

**COMMON LOTTERY BOARD MEETING
JANUARY 25, 2019
1050 First Street NE, 3rd Floor
1:30PM – 3:00PM**

MINUTES

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

Name	Organization	Present	Oct Minutes
Paul Kihn	Deputy Mayor for Education	X	Y
Susan Schaeffler	KIPP DC	X	Y
Claudia Lujan	DCPS	X	Y
Daniela Anello	DC Bilingual	X	Y
Colin Taylor	DCPS	X	Y
Hilary Darilek	E.L. Haynes	X	Y
Juliana Herman	DCPS	X	Y
Hanseul Kang	State Superintendent	X	N/A
Lenora Robinson Mills	Public Charter School Board	X	N/A
Cat Peretti	My School DC	X	N/A

II. October Minutes

Approved unanimously.

III. EdFEST 2018

The event was a huge success, increasing attendance by 2,070 people for a total over 7,000 this year. It was crowded and the My School DC Parent Advisory Council has suggested some strategies to make it less crowded by exploring extending it by an hour, and reducing floor space dedicated to non-school exhibitors. They also acknowledged the value of those exhibitors. Most

Board members attended and congratulated the My School DC team on executing a flawless event.

Board member Anello asked if MSDC captures where people are coming from since she thought this year's attendees seemed very diverse, more so than in years past. Yes, My School DC has some data on Wards of residence for the attendees that completed the exit survey and will follow up. The goal of My School DC's outreach for EdFEST is to get a broad swath of families there.

Board member Kihn asked if the childcare providers were new. Yes and no, the CBOs were invited last year but shared two tables. They were given more tables this year and all were invited. They are private day cares, but funded publicly to provide free pre-kindergarten as part of OSSE's programming. They are listed on My School DC's website as options outside of the common lottery.

Board member Schaeffler asked if this opened the door to other private schools attending, but that is not the plan. These CBO pre-kindergartens are a part of publicly funded PKs that meet quality standards. Board member Kang explained that all of New York's pre-kindergartens are funded this way.

Board member Robinson Mills suggested extending the event by more than an hour to spread out the crowding. Board member Peretti committed to look into it, but it would be balance on what school staff is expected to work on a Saturday and we wouldn't want tables to be abandoned early.

IV. Lottery Launch for 19-20

The launch of the application is a peak day for both web visits to learn about schools and applications submitted. It went well this year and applicants experienced:

- Enhanced mobile platforms and enhanced user-friendly application
- New STAR ratings incorporated onto My School DC profiles and School Finder
- New gender options for non-binary applicants
- Hotline has fielded 2,100+ calls since launch

Board member Schaeffler asked if it is a positive trend that apps go up? Board member Peretti answered that it is not a metric of success for My School DC, but rather an informational data point for the Board. The hope is for families to find best fit schools and stay there, and history tells us that many people apply without real intent of leaving their current school. Board member Lujan added that DCPS likes to monitor these trends even though it isn't a "positive" or goal metric for the lottery.

Board member Kihn asked what kinds of calls the hotline gets? Primarily, they are calls seeking assistance with apps, and this week it has been a lot of selective high school applications. Board member Herman asked if call volume was in the normal range. It is, with the exception that we had significantly more calls last year when we were taking mid-year applications for in-boundary students.

V. Policy Discussion

This year our data collection was due 10/19 with a hard deadline/code freeze of 11/30, but there were many major changes after 10/19 that changed school selections and required special alerts to families:

- MSDC accommodated in the most simple way possible in the application (to prevent global data errors)
- MSDC alerted ~8,000 people that had submitted or started apps (to ensure all applicants had access to the same choices)
- MSDC alerted ~50,000 people that signed up for alerts (to try and reach non-applicants that WOULD apply due to the changes)

DC Public Charter School Board and DCPS decision-making does not always line up with MSDC early data collection. MSDC has policies in place restricting participants from taking apps outside of our common app. MSDC typically makes changes when they are final and alert whomever we can, but this year there were more and some were of a different nature (adding grade levels) and volume.

Board member Schaeffler noted that it isn't the lottery program's sole responsibility to communicate these changes. Board member Robinson Mills concurred and added that MSDC has to alert applicants since there are still families seeking the schools that are altered or closed.

Board member Anello asked if there are applicants that only apply to one school when they could apply to 12? The median number of selections is 3-5 depending on the grade level. Only a few applicants had the closing or altered schools as their only lottery choice. The message in MSDC outreach is to apply to the schools you would send your kids to. The Board briefly discussed whether a minimum number of selections would be enforceable or helpful.

Board member Taylor asked if there is any messaging in the application about grade level changes, etc.? As soon as MSDC learns of a change being imminent or final, MSDC develops a communications plan that might include pop up text in the application itself for that school. There is no general disclaimer that things could change, as this has been an anomalous year and usually the application stays constant. Board member Anello asked if there could be a pop-up for all applications when a school changes. The communications always involve alerts to our text/e-mail pool and the specific applicants to the schools impacted.

Board member Robinson Mills asked if MSDC alerted 8th grade counselors about changes to the high schools. Yes, MSDC did that on the same day as the alert.

Board member Kihn asked what is involved in re-ranking an application? MSDC removes a school selection when a school closes and the re-ranking is manual and introduces some risk of human error. Board member Darilek suggests investing in automation of the re-ranking if this is going to become common.

Board members Schaeffler and Mills ask if MSDC needs more staff to be able to accommodate changes without risking the citywide match? Board member Kang – the OSSE budget has been

cut every year, but MSDC receives contributions from charters, PCSB and DCPS that could be increased. Board member Schaeffler thinks the city has money for this and that we should acknowledge these changes as the “new norm” that will happen late despite the best efforts of school leaders to execute on all of the requirements as early as possible.

Board member Kihn questions why the “new norm” needs to be late changes. Instead, why can’t DCPS and PCSB make decisions earlier? Board member Schaeffler noted that ANC meetings need to be scheduled, letters of support gathered, plans negotiated, and all on directed timelines. Board member Robinson Mills says the timeline for accountability is driven by PARCC release and calculation of the performance tiers, such that the earliest possible closure is December. Board member Kihn says there are changes on the list this year that are not accountability related such as the Lee replication and the removal of Ross PK4. Board member Lujan said the Ross decision was an anomaly based on an assessment of their physical space needs, and usually those decisions are made earlier.

MSDC suggests new policy language: If a school requests a change to any data after this deadline which has the likelihood of substantively impacting families’ applications and how it is coded, such as the school’s name, location or grades served, then those change requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The factors that My School DC will consider in making any post-deadline changes to the lottery application are:

1. Whether such a change is finalized with approval from DCPS and PCSB;
2. How families have been notified or can be notified of the change;
3. Fairness to the total applicant pool and number of students impacted;
4. How much risk a late change will introduce into the stability of the common application for all schools; AND
5. How much time a family has to act on the change before the deadline for the impacted grade span.

Board member Kihn says that as a board, we must encourage schools and LEAs to be mindful of the lottery challenges that late changes create, otherwise the new normal would be a bit of a free-for-all. Board member Darilek notes that some of these changes are LEAs’ decisions alone, and she appreciates that this policy is saying there may be a time that we cannot accommodate a change and it is that simple.

Board members proposed a later launch of the lottery application to give more time for changes, such as holding EdFEST in December but opening the lottery application in January. When MSDC was formed, the LEA design committee worked on the common timeline for a while and factored in the selective high school needs for testing, auditions, etc. MSDC has used the same dates each year to honor that process and for consistency. The deadlines are well known with families and kick off school processes – it would be a shame to lose that consistency and shorten the time families have to apply in an effort to solve for changes from a few schools. Further, half these changes would not have been known even with a January application launch, and MSDC would still have to freeze the code to test leading up to launch. The My School DC Parent Advisory Council was firmly against changing the deadline dates. Board member Kihn recommends that we avoid making a big policy decision based on this year. He wants to go through one more cycle, suspecting this year is anomalous.

Board member Schaeffler notes again that the city should dedicate more resources so the lottery isn't at risk of failure, and would support increasing the contributions from both sectors as the number of schools continues to expand.

VI. Dual Language Immersion Data

There has been stakeholder interest in demand for dual language immersion schools. MSDC will examine demand and enrollment at participating DL schools pulling from lottery results and My School DC reports with the goal of answering where does My School DC see unmet demand? Who is applying to DL schools in the lottery?

My School DC would like to isolate those unique students on waitlists without a match, which is a truer signal of unmet demand than simply the total number of students on waitlists that is commonly used to justify expansion.

May 6th will be the next meeting.