

Minutes
ANC 6A Community Outreach Committee (COC) of Advisory Neighborhood Commission
(ANC) 6A
In-Person Meeting at Miner Elementary School
Regular Meeting - February 26, 2024

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm.

COC members present: Paul Spires (Chair), Adina Wadsworth, Elizabeth Corinth, Angelique Dorazio Sanders, Clare Dougherty, Gail Sullivan

ANC 6A Commissioners present: Amber Gove, Dave Wethington, Steve Moilanen

ANC 7D Commissioners present: Marc Friend, Brett Astmann, Ebony Payne

First Item: Discussion of the proposed Miner-Maury Elementary Schools pairing

Jenn Comey, Director of Planning and Analysis, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education, Paired School Model Implementation presented slides to describe the current school boundary lines findings.

The community members in attendance broke into smaller groups to identify specific challenges of the Paired School Model and how to meet them. Each of the groups reported out their findings, listed below, which will be submitted to ANC 6A and the office of the DME.

Working Group Considerations

- Regarding the two-year timeframe:
 - This has been a conversation for at least a decade, but to the knowledge of the people in the group, it was the first time that the recommendation had been formalized anywhere. We agreed it was a mistake to just let the process drop for another two years, and there needed to be some mechanism to keep the conversation going in the interim.
 - What happens to the timeline if there is not stable leadership at both schools in two years?
 - There should be a mechanism to assess the impact of the at-risk set asides to determine if a paired model is still needed when the working group begins its work
- We do not want to restart this conversation in two years from where we are today. Should there be some kind of pre-working group working group? How can more parents be engaged in these discussions? Who facilitates these processes? Clearly DCPS will be involved, but there should be a role for our elected representatives (ANCs).
- How do we operationalize the Working Group?
 - The role of the working group, its composition and its mandate need to be clarified. Who ultimately decides what is "feasible?" The community needs to be engaged in a more substantive way than we were during the boundary study, but people are going to differ on what is "feasible." There also needs to be some kind of technical expertise on the question of "feasibility."
 - An initial list of stakeholders who should be included in some part of this process is: teachers, other school staff, parents, ANC's, people who live in boundaries but do not send their children to either school, educational experts and those who can bring in learning from other paired schools models
 - It seems like the best role for the working group should be to lead research and community engagement that feeds into a feasibility assessment

- Who ultimately decides if the schools will be paired? Is that the Mayor? Should the assessment of feasibility be continued to be housed in the Mayor's office, or does it move somewhere else? Who makes the final decision and who needs to lead the interim process?

Staffing

- For retention of teachers, staff, and principals—possibility to offer extended contracts.
- How would hiring be approached by both schools- One principal for two schools? Two for both? Would positions like specials, library, school psychologist, nurse, social workers be shared between two buildings or would there be separated positions for both schools?
- Maury PTO has \$120,000 spread across all paid aides- would school aides become salaried employees and would they be offered positions first?
- What would professional development look like?
- What would community building between the teachers, staff, and principals look like?
- Would they be budgeted as one school or two?

Transportation and Logistics

Our goal was to discuss/brainstorm safe passage between Miner and Maury, with a focus on minimizing the impact of those facing a dual drop-off scenario. Thoughts included:

- **Crossing Guards:** May need more; perhaps create a crossing guard "safety corridor" where kids could be handed off between guards (i.e. guards at every intersection between the two schools.)
- **Parking:** Availability and lot size are concerns; Miner may have enough, but not Maury; traffic flow and traffic patterns will need to be considered since there may be a new volumes of traffic to consider; perhaps consider new signage, stoplights, streetlights, and crosswalks to accommodate more foot/vehicle traffic coming down Tennessee Avenue
- **Bicycles:** There are no protected bike lands between the two schools; how would bike traffic interface with the new parking patterns; is there enough bike parking at Miner and Maury?
- **Buses:** Consider a shuttle bus between Miner and Maury to help dual drop offs. Parents with 2x kids could drop both kids at Miner, and the shuttle would take the older kids to Maury.
- **Other ideas:** Get imaginative with transportation options between schools -- walking/bike bus; shuttles decorated w/themes, etc.

School Drop Off and Pickup // Safe Routes to School

Ideas:

- Collaboration needed on:
 - Sibling pickup between schools
 - Awareness of sibling pickup dynamics
- Walking or other "shuttle" between schools.
 - Could be volunteer-run or staff run.
 - Throughout the day or beginning/end of day only
- "Carpool" -- common drop off points at each school, with a volunteer shuttle in between...that way if you have kids at both schools, you can drop your children off at only one school and the other child will be shuttled to their school somehow.
- Consult Peabody/Watkins Cluster School on their best practices on the above and below (and other issues)
- Coordinate with Eliot-Hine on these logistical questions too.
- Consult with DDOT on Tennessee Avenue safety

- Crossing guards at Tennessee Ave intersections
- Consider staggering start/end times of school and after- / before-care to help parents with kids in both schools
- Develop emergency / contingency closure and pickup plans that take into account the paired school -- is it possible for students to move to the other school?

Capital Improvements

- Minor renovations needed to existing classrooms in both schools to account for ed-spec
- Several Miner-specific improvements needed / wanted in order to update the facility: updated bathrooms, updated playground equipment and an improved surface for the field, updated electrical. Consider outdoor classrooms.
- Improved security staffing and fixing the gate at Miner so that it latches correctly. There was a lockdown recently because of a shooter on the loose and the outer gate wasn't closing and so it couldn't be ruled out that the shooter was on campus.
- Might need changes to the administrative spaces depending on cluster staffing
- More bike racks on campus at Miner
- Ensure the car drop off areas / curb cuts at both schools are able to accommodate parents doing double pick up in a car

Community building

Lots of opportunities to build community between the two schools - these were the most popular:

- Parent socials with babysitting provided
- Library Days for Maury/Miner - storytime at Rosedale Library jointly
- Park Meets Ups for Popsicle Day
- Affinity Groups Across Both Schools

It was recommended that the process for community building start early and grow it gradually - so now is a good time to get going.

There is strong need for buy-in from the Principals and Teachers to grow a sense of community

- Organized Bike Rides for students at both schools
- Joint movie nights at the park
- Establish a roundtable for student input from both schools

Community Engagement

Recommend that someone needs to communicate to the families who are not showing up at these meetings and find out how they feel. We need communication from the principals or other DCPS officials to the community (the parents should not be the ones spreading the word). And we need the DME and DCPS to work together to answer questions that we really don't yet know, including desired outcomes, Title 1 status, staffing concerns, early action PreK status, and more.

Considerations for early childhood center

1. Incorporating separate spaces into special education/early intervention spaces.
 - Since 0-3 childcare cannot live in the new building, the current prek space could serve childcare and special education services

- This could include Strong Start for those in daycare - allowing dedicated spaces for practitioners, children, and families, as needed; additional rooms for special education services when children reach K-5.
 - This can continue Miner's support for all children and incorporate early intervention.
2. 0-3 could be a feeder for PreK
 - As DME discusses how to prioritize the needs of at-risk students, this, too, can apply to the daycare setting.
 - As a needs-based care structure, those most in need will be provided the opportunity to access the Miner 0-3 services.
 - Inclusion in the 0-3 care will then provide a seat in prek, creating the Feeder flow from birth through Miner and Maury.
 - If combined with the intervention services above, the paired model can create a support system from birth for children in need of that support.
 3. Consideration - could the 0-3 have a location preference as well? Assuming the center is needs-based, and similar to the in-bound at-risk set asides for prek, could similar preferences be made to ensure families nearby who could benefit from 0-3 have access to it?
 4. Consideration - 8 PreK classrooms is a lot, but is it enough?
 - Given the current Maury overflow to other PreK and anticipated increase in in-bound participation, will guaranteed spots for in-bound remain? Consideration for Miner's current approach for PreK and how that may change is needed.
 - Does 0-3 have to be in the Miner building itself? It supports the broader feeder system, but it being elsewhere could open more seats to the combined model.

Second Item: Grant Application, Celebrate Capitol Hill, Inc. an H Street Youth Art Project.

Lauren Mendonsa presented an application for art supplies to aid in her efforts to keep neighborhood youth engaged and beautify the surrounding public spaces. The COC voted unanimously to support the grant request in the amount of \$1,370.00.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.