ADVISORY TEAM  
(LSAT) HANDBOOK

VERSION 1

JULY 2020

# Membership, Elections and Roles

## MEMBERSHIP

The Murch Local School Advisory Team (LSAT) will have the following members representing their constituencies:

- 1 WTU Building Representative or designee
- 4 Teachers, elected by the ET-15 and EG-09 teachers
- 1 Non-Instructional Staff Member, elected by non-instructional school staff
- 4 Parents/guardians who have children enrolled in the school, elected by the parents
- 1 HSA representative who has children enrolled in the school, nominated by the HSA Board
- 1 Community Member who is a resident of the Murch school boundary, works within the Murch school boundary, or is a member of one of Murch's official partner organizations

Any additional member(s) are appointed to the LSAT through a consensus of its members. The maximum number of members for a LSAT is fifteen (15). If the LSAT wishes to include additional members beyond that maximum, the Team may apply for a waiver from the DCPS Office of Family and Public Engagement by emailing [ofpe.info@dc.gov](mailto:ofpe.info@dc.gov).

## Terms and Length of Service

Terms shall begin July 1 and end on June 30. Murch LSAT members commit to a two-year term. Terms are staggered. Two new members are nominated and elected in each year's annual HSA/LSAT election.

## **ELECTIONS**

Murch LSAT elections should be held annually between May 1 and June 30.

Members, except the community representative, are elected by secret ballot of the group they represent.

### **Teacher Representatives**

- All ET-15/EG-09 personnel employed at the school and included in the Washington Teachers' Union (WTU) bargaining unit, are eligible to run as teacher representatives and/or vote for teacher representatives on the Local School Advisory Team.
- The WTU Building Representative at each school conducts the election of ET-15/EG-09 staff.

### **Non-Instructional School Staff Representative**

- The principal will facilitate a meeting of the non-instructional staff for the purpose of electing the staff representative.
- All non-instructional staff assigned to the building are eligible to vote and to serve as the non-instructional staff representative.

### **Parent Representatives**

- Parent elections shall be conducted by the HSA.
- Three-week notice of nomination and election of parent representatives must be given to all parents who have children enrolled at Murch.
- Only parents, custodians, or guardians of children currently enrolled at Murch are eligible to vote in the election and serve as a parent representative.
- Membership in the HSA is not required in order for a parent to serve on the Local School Advisory Team.

## **Community Representative**

The community representative is appointed to the Local School Advisory Team through a consensus of its members.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Principal or Principal's Designee**

The principal is not a member of the Local School Advisory Team itself but is essential to the Local School Advisory Team's work and is expected to strongly consider LSAT recommendations.

The principal, or designee, must play essential roles in the LSAT in terms of participation, responsive listening, and respectful dialogue. The principal will be held accountable to their Instructional Superintendent and the Chancellor for successful execution of this role.

The principal, or designee, will attend all monthly LSAT meetings. At each of these LSAT meetings, the principal and LSAT will discuss agenda items and topics that relate to promoting high student achievement and community inclusion and engagement.

The principal, or designee, shall:

- Attend all monthly Local School Advisory Team meetings

- Work with the Chair on logistics, meeting planning and agenda creation
- Ensure elections are held during the election window time period
- Provide copies, in as timely a manner as possible, of all material -- data, budgets, DCPS school policies and mandates -- necessary for the LSAT to make informed recommendations. (Individual student data or personnel information shall not be shared as it must be kept confidential)
- Use school communication channels to support LSAT activities and elections
- Ensure that all school stakeholders (parents, teachers, students, and community members) are respected and made to feel welcome to participate on the Local School Advisory Team
- Promote an atmosphere of inclusion, with dialogue focused on successful research-based approaches that benefit all students.

### ***Alignment with Collective Bargaining Unit***

With respect to the LSAT-related areas outlined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the WTU and DCPS: while the principal is not required to follow recommendations from the Local School Advisory Team, he/she is required to submit a written justification to the Chancellor/Superintendent and the President of the WTU if their final decision departs from the recommendation of the LSAT.

### **Local School Advisory Team Members**

Members are encouraged to attend all meetings in person. Team members cannot be represented at meetings by a designee or a proxy.

In the event of a vacancy of a team member position, the constituents of that member shall conduct an election to fill the vacancy as soon as possible while still ensuring proper notice is given to the school

community. For example, if there is a parent vacancy, the parent organization will hold an election for a new parent member. If there is a teacher vacancy, the teachers will hold an election for a new teacher member. Until an election takes place, an interim teacher team member may be appointed by the WTU building rep or WTU President. Until an election takes place, an interim parent team member may be appointed by the President or Co-Presidents of the HSA. Notification of any vacancy shall be provided in writing to the DCPS Office of Family and Public Engagement and the WTU.

### **Local School Advisory Team Co-Chairs**

There will be one Parent Co-Chair and one Teacher or Non-Instructional Staff Member Co-Chair. The parent co-chair is elected from the member pool by the LSAT parent representatives and the teacher or non-instructional staff member co-chair is elected from the member pool by the LSAT faculty/staff representatives.

The Co-Chairs are the primary liaison to the principal and are the principal's point of contact for the LSAT. The Co-Chairs:

- Work with the principal on logistics, meeting planning, and agenda development;
- Prepare and disseminate meeting agendas;
- Convene meetings of the Local School Advisory Team;
- Facilitate the LSAT meetings;
- Encourage other members to attain the knowledge necessary to participate meaningfully which may include identifying internal or external resources;

- Serve as liaison between the Local School Advisory Team and DCPS central office, specifically the Office of Family and Public Engagement (OFPE), distributing key information from the central office as well as requesting information from, or voicing concerns to, the central office;
- Participate in meetings and professional development sessions for chairs and members.

### **Local School Advisory Team Secretary**

The secretary is elected from among Team members. The secretary:

- Takes meeting minutes that are to be emailed to the team members within a week of every meeting to ensure accuracy and transparency. (Personnel and other confidential information will be omitted from minutes at the discretion of the principal. Otherwise, meeting minutes will reflect the discussion accurately.)
- LSAT members shall notify the secretary in writing within 5 school days of any discrepancies in the minutes.
- The principal and LSAT members must approve the minutes before they are posted on the school website. Failure to respond to a request to approve minutes shall be taken as assumed consent.
- Minutes must be posted as soon as possible, but not later than 20 school days after the meeting date.
- Once approved, and not later than 20 school days after the meeting date, the secretary must send the meeting minutes to the DCPS Office of Family and Public Engagement by email to [ofpe.info@dc.gov](mailto:ofpe.info@dc.gov).

# Specific Responsibilities of the Murch Local School Advisory Team

1. Working with the Principal on initial development, regular monitoring and continuous refinement of the local Comprehensive School Plan (CSP) (school goals), including the supporting budget.

The Comprehensive School Plan should define the structure in which the school operates. As such, it should serve as an umbrella to encompass the components listed below. Reviewing, understanding, and questioning the Comprehensive School Plan should be a regular part of LSAT activities.

2. Advising the principal on school priorities.

The Principal is responsible for leading the school, but the Murch community (administrators, teachers, parents and students) should be a reflection of the collective goals this group has for its students. Given the constant evolution of the community make-up, the LSAT should guide the Principal in understanding shifts in priorities.

3. Reviewing data in order to be informed about school needs and trends.

The LSAT serves as the primary instrument for the Murch community (especially parents) to oversee and monitor school performance. There are three distinct segments of data used to complete this task: Universal, Summative, and Formative (the latter two being performance-specific measures).

**Universal** (number of students in total, percentage of ELL students, percentage of Special education students, percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch, etc).

**Summative** (end-of-year measurements that provide a window into what occurred over the entire school year, such as PARCC assessments, school attendance, disciplinary metrics). Typically, summative measurements like PARCC are released too late to allow for planning for the upcoming school year.

**Formative** (“progress monitoring” assessments which are given multiple times per year and allow for responsiveness to real-time measurements of learning). Formative measures can be analyzed during the school year.

4. Using assessment results to develop specific strategies for research-based school improvement.

Assessment data should be examined both longitudinally and in real-time. In both instances, scores should be analyzed for trends, such as falling Math scores year-over-year, a large gap in performance between subgroups, or low performance by grade level on progress monitoring. When specific trends are recognized, the LSAT should surface recommendations for specific strategies that are appropriately evidence-based. The more specifically a trend is identified, the more likely an appropriate evidence-based strategy can be employed.

5. Promoting a positive school climate through respectful discourse

By design, the membership of the LSAT should be an inclusive group in representation of all stakeholders within the Murch community. The LSAT, however, should not work in isolation or without transparency. Establishing plans and priorities, analyzing data, and advocating for potential changes in program or strategy implementation can lead to others within the Murch community feeling their experiences and/or concerns are not appreciated or welcomed. The LSAT should make considerable efforts to remain open to and inclusive of a variety of ideas from the broadest possible swath of the Murch community, while simultaneously recognizing the overall goal of creating a successful school experience for all students.

6. Complying with the requirements of the District of Columbia Open Meetings Act and the Freedom of Information Act.

Notes are taken on all meetings and are shared in compliance with Open Meetings Act.

7. Alignment of strategic and specific goals and objectives of DCPS.

The role of the LSAT is very distinct, and actions of the team should be aligned with the objective of promoting “high expectations and high achievement for all students.”

In the course of carrying out these responsibilities, all directed at improving student achievement, the Local School Advisory Team shall discuss and advise the principal on matters such as:

1. Budget decisions

The LSAT should make budget recommendations aligned with the analysis made and discussions had through the above responsibilities. Frequently, budgets are determined at the central office in January, and received by schools in February or March with little time between reception and the required approval of the LSAT. DCPS budgets often allow for limited latitude in terms of staffing or professional development, but the collaborative recommendations of the LSAT should be strongly considered. Those recommendations that are thoroughly researched and aligned with the goals of the LSAT will be the most likely to be successful. Cooperation with the HSA can be beneficial for funding goals that cannot be covered in the DCPS budget. The LSAT itself has no decision-making authority, simply budget approval.

2. Organization of the school

Murch should structure itself as an organization in alignment with the targeted goals the community (via the LSAT) has determined for the school. A clear understanding of how the school is organized, and the roles and responsibilities of the personnel in the school is beneficial. The Comprehensive School Plan should encompass this information, and recommendations for shifts should be based on clear data analysis.

3. Curriculum options, including special or supplementary course offerings and specialized research-based instructional strategies.

The changing structure and priorities of the Murch community should be reflected in the curriculum, course offerings and strategies that are implemented within the school. A clear understanding of the curriculums, strategies, measures, and implementation supports is beneficial and allows for an analysis of alignment. LSAT members should feel empowered to make recommendations regarding areas assessed to be lacking or out of alignment.

#### 4. Allocation of school resources

The LSAT has approval authority of the school budget, and as such has a role to play in allocation of school resources not specifically mandated by DCPS central office.

#### 5. Priorities and considerations for staffing patterns and the selection of personnel

Similar to the organization of the school, staffing, personnel selection, and personnel allocation should be aligned with the goals of the Murch community and the CSP. The LSAT has approval authority of the school budget, and as such has a role to play in approving staffing and personnel allocation/alignment. A clear understanding of needs based on data analysis will best inform this process.

#### 6. Monitoring overall student progress

As mentioned above, there are numerous ways to measure student progress. The proper functioning of the LSAT necessitates having timely access to, and a thorough understanding of, student data.

#### 7. School culture

Through all of the above roles, the LSAT has substantial influence on Murch culture. Part of the role of the Murch LSAT is to ensure that every member of the community, including, but not limited to, staff, students and parents, feels included. To that end, part of the responsibilities of the LSAT is to evaluate school climate and culture and develop improvements if needed. For instance, in 2019-20, the LSAT targeted the broad topic of inclusion at Murch, prompted by data indicating a racial achievement gap trend that was not improving from year to year. The LSAT hosted two Community Forums and by listening to the resulting parent and teacher dialogue,

responded via a \$20K HSA budget request to support the hiring of an educational consultancy focused on diversity/equity/inclusion (DEI). With the HSA's approved support, DEI work with parents, teachers and students is slated to begin in August 2020.

8. Family engagement.

The LSAT plays a key role regarding information transparency within the overall Murch community. The LSAT serves as a valuable liaison in disseminating budget, data and staffing information to all stakeholders, and in assuring that the largest number of individuals possible can offer feedback and make their opinions known. Providing access and clarity is a foundational role of the LSAT – families cannot be truly engaged without the opportunity to be fully informed.

## Suggested LSAT Calendar – Year at a Glance

Month	To-do and Possible Topics of Discussion
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New LSAT member term begins</li></ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meet and greet with past and present LSAT members</li><li>• Distribute LSAT Handbook to new members</li></ul>

September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure all elections (parents and staff) for LSAT representatives have been held and plan fall elections if not</li> <li>● Determine Parent/Teacher Co-Chairs and Secretary</li> <li>● Share access to Basecamp</li> <li>● First LSAT Meeting of the year (tentatively mid-September; subsequent meeting generally held on the first Tuesday of the month at 5:45 pm prior to the 7:00 pm HSA meeting)</li> <li>● Review LSAT purpose and goals <a href="http://bit.ly/dcpslsat">bit.ly/dcpslsat</a></li> <li>● Reflect on the vision/mission of Murch ES</li> <li>● Reflect on who is represented on the LSAT and what perspectives may be missing from the conversation (grade level, race, in-boundary status, primary language spoken, families of students with special needs, etc.)</li> <li>● Secretary to share meeting minutes with HSA Communications team to be published on the Murch ES Website</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review Comprehensive School Plan (CSP)</li> <li>● Preview Budget Timeline</li> <li>● Preview Enrollment Projection Timeline</li> <li>● Discuss LSAT's goals for the year so that the work can be strategically prioritized to align with the CSP and to unify the community</li> <li>● Discuss goals of Community Task Force (Affinity Groups)</li> <li>● Schedule future LSAT meetings (3 months out)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schedule Community Forums with Mary Eckstein (fall, winter, spring)</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review previous year's Budget Priority Parent Survey (BPPS)</li> <li>● Analyze Beginning of Year (BOY) data (if available) that relates to CSP goals</li> <li>● Share school enrollment projections for the following year</li> <li>● Finalize theme and speaker for the Fall Community Forum</li> <li>● Publicize forum</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Finalize BPPS for publication in January</li> <li>● Discuss best methods of BPPS distribution (email, Friday Folders, computers set-up in Welcome Center, multi-language accessibility, etc.)</li> <li>● Discuss schoolwide Data Night content</li> <li>● Schedule Data Night</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Distribute BPPS schoolwide (see above)</li> <li>● Discuss the CSP progress made to date; reflect on what may have hindered or enabled growth in the focus areas</li> <li>● Review the budget process and what to expect</li> <li>● Reflect on what went well (WWW) and even better if (EBI) about the previous year's budget process</li> <li>● Determine priorities for investment in the budget that would support CSP</li> <li>● Publicize Data Night</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review, analyze and publish BPPS results</li> <li>● Finalize Winter Community Forum</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discuss budget allocation (contingent upon DCPS)</li> <li>● Consider holding an extra LSAT meeting during budget season to discuss allocation</li> <li>● Publicize Winter Community Forum</li> <li>● Winter Community Forum</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discuss implications for the new school year's budget</li> <li>● Propose any potential changes or shifts for the next school year</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Finalize and publicize Spring Community Forum</li> <li>● Plan for LSAT elections by discussing diversity of perspective and what voices were represented on the LSAT this year and what voices may have been missing; share feedback with HSA Nominating Committee so that a diverse candidate pool can be cultivated</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Spring Community Forum</li> <li>● Reflect on WWW and EBI of current year's LSAT</li> <li>● Reflect on the school's growth towards CSP goals</li> <li>● Share goals that should be continued/realized next year</li> <li>● Prepare a transition plan for the new LSAT</li> </ul>

# Sample Agenda for First LSAT Meeting of SY

## 1. Administrative

- Welcome and Introductions
- Role of the LSAT

To bring a group of parents, teachers, staff and the community together with different perspectives to support high levels of academic achievement at Murch, to bolster the school's overall mission and to provide budget recommendations in the winter/spring. The LSAT exists at every DCPS school.

- Appointment of Co-Chairs and Secretary
- Basecamp Access

- Online platform where documents are stored and whole group archived communication is possible.
- Review meeting minutes from last meeting of previous year
- Schedule future LSAT meetings (3 months out)

## **2. Items for Discussion**

- Principal's Update
  - Vision/Mission of Murch
  - Budget Issues and Process
    - Budget that allows Murch to meet the Comprehensive School Plan (CSP)
    - Needs identification through data analysis
- LSAT's work in the previous year
  - Community Forums, data analysis, Budget Priority Parent Survey (BPPS), budget work, Community Task Force (CTF), etc.
  - WWW (what went well and EBI (even better if))
- Reflection
  - Who is represented on the current LSAT? What perspectives will be represented, what perspectives may be missing? (Grade level, race, in-boundary status, primary language spoken, families of students with special needs, etc.)

## **3. Next Steps**

- Secretary to share previous year's meeting minutes with HSA Communications team to be published on the Murch ES Website
- Schedule meeting with DSL (Director of Strategy and Logistics) to look over SY calendar and tentatively schedule events (Forums, Data Night, etc.)
- Contact DCPS [OFPE.info@dc.gov](mailto:OFPE.info@dc.gov) to share current year's Team member details

## **Education Terms - Acronyms and Terminology at DC Public Schools**

Term or Acronym	Explanation
DCPS	District of Columbia Public Schools
LSAT	<a href="#">Local School Advisory Team</a>
PTA and PTO	Parent Teacher Association and Parent Teacher Organization
<a href="#">Title I School</a>	A school where 40% or more of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch
FRL and FARM	Free and Reduced-price Lunch & Free and Reduced-price Meals
SEL	Social Emotional Learning – How children and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math
CTE	Career and Technical Education
SPED	Special Education
ES	Elementary School

MS	Middle School
HS	High School
EC	Education Campus - a school that combines an elementary and middle school or middle and high school
PK3	Prekindergarten for three-year-olds
PK4	Prekindergarten for four-year-olds
K	Kindergarten
<a href="#">OSSE</a>	DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education – Sets statewide policies, provides resources and support, and exercises accountability for all public education in DC
<a href="#">DME</a>	DC Deputy Mayor for Education – Develops and implements the mayor’s vision for education from birth to 24.
<a href="#">SBOE</a>	DC State Board of Education – Advises the State Superintendent of Education on educational matters, including state standards, policies and regulations.
<a href="#">ED</a>	United States Department of Education
<a href="#">IMPACT</a>	The DCPS effectiveness assessment system for school-based staff
<a href="#">LEAP</a>	<u>L</u> earning together to <u>A</u> dvance our <u>P</u> ractice – DCPS’s teacher professional system

<a href="#">Cornerstones</a>	High-quality, in-depth activities offered across the district that all DC Public Schools students will participate in during each unit of study
<a href="#">My School DC</a>	Citywide lottery application for public schools in DC
<a href="#">A Capital Commitment</a>	DCPS's five-year strategic plan including a vision, mission, values, strategic priorities and goals
<a href="#">IB</a>	International Baccalaureate - educational program focused on developing the skills needed to live, learn and work in a globalized world

**DC Public Schools Office and Divisions** - More information can be found at <https://dcps.dc.gov/publication/dcps-organizational-chart>

Acronym	Explanation
SEAD	Social Emotional Academic Development
OFPE	Office of Family and Public Engagement
OCOO	Office of the Chief Operating Officer

OTC	Office of Talent and Culture
OTL	Office of Teaching and Learning
OGC	Office of the General Counsel
LAD	Language Acquisition Division

**Acronyms commonly used in Murch LSAT**

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
BOY	Beginning of the Year
CSP	Comprehensive School Plan
DEI	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
EL	English Learners
EOY	End of the Year

HSA	Home and School Association (PTA)
MOY	Middle of the Year

# Murch LSAT Member Roster

Position	Name	Email Address	Contact Number
WTU Building Rep/ Designee			
Teacher #1			
Teacher #2			
Teacher #3			
Teacher #4			
Non-Instructional Staff			
Parent/Guardian #1			
Parent Guardian #2			
Parent/Guardian #3			
Parent/Guardian #4			
HSA Representative			
Community Member			

