

SUTTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Date: **April 9, 2024**

Time: **5:30 p.m.**

Location: **Sutton Middle School Northside Campus**

Recording:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16lhvCIHFcHpiecN963y47eIOXJCJRdoq/view?usp=sharing>

- I. Call to order: 5:32 pm
- II. Roll Call

Role	Name (or Vacant)	Present or Absent
Principal	Dr. Dominique Merriweather	Present
Parent/Guardian	Shauna Achey	Present
Parent/Guardian	Laura Collins	Present
Parent/Guardian	Tania Wismer	Present via Zoom
Instructional Staff	DeMarkius Lamar	Present
Instructional Staff	Shelly Riddle	Present
Instructional Staff	Antoine Edwards	Present
Community Member	Ana Flores	Present via Zoom
Community Member	Fran Egan	Present
Swing Seat	Charneka Jones	Present

Quorum Established: **Yes**

III. Action Items

- a. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion made by: Collins; Seconded by: Riddle
 Members Approving: All
 Members Opposing: None
 Members Abstaining: None
Motion Passes
- b. **Approval of Previous Minutes from March 5, 2024 meeting:** *List amendments to the minutes: None*
 Motion made by: Lamar; Seconded by: Edwards
 Members Approving: All
 Members Opposing: None
 Members Abstaining: None
Motion Passes

IV. Discussion Items

a. Discussion Item 1: 2024 Spring MAPS Results

- i. Dr. Merriweather presented the 2024 Spring MAP Achievement Levels by grade level, along with the district-wide level. Achey highlighted that 6th graders continue to outperform the 7th and 8th graders.
- ii. Dr. Merriweather reviews the Spring MAP results as compared to the Fall MAP results for various subgroups and noted that each subgroup had an increase in beginning learners and a decrease in those characterized as distinguished and proficient learners. He further observed that this pattern aligns with trends seen in other schools across the district, noting that Sutton has experienced a similar trend in previous years as well.

b. Discussion Item 2: BASC-3 Data

- i. Dr. Merriweather shared the BASC Summary for Behavioral and Emotional Risk Index (BERI), noting that 81% of Sutton students were at normal risk, 15% of students were at elevated risk and 5% were extremely elevated risk. Counselors are actively ensuring that students in the elevated and extremely elevated risk categories receive the necessary support.

c. Needs Assessment

- i. What does this data tell us?
- ii. What good news is there to celebrate?
- iii. What are growth opportunities?
- iv. What trends do we see in the data?
 1. Riddle emphasized the importance of celebrating the growth achieved in distinguished and proficient categories among several of the subgroups.
 2. Merriweather noted the importance of leveraging professional development to maintain an acceleration mindset at Sutton. Achey raised concerns about testing fatigue, to which Dr. Merriweather responded that he has observed similar outcomes for the past seven years and believes that testing fatigue does play a role. Jones pointed out that the test increases in difficulty between fall and spring so some of the skills students are being tested on are new concepts. Egan mentioned that, according to her child, not all students take the testing seriously. She inquired about whether there is an opportunity to add more rigor behind the celebration or acknowledgement for those students whose performance really grows. Additionally, Achey asked about the testing environments throughout the school and whether how comfortable students are in the environment could impact scores.

Dr. Merriweather highlighted that Sutton has provided additional support for some teachers if needed to make the environment conducive to learning. Egan raised concerns about the performance gap between black and white students. Dr. Merriweather emphasized that while the school plays a significant role, community and home environments are crucial. He noted ongoing efforts to enhance family engagement, including inviting families for tutoring before and after school and having more academically focused family engagement sessions. Egan suggested actively involving students in addressing their own performance, to which Dr. Merriweather responded by proposing that the inclusion of student council and student ambassadors and setting goals could be helpful. Jones suggested the creation of a data wall to display aggregate results openly. Dr. Merriweather proposed a friendly competition among grade levels and a student data friendly wall that posted results by grade level to further engage students. Riddle supported the idea, noting the positive impact of competition and inclusive participation. As they plan for next year, Dr. Merriweather expressed his intention to incorporate these ideas. Riddle emphasized the importance of teamwork between teachers and parents and practice. Dr. Merriweather spoke about focusing on manageable factors, stressing the need for intentional seriousness regarding testing at future Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings. Egan observed that Sutton has been more lenient with students coming out of Covid and could now focus more on rigor. Wismer emphasized the importance of empowering parents to motivate their children, even if they can't help with homework. Jones observed that students often perform better on unit assessments due to the motivational factor of grades. Achey suggested providing review packets to help refresh students' memories before the testing.

V. Information Items

- a. Principal's Report: Sutton has had Parent University sessions. We are communicating with families and numbers have been increasing. Ms. Rodriguez has been intentional about sessions being offered. On the school side, Sutton is offering Parent Tours, Infinite Campus assistance, registration support resources/external support, Donuts with Dr. Merriweather which will continue next year. Wismer noted that not having computers at home has been impactful as her daughter has needed a computer for homework. Edwards, Lamar, and

Jones noted that having the computers at school has made for a much better learning environment at school. Dr. Merriweather acknowledged that we won't ever be at 100% satisfaction. Not having computers assigned to individual students has helped with engagement and allowed students to interact more rather than be glued to their computer. Dr. Merriweather reiterated that the expectation is that homework is not on computer and that they will continue to reiterate that homework should be on paper.

- i. Highlights of recent Sutton Achievements: Reading Bowl State Championship (5th consecutive year); Debate Team Championship (6th consecutive year), Girls Soccer Championship (APS city championship), Boys Track Team Championship (2nd consecutive year), Girls Track Team Championship (3rd consecutive year). Academically and athletically, Sutton students are doing amazing things. Swim Team won first place in the War Eagle Swim and Diving Championship (first time an APS school has won in 44 years); a Sutton student was the Young Georgia Authors District Winner; teacher data presentations, 8th grade dance, and the 7th grade DC trip were all successful.
- b. Cluster Advisory Team Report: Wismer reported that the committee has achieved most of their goals. The district is now considering ways to help supplement costs for visas for DLI teachers. They are looking at paying \$6,000-\$7,000 to address DLI teacher shortages. Additionally, the cluster is focused on strategies to retain families throughout the full K-12 education spectrum.
- c. DLI Spanish Achievement Advisory Committee Report: Egan reported that the committee met three weeks ago and is scheduled to meet again next week. Dr. McKenzie, head of DLI and World Languages for APS, pulled STAMP data, indicating that MAP data is not normed and does not accurately gauge language learning. STAMP data assesses reading, writing, listening, and speaking. There rigorous standards because a goal of DLI is for students to graduate with a Seal of biliteracy as well as IB bilingual diploma which requires taking an IB core class in the language. Currently about half of Sutton DLI students are meeting the targeted standards. The committee members have been tasked with discussing strategies within their networks to bring new ideas to the next meeting.
- d. Bus Transportation Update: Achey sent out letter to Mr. Franklin, Dr. Battle, and the School Board, which Dr. Merriweather then distributed to the Sutton community. Dr. Battle reported that they are doing more internal research. Achey will follow up again with new numbers of classes missed and to express further concerns about transportation delays during Milestones testing. Additionally, Achey will also post a form on the grade-level Facebook pages to collect anecdotes and stories related to transportation. Wismer noted that systemic transportation issues are prevalent throughout the district.

- e. GO Team Elections will take place from April 16-26. Sutton has six candidates. The candidate information can be found at apsstrongschools.com. Two of the six candidates will be elected.
- VI. **Announcements:** Egan suggested developing communications for parents that include tips and coaching suggestions on how to support their children in addressing low growth on Milestones assessments. Achey then reiterated the importance of completing required GO Team training as well as surveys.
- VII. **Adjournment**
Motion made by: Egan and Jones; Seconded by: Wismer
Members Approving: All
Members Opposing: None
Members Abstaining: None
Motion Passes

ADJOURNED AT 6:37 p.m.

Minutes Taken By: [Laura Collins](#)

Position: [Secretary](#)

Date Approved: [TBD, Draft for approval at next meeting of the Sutton GO Team Meeting](#)