

## DT Howard Middle School

Date: **October 6, 2025**

Time: **4:45pm**

Location: **Virtual/YouTube:**

<https://www.youtube.com/@DavidTHowardMiddle/streams>

- I. Call to order: 4:49pm
- II. Roll Call

Role	Name (or Vacant)	Present or Absent
Principal	Tekeshia Hollis	P
Parent/Guardian	Doug Brooks	P (virtual)
Parent/Guardian	Deonne Malick El-Deiry <i>Chair &amp; Cluster Advisory Team (CAT) Representative</i>	P
Parent/Guardian	Joshua Griggs	P
Instructional Staff	Regina Bryant	P
Instructional Staff	Sudie Nolan-Cassimas <i>Vice Chair</i>	P
Instructional Staff	Jason Langbehn	P
Community Member	Heena Patel <i>Secretary</i>	P
Community Member	Boyd Baker	P
Swing Seat	Jenny Reiner	P (virtual)
Student (High Schools)		

Quorum Established: **YES**

### III. Action Items

**Approval of Agenda:** Motion made by: Sudie Nolan-Cassimas Seconded by: Jason Langbehn

Members Approving: 8

Members Opposing: 0

Members Abstaining: 0

**Motion Passes**

a. **Approval of Previous Minutes:**

Motion made by: Joshua Griggs Seconded by: Sudie Nolan-Cassimas

Members Approving: 9

Members Opposing: 0

Members Abstaining: 0

## Motion Passes

**IV. Public Comment** – no one signed up

**V. Discussion Items**

a. **Discussion Item 1:** MAPS Data; Spring to Fall Growth

Principal Hollis presented academic performance data to inform strategic planning.

### • Details

- **Principal Hollis:** Shared EOG (End of Grade) data showing student performance in ELA and math across grade levels.
- **Multiple members:** Discussed a pattern where student performance tends to be flat or decline from 6th to 7th grade, then improve significantly in 8th grade.
- **Principal Hollis:** Noted that 7th grade is academically challenging, particularly in math with the introduction of geometry concepts.
- **Multiple members:** Discussed the impact of COVID on current students, particularly noting that the current 8th grade cohort has been a "cohort of concern" academically since they missed significant instructional time in elementary school.

### • Conclusion

- The team acknowledged the need to address performance gaps, particularly for Black students and students with disabilities.
- The team noted that higher expectations have led to improved results, particularly in 8th grade.

b. **Discussion Item 2:** Mission and Vision Alignment

The team reviewed the school's mission and vision statements for alignment with the district's strategic plan.

### • Details

- **Principal Hollis:** Presented the current draft of Howard's mission and vision statements.
- **Multiple members:** Expressed support for maintaining Howard's unique mission and vision rather than adopting the district's generic statements.
- **Principal Hollis:** Noted that the school will need STEAM-aligned mission and vision statements for certification purposes.

### • Conclusion

- The team agreed to keep the current mission and vision statements: "David T. Howard is an engaging and inclusive community that ensures all students reach

their individual academic potential and develop critical thinking skills so they can navigate a rapidly changing world" and "Through an inclusive culture of equity, collaboration, and excellence, all students will be empowered to be innovators and responsive citizens."

c. **Discussion Item 3:** Howard Middle School Strategic Plan SY25

The team discussed and developed strategic goals for the 2025-2030 School Strategic Plan.

• **Details**

- **Principal Hollis:** Presented the current continuous improvement goals focused on literacy, numeracy, and chronic absenteeism.
- **Multiple members:** Debated whether to add a fourth goal related to school culture/climate or student-staff relationships.
- **Josh:** Suggested focusing on subgroup performance rather than overall performance to close achievement gaps.
- **Deonne:** Expressed concern about focusing solely on subgroups and emphasized the importance of ensuring that every child has an individual growth plan while incorporating the entire student population into our overall goals.
- **Multiple members:** Discussed realistic improvement targets, with some suggesting 2-3% annual improvement rather than the district's implied 20% over 5 years.

• **Conclusion**

- The team agreed to maintain three strategic goals focused on ELA proficiency, math proficiency, and attendance.
- The team agreed to set a 3% annual improvement goal (15% over 5 years) for subgroups and 2% annual improvement (10% over 5 years) for overall student performance.
- Principal Hollis will rewrite the goals with these targets for review at the next meeting.

## VI. Information Items

Principal Hollis provided updates on enrollment, discipline, staffing, and other school matters.

## VII. Details

- a. **Principal Hollis:** Reported current enrollment of 1,192 students with 51.6% gifted, 10.2% special education, and 3.8% EL students.

- b. **Principal Hollis:** Shared that the current attendance rate is 91.8%, up from 90.1% last year.
- c. **Principal Hollis:** Presented discipline data showing 87 incidents, with prohibited use of cell phones being the most common infraction.
- d. **Principal Hollis:** Reported staffing updates including three new teachers, additional custodians, and a new special education lead teacher.
- e. **Principal Hollis:** Discussed issues with the Mastery Connect assessment platform and plans to explore alternatives.

## VIII. Conclusion

- a. The school is maintaining strong attendance rates and has made staffing improvements.
- b. The school will likely return to using a previous assessment platform (likely Formative) due to ongoing issues with Mastery Connect.

## IX. Announcements

### Facilities Planning Update

Tekeshia provided an update on facilities planning for the cluster.

#### • Details

- **Deonne:** Reported that the current scenario for Midtown includes an addition AND other innovative solutions.
- **Deonne:** Noted that Howard is currently at 88% capacity, approaching the 90% threshold that would trigger policy changes.
- **Deonne:** Shared that Howard is the lowest per-pupil funded middle school in the district despite being the largest under one roof.

#### • Conclusion

- The team needs to monitor enrollment closely as it approaches capacity limits.
- A meeting with the cluster superintendent and Lisa Bracken is being scheduled to discuss funding concerns.

## X. Action Items

#### • Principal Hollis

- Rewrite strategic goals with 3% annual improvement targets for subgroups and 2% for overall performance
- Send GO Team members the questions from the Georgia Health Survey for review
- Explore alternatives to the Mastery Connect assessment platform, likely selecting Formative
- Establish a protocol for when math quizzes are unlocked for student and parent viewing

- **Deonne**
  - Schedule meeting with Cluster Superintendent Sofianos and Lisa Bracken regarding funding concerns
  - Share facilities planning survey with school community
- **Sudie**
  - Participate in the meeting with Cluster Superintendent Sofianos and Lisa Bracken as staff representative
- **GO Team Members**
  - Review the Georgia Health Survey questions when provided
  - Provide feedback on the facilities planning survey

## **XI. Adjournment**

Motion made by: Joshua Griggs ; Seconded by: Sudie Nolan-Cassimas

Members Approving: 9

Members Opposing: 0

Members Abstaining: 0

Motion Passes

**ADJOURNED AT 6:31pm**

---

**Minutes Taken By:** Heena Patel

**Position:** Secretary

**Date Approved:** [Insert Date When Approved]