

Levy Oversight Committee

Thursday, March 8, 2007

4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

City Hall, 7th Floor

Meeting Purpose:

- To discuss and develop a recommendation on Middle School investments for 2007–2008
- To review the 2007 Summer College proposal

4:00 pm	Welcome and Introductions	Tim Ceis Deputy Mayor
4:05	Review of Agenda and Approval of Minutes from LOC meeting of February 13, 2007	Tim Ceis Deputy Mayor
4:10	Middle School Investments Review and Options	Holly Miller Jessica de Barros
4:30	LOC Discussion of Middle School Investments	All
5:50	Summer College 2007 Proposal	Holly Miller
6:00	Adjourn	

Next Meeting

March 20, 2007

Handouts

Minutes of 2/13/2007

Options for Middle School Investments

Proposal for Summer College 2007



DRAFT



City of Seattle

**FAMILIES AND EDUCATION LEVY
LEVY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**
Tuesday, February 13, 2007 • 4:00–5:30 p.m.
City Hall, Room 370

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Someireh Amirfaiz, Tim Ceis, Cheryl Chow, David Della, Kris Hildebrandt, Antonio Hopson, Marie Kurose, Lin Carlson for Raj Manhas, John Pehrson, Debra Sullivan

OTHERS PRESENT: Carla Bryant (Office for Education), Lori Chisholm (Seattle Parks), Jeff Clark (Seattle Public Schools), TJ Cosgrove (Health), Jessica de Barros (OFE), Jerry DeGriek (HSD), Karl Fields (Parks), Chris Fleming (SPS), Bob Fortner (Youth Tutoring Program), Donnie Grabowski (OFE), Michele Finnegan (Parks), Sonja Griffin (HSD), Terry Hayes (HSD), Paula Houston (YMCA), Mary Johnson (HSD), Patricia Lee (Council Central Staff), Marilyn Littlejohn (OPM), Andhra Lutz (SPS) Patricia McInturff (HSD), Ruth Medsker (SPS), Holly Miller (OFE), Erica Mullen (YMCA), Ramona Pierson (SPS), Aurora Porter (YMCA), Deeann Burtch Puffert (Child Care Resources), Princess Shareef (SPS), Sid Sidorowicz (OFE), Kristi Skanderup (MSSP), Tilman Smith (HSD), Josh Sutton (YMCA), Mao Svy (HSD), Viviana Ulloa (HSD), Margie Viall (HSD), Scott Washburn (YMCA), Steve Wright (SPS), Meenoo Yashar (Child Care Resources), Billie Young (HSD)

David Della called the meeting to order and asked for introductions. The minutes from the January 23, 2007 meeting were approved.

D. Della congratulated the Seattle School District on the passage of the recent Operating Levy and Capital Bond Issue. He said he was troubled by the Annual Report and felt that if the Levy was going to move the needle on academic achievement, the LOC must rethink approaches and more clearly define goals and strategies to improve academic achievement. Specifically, the LOC might want to consider the possibility of funding tutoring programs for students in elementary and middle schools as a strategy to help increase WASL success. He also said the LOC should be clear that refugee and immigrant students needed to be clearly identified and programs devised to help them achieve academically.

Tim Ceis agreed that the LOC needed to consider tutoring as a strategy for more effective academic support of students. He said the LOC needs to evaluate existing programs and look at other options for effectiveness and reprogram funds as appropriate. Today is the first step in that process. We must be honest in evaluating programs with data.

Early Learning

Sonja Griffin presented a report on the Early Learning Network.

Debra Sullivan asked about the attrition rate for teachers. S. Griffin said she did not have exact numbers but would provide them at a later date. In general, the rate was low because teachers want to participate in the professional development program.

Antonio Hopson asked if funding is provided for transporting students to and from preschool programs. S. Griffin said no funding is provided for transportation and that is a barrier for some families. But, the number one reason for families leaving the Step Ahead program last year was moving out of the area.

T. Ceis asked about the student attrition rate for this year and how many students had dropped out and been replaced. S. Griffin said the rate is about 8 percent so far. D. Sullivan asked if there were any way to bring these families back into the program. S. Griffin responded that was unlikely because many of the families had moved out of the area. Last year, it appeared that the lower the family income, the more likely they would drop from the program.

A. Hopson asked why parents have to be working to participate in the program. S. Griffin said State funding that enables programs to operate full-day and full-year requires working parents. Marie Kurose asked how many full-day and how many part-day slots exist. Billie Young said most programs offered both.

John Pehrson asked if Early Learning contracts contained performance pay. S. Griffin said the contracts do contain performance pay and, while some contractors may not have taken those provisions seriously last year, they are well aware of them now. J. Pehrson said he liked the approach of using incentives as support, not just for monitoring performance.

T. Ceis asked if the goal was for Step Ahead students to achieve a Level 3 or 4. S. Griffin said the annual goal was for 75% of the students to achieve a Level 3 or 4 by the end of the year.

L. Carlson asked if resources were available for the end of the year DIAL 3 assessment and if school readiness is a factor in performance pay. S. Griffin said funds had been reallocated to assure the DIAL 3 assessments were completed and school readiness is a major factor in performance pay.

Someireh Amirfaiz asked if there is a breakdown, by ethnicity, of teachers involved in professional development. T. Smith said many classes are dual language. HSD staff agreed to provide this information to the LOC. S. Amirfaiz pointed out that many teachers are not college ready. T. Smith said pathways were available, beginning in neighborhood locations, for teachers seeking to become college ready.

Middle Schools

Sid Sidorowicz presented information on middle school outcomes.

Aimee Hirabayashi said Middle School Support funding is coordinated with funding from the Nesholm Family Foundation and the School District to create an organized process for identifying students who are not meeting standard and developing student learning plans for them.

Princess Shareef said all students scoring Level I or Level II on the WASL are identified and their academic performance along with other issues, such as challenging family circumstances, analyzed in depth by a school team. Services, including academic remediation, are determined for students based on need and might include tutoring through the University of Washington or MESA and/or referrals for after school programs or other services.

Jeff Clark said he uses a variety of effective approaches at Denny Middle School including tutoring by retired math teachers, Saturday classes and summer programs.

Andhra Lutz said the Mercer Middle School Care Coordinator analyzes student achievement data to figure out which strategies will work for students. She then uses school breaks, Saturdays and summers to provide interventions.

Cheryl Chow noted the tremendous amount of hours of support being provided for these students. T. Ceis said the data shows disturbing results for middle school students, and the data needs to be displayed and analyzed so that issues can be discussed by the LOC.

Marie Kurose said at the core of the issue is whether the targets are aggressive enough. Clearly, middle schools are trying to address a lot of issues. A target of 84 students out of 1200 meeting standard is not a high enough goal. Maybe new strategies focused on academics should be tested. As the Levy progresses, consideration should be given to setting aside dollars to fund academically rigorous approaches.

Cheryl Chow reminded everyone that students come from a variety of backgrounds, including some very harsh experiences. They may need more than academic support to succeed in school.

Holly Miller asked if the LOC would like to schedule another meeting in early March. T. Ceis said yes, but the LOC needs to be better briefed on the data before getting back together. There should be an understanding of the big picture in middle schools and a willingness to consider different approaches to improving outcomes. C. Chow agreed and noted that the LOC needed a better understanding of how to move children through the WASL levels, and the resources needed to achieve that. The LOC should be open-minded about what these programs can achieve.

T. Ceis asked that the next meeting not have more presentations; he would like an opportunity for the LOC to discuss issues based on a clear presentation of data.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.



Memorandum

Date: March 8, 2007

To: Families & Education Levy Oversight Committee

From: Holly Miller, Director, Office for Education

Re: Options for Middle School Investments

I. Introduction/Overview

At its last two meetings, the Levy Oversight Committee has expressed concern over the large percentages of middle school students not achieving academically and the large achievement gap. To guide the LOC through discussion of this issue, this memo will analyze middle school achievement across the city, review lessons learned from the Levy's middle school data from the first year, and provide three options for improving middle school investments to yield the best possible outcomes for students.

II. Taking a Step Back: Middle School Academic Performance

To gain perspective and highlight the magnitude of targets we need to narrow the achievement gap, the table on the following page shows the picture of academic performance among all Seattle middle schools today. Schools in southeast and southwest Seattle are in **bold**.



2006 7th Grade WASL Scores, Seattle Public Schools

7th Grade WASL 2006	Math Percentage Meeting Standard	Math Number of Students Not Meeting Standard	Achievement Gap (Highest Percentage - Lowest Percentage)	Reading Percentage Meeting Standard	Reading Number of Students Not Meeting Standard	Achievement Gap (Highest Percentage - Lowest Percentage)
Eckstein	76.8%	90	36.6%	84.8%	60	36.6%
TOPS K-8	75.0%	13	30.0%	89.3%	5	30.0%
Salmon Bay School	70.1%	32	15.3%	82.8%	17	15.3%
Washington	65.2%	96	50.9%	73.8%	71	50.9%
Catharine Blaine K-8	56.7%	24	N/A	73.3%	14	N/A
Whitman	56.5%	135	46.2%	65.3%	107	46.2%
McClure	53.8%	97	57.2%	61.8%	80	57.2%
Madison	46.0%	145	31.1%	57.6%	113	31.1%
Mercer	39.1%	139	22.3%	53.5%	105	22.3%
Hamilton	38.7%	137	36.5%	50.0%	110	36.5%
Summit K-12	30.7%	51	N/A	62.7%	27	N/A
Madrona K-8	30.0%	28	N/A	45.9%	20	N/A
Denny	28.1%	126	35.9%	47.8%	91	35.9%
Meany	23.3%	90	23.4%	34.4%	77	23.4%
Pathfinder K-8	21.7%	35	N/A	43.5%	24	N/A
Aki Kurose	15.5%	151	35.3%	29.1%	131	35.3%
AS #1 Pinehurst	7.1%	11	N/A	28.6%	4	N/A
African American Academy	5.6%	51	N/A	18.5%	42	N/A
SE/SW Average	33.0%	612		47.3%	482	
<i>SPS Average</i>	<i>47.4%</i>			<i>59.3%</i>		
<i>State Average</i>	<i>48.5%</i>			<i>61.5%</i>		

The next table shows academic achievement by race, English language proficiency and income level, and compares these achievement levels with all Seattle Public Schools 7th grade students and all Washington state 7th grade students.

7th Grade WASL Scores 2006 Seattle Public Schools

	Math	Reading
African American	17.7%	33.8%
American Indian	30.3%	42.2%
Asian	51.3%	58.6%
Latino	28.0%	44.8%
White	67.6%	78.7%
Limited English	13.2%	15.4%
Low-Income	24.5%	37.5%
All SPS Students	47.4%	59.3%
All WA State Students	48.5%	61.5%

These data draw a very clear conclusion: middle school academic performance is poor across the board. The Levy has a big challenge in closing the gap for this group of students. The Levy has five more years to make a measurable impact on academic achievement and the gap.

III. Review: What Data Showed About the Levy’s Middle School Investments

The table below shows the impact of Levy middle school investments in 2005-06. The table shows the number of students who participated in Levy programs and achieved academically, who had not achieved in the prior year (“value-added”). Also shown are the total number of students served by each program, the total number who achieved academically (not value-added), the value-added outcomes as a percentage of total number of students served, and the return on investment as defined by the dollars spent per successful outcome.

Levy Program	Number of Students Who Achieved (Value-Added)	Total Number of Students Served	Total Number Who Achieved (Not Value-Added)	Value-Added Outcomes as a Percentage of Total Served	Return on Investment
All Middle School Programs (MSSP, CLCs, other Out-of-School Time)	318 ¹	5,939	2,144	5%	\$7,566
Community Learning Centers	243 ²	3,961	1,396	6%	\$3,980
Middle School Support	69 ³	1,641	221	4%	\$14,592
Out-of-School Time	52 ⁴	1,079	639	5%	\$8,260

If the LOC recommends continuing to invest in Community Learning Centers (CLCs), it should be mindful of the following findings from our data:

- Impact on level 1 vs. level 2 students
 - Data showed CLCs were more effective at helping level 2 students meet the targets.
 - This is confirmed by research on other CLCs outside of Seattle.
 - This shows little added benefit for combining CLC and Middle School Support Program (MSSP) investments for level 1 students.

¹ This is an estimate based on data available for students who took the WASL in both 2004-05 and 2005-06. This data showed 95 (6%) of students for whom data is available for both years did not pass the WASL in 04-05 and did pass in 05-06. The value-added percentage was extrapolated to the total number of students served in MSSP, CLCs and other middle school out-of-school time.

² Data showed 75 (6.7%) of students for whom data is available for both years by CLCs did not pass the WASL in 04-05 and did pass in 05-06. The value-added percentage was extrapolated to the total number of students served in CLCs.

³ Data showed 16 (4.7%) of students for whom data is available for both years by MSSP did not pass the WASL in 04-05 and did pass in 05-06. The value-added percentage was extrapolated to the total number of students served in MSSP.

⁴ Data showed 13 (5.2%) of students for whom data is available for both years by Out-of-School Time (OST) did not pass the WASL in 04-05 and did pass in 05-06. The value-added percentage was extrapolated to the total number of students served in OST.

- Participation levels
 - Students participated in CLCs, on average, fewer than half of all possible days.
 - Research shows higher participation rates are needed to help students achieve academically.
- Academic focus of CLC programs is unclear and inconsistent.

IV. Options for Improving Academic Return on Investment for Middle School Students

(a) Current Model With Improvements

OFE prescribes program changes, including much higher targets, to existing middle school programs, based on data. For example, CLCs would serve predominately level 2 students, and MSSP would serve level 1 students, who would also receive tutoring. Higher participation rates for CLCs would be required. Program changes would apply to all middle school sites.

Pros of Option (a):

- OFE would have greater control over program quality.

Cons of Option (a):

- Investments would not necessarily be more streamlined or integrated with schools than they are currently.
- Schools would continue to have separate targets for each program.

(b) School-Based Improvement Model

1. Invite a *pool of up to six* middle schools and/or schools and partners to write proposals for comprehensive academic services. The schools/partners would compete for investments in up to four sites.
 - Schools and/or schools and partners would write proposals to manage middle school investments under OFE's oversight.
 - Funds would flow from OFE to middle schools and/or schools and partners, who would coordinate in-school and out-of-school services tailored to the specific needs of their students.
 - Proposals could, but would not be required to, include current services (CLCs, MSSP).
 - Targets would be required to be much higher than current levels.
 - Proposals would set one target for the whole school, as opposed to separate targets for separate programs.
 - Proposals would specify which strategies the school would use to help level 1 and level 2 students.
 - Proposals would be required to address data at the school level, Levy-wide level and applicable national research (as specified by OFE).
 - More direct remedial approaches—such as tutoring—would be encouraged for level 1 students.
 - OFE would ask a panel of academic experts to assist in review of proposals.

2. Invite *all* middle and K-8 schools and/or schools and partners to write proposals for comprehensive academic services.

Pros of Options (b)1 and (b)2:

- Middle School investments would be streamlined, well-integrated into schools, and flexible in order to meet each school's academic needs.
- There would be **one** Levy outcome for each school, instead of separate outcomes for separate programs.
- Schools and/or schools and partners would be responsible for managing services and achieving outcomes.
- Services would be better tailored to level 1 and level 2 student needs.
- This approach helps students improve academically, while also helping schools and the district improve.

Cons of Options (b)1 and (b)2:

- Middle schools and/or schools and partners might not have the capacity or willingness to manage investments autonomously.
- OFE may not receive many strong proposals, which could lead to discontinued funding or seeking other options for middle school investment.
- A good plan does not guarantee capacity to execute it or follow through.

(c) Open Competition

Issue a Request For Investments (RFI) to help middle school students achieve academically. Proposals would be required to have much higher targets than current levels. Public and private entities would be eligible to apply. The key selection criteria would be return on investment. OFE could RFI services for a portion of middle school students who are academically behind or all middle school students who are behind.

Pros of Option (c):

- Potential to gain wide range of strategies from which to select.
- Potential for more efficient return on investment.
- Investments would be more directly tied to academic achievement.

Cons of Option (c):

- Investments would potentially be less streamlined and integrated with schools than they are currently.
- There would be political opposition.
- While this approach would help students improve, it would not help schools or the district improve.

V. Our Challenge

Our challenge as a group is to determine whether we still believe the programs the Levy is investing in—albeit with higher targets—will suffice to meet the magnitude of the challenge shown here. Or, should other robust, strong approaches with more direct academic focus be considered, in order to make a substantial difference within a few years?

Date: February 28, 2007

To: Levy Oversight Committee

From: Holly Miller
Donnie Grabowski

Re: Proposal for Summer College 2007

This is a summary of the 2006 Summer College program and a description of proposed investments in 2007.

Background

This year for the first time, Seattle Public Schools (SPS) offered Summer College to high school students who did not pass the reading, writing and math sections of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). Summer College was designed to help 9th and 10th grade students who scored a level 2 (out of four possible levels) on the WASL in at least one subject.

Summer College was a collaboration between SPS, Seattle Community Colleges and the City of Seattle. Summer College served students at three community college sites—North, Central and South. Students took two academic courses (literacy and math) to accelerate student achievement, as well as exciting enrichment courses to give students the experience of college life. Summer College was a five-week-long program. Immediately following the five-week Summer College program, students re-took the WASL. The program target was for at least 75 percent of Summer College students to pass the WASL on the retake.

SPS funded the academic teachers and student transportation; Seattle Community Colleges provided the classroom space; and the City allocated \$220,000 from 1997 Families & Education Levy underspend for the enrichment teachers, classroom maintenance and lunches (\$87,979 was spent). The state legislature added \$28.5 million for remedial assistance in the 2006 supplemental budget, which significantly supported Summer College and the District's overall remedial effort.

Startup Issues and Solutions

We faced multiple startup challenges in implementing Summer College:

- **Timing of WASL score release** – WASL scores were released to SPS in mid-June. This left little time to identify students who were eligible for Summer College, raise awareness among eligible students, recruit and enroll students.

SPS and OFE are working with the high school director, school principals and Pathway deans to identify potential participants early and to alert all parents to the Summer College opportunity.

- **Low enrollment** – The program enrolled approximately 330 students (out of a total of 600 possible slots).

OFE reduced the number of slots for the 2007 program to 400. SPS is notifying parents earlier about the Summer College opportunity and SPS has already received numerous inquiries from parents about the program because word has spread about the high quality of the program. OFE and SPS staff are meeting with the High School Director, school principals and Pathway deans to identify potential Summer College participants early and to inform parents of Pathway students about Summer College.

- SPS staff were assigned responsibility for managing both Summer College and the District summer school. Planning for Summer College began in March 2006, resulting in time compression for SPS staff who were charged with helping to develop the program.

SPS has assigned an additional staff person to help manage both Summer College and the SPS summer school program.

- **Hiring of teachers** – The pool of available and qualified math instructors was limited and Summer College program development was late in the year, resulting in fewer available teachers.

About half of the teachers from 2006 Summer College have already indicated their desire to participate again in 2007, and SPS has already started recruiting teachers for the 2007 program.

- **Identifying eligible students** – Some students were enrolled in Summer College who scored a level 1 or a very low level 2 on the WASL. This happened in part due to confusion over the definition of level 2 (the range for student performance within level 2 is large). This complicated instruction since the curriculum was designed for level 2 students.

OFE has included funding for 75 slots at each site for individual tutoring for students who may have scored level 1 or very low level 2 on one section of the WASL and level 2 on another. Students scoring level 1 or very low level 2 would receive intensive one-on-one tutoring in that subject area at both sites.

- **Data collection and reporting** – OFE and Community Colleges found it difficult to obtain student data from SPS on students in Summer College.

OFE is negotiating a written data-sharing agreement with SPS. Both site coordinators will be required to compile enrollment and attendance data daily and to submit the data weekly to the Summer College coordinator.

- **Student attendance** – Not all enrolled students attended Summer College regularly. Approximately 200 out of the 330 enrolled completed the program with satisfactory attendance.

Incentives for students who attend enough to receive elective credit (2 absences) will be offered. All students (and their parents) who enroll in one-on-one tutoring will be required to sign a contract.

- **WASL re-takes** – Not all Summer College students re-took the WASL. 167 Summer College students took one or more WASL re-take tests.

Incentives will be offered to students who retake the WASL.

2006 Summer College Outcomes

Overall, level 2 SPS students who attended Summer College out-performed level 2 SPS students who did not attend Summer College on the math and reading WASL re-take. There was no marginal difference in scores between the two groups on the writing WASL re-take.

	Met Math Standard	Met Reading Standard	Met Writing Standard
Summer College Students (Level 2)	46%	46%	71%
Other SPS Students (Level 2)	41%	34%	71%

Student outcomes varied by community college site, with North Seattle Community College having the greatest percentage of students passing the WASL re-take, followed by South and Central Community Colleges.

Feedback From Partners

OFE has obtained feedback from SPS, the Community Colleges, and Summer College teachers and site coordinators. Major items reported include:

- Students were able to truly experience college life by being exposed to community college campuses; this changed students' perspectives about college.
- Students said if they always had this kind of school, they would do better.
- The funding to the community colleges was very helpful.
- It was difficult to organize Summer College at Seattle Central, since the facility was only open four days per week.
- Class sizes were small, a positive advantage of low enrollment. Teachers would like to keep class sizes low, although teachers felt class sizes could be moderately increased to 10-15 students per class. "Leveling" students, or organizing classes according to more precise student achievement levels, is more important to some teachers than having low class sizes.

Other Developments

Since 2006 Summer College has ended, SPS has hired a new summer school coordinator for 2007. In addition, Governor Gregoire, State Superintendent Terry Bergeson and the State Board of Education have proposed delaying the WASL math graduation requirement until 2010. Students in the classes of 2008 and 2009 will be required to complete additional math courses if they do not pass the WASL. Governor Gregoire's proposed 2008-09 budget includes approximately \$50 million over two years for WASL remediation.

Proposal

Invest in a second year of Summer College. OFE and SPS will address the challenges from the first year.

- Summer College would be located at two sites (North and South Seattle Community Colleges), dropping Seattle Central as a site.
- OFE would contract with a non-profit or private company to offer one-on-one tutoring at both sites for students who score a level 1 or very low level 2 on a WASL section. Tutoring would be combined with the level 2 curricula designed by the state, and community college elective classes. Differentiating instruction based on level would allow the classes with higher-performing students to move more quickly.
- The cost for serving 400 students between the two sites is estimated at approximately \$303,000 for five weeks. OFE proposes funding 2007 Summer College costs as follows: 1) underspend from last year's Summer College program (\$132,000); 2) additional underspend from the 1997 Families & Education Levy (\$64,000); and 3) 2005 & 2006 excess revenue from the 2004 Families & Education Levy (\$107,000).