

DT Howard Middle School

Date: April 20, 2026

Time: 4:45pm

Location: Virtual/YouTube:

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

- I. Call to order: 4:47pm
- II. Roll Call

Role	Name (or Vacant)	Present or Absent
Principal	Tekeshia Hollis	P
Parent/Guardian	Doug Brooks	P
Parent/Guardian	Deonne Malick El-Deiry <i>Chair & 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
Student (High Schools)		

Quorum Established: YES

III. Action Items

- a. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion made by: Joshua Griggs Seconded by: Heena Patel

Members Approving: 8

Members Opposing: 0

Members Abstaining: 0

Motion Passes

- b. **Approval of Previous Minutes:**

Motion made by: Heena Patel Seconded by: Jason Langbehn

Members Approving: 8

Members Opposing: 0

Members Abstaining: 0

Motion Passes

IV. Discussion Items

a. Discussion Item 1: Spring MAP Results - Overall Performance

The administration presented comprehensive MAP data showing progress from fall to spring across all grade levels and subgroups.

Details

- Darice Williams: Reported overall ELA MAP data shows decreasing beginning levels and increasing proficient/distinguished levels from fall to spring, though some students were not tested in spring administration
- Marquita Moore: Presented similar positive trends in math data with distinguished level learners increasing across all grade levels
- Josh Griggs: Clarified that MAP cutoffs increase throughout the year, making the progress even more significant as students are advancing against a moving target
- Tekeshia Hollis: Noted that spring testing window was shorter and coincided with 8th grade Orlando trip, resulting in fewer data points than fall/winter administrations

Conclusion

- All students and subgroups (Black, Hispanic, SWD) are trending in the right direction
- Distinguished level learners increased for Math in all grade levels
- Beginning level learners decreased for ELA in all grade levels from fall to spring

Subgroup Data Analysis - Black Students

Detailed analysis was presented in response to community member Stacey Barton-White's request regarding achievement gaps for Black students.

Details

- Tekeshia Hollis: Presented cohort tracking data showing Black students' progression from 6th to 8th grade, with beginning/proficient levels decreasing from 43%/48% in 6th grade to 33% in 8th grade
- Josh Griggs: Highlighted the asset-based view showing proficient/distinguished rates for Black students in math increased from 17% to 36% over two years
- Deonne Malick El-Deiry: Requested grade-level breakdowns for Hispanic and Black students similar to the SWD analysis provided
- Marquita Moore: Confirmed that Hispanic and EL students show slightly more progress than Black students, which correlates with better attendance rates

Conclusion

- Achievement gap for Black students is declining year over year
- Data shows consistent improvement across cohorts as they progress through grade levels
- Attendance correlation is significant factor in achievement differences

Attendance Data and Interventions

Extensive discussion of attendance patterns across subgroups and interventions implemented to improve attendance.

• Details

- Marquita Moore: Presented data showing Black subgroup has higher percentage of students not meeting attendance thresholds compared to Hispanic and multiracial students
- Tekeshia Hollis: Described comprehensive attendance interventions including perfect attendance celebrations, "10 to win" program, dot matrix relationship building, Everyday Lab Pro tracking, grade level competitions with traveling trophy, and individual family outreach
- Deonne Malick El-Deiry: Requested analysis of attendance data for bottom quartile students across all subgroups to determine if attendance issues are concentrated in specific academic performance levels
- Sudie Nolan: Emphasized need for continued parent communication about attendance importance
- Marquita Moore: Noted that white student attendance has declined this year, showing attendance is not isolated to one subgroup

• Conclusion

- Attendance is the strongest predictor of academic success across all subgroups
- Multiple interventions are in place but continued focus is needed
- School will request bottom quartile attendance data from district data strategist for future analysis

Targeted Academic Interventions and Supports

Discussion of specific strategies used to support struggling students and close achievement gaps.

• Details

- Marquita Moore: Listed interventions including Saturday School for bottom 25%, in-school reading/math support classes during connections period, tutoring and pull-out support, MTSS and ESOL support, and special education lead teacher support
- Darice Williams: Described literacy-focused interventions including daily planning with reading connections teacher, pushing into social studies PLCs, paired text strategies, and vocabulary breakdown support across content areas
- Tekeshia Hollis: Explained tiered approach where beginning-level students receive more intensive interventions (lunch and learns, connections class pull-outs) while developing students may only need small group pull-outs in classroom
- Tekeshia Hollis: Highlighted new additions this year including special ed lead teachers helping with pull-outs, district specialists providing support, and novel studies in social studies classes including civil rights walking field trip in Old Fourth Ward
- Josh Griggs: Questioned whether strategies for moving beginning students to developing are the same as those for moving developing students to proficient

• Conclusion

- School employs differentiated, tiered intervention approach based on student needs
- Literacy is foundational to all academic achievement
- All staff members (administrators, teachers, specialists) participate in intervention support

Students with Disabilities (SWD) Performance

Analysis of SWD subgroup data and opportunities for growth.

• Details

- Darice Williams: Noted opportunities for growth with SWD population in 7th and 8th grade ELA, though some increases in distinguished SWD students were observed
- Marquita Moore: Reported similar trends for SWD in math with opportunities for additional targeted instruction in co-taught and resource classes
- Tekeshia Hollis: Confirmed SWD students have higher attendance concerns than non-SWD students based on presented data

• Conclusion

- SWD subgroups are trending in right direction overall (decreasing beginning, increasing proficient/distinguished)
- Specific opportunities exist for 7th and 8th grade ELA support
- Attendance remains a significant factor for SWD achievement

English Language Learners (ELL) Data

Discussion about the need for more comprehensive ELL data reporting.

• Details

- Deonne Malick EI-Deiry: Noted that ELL was the lowest subgroup on some data points in fall and requested similar grade-level breakdown as provided for other subgroups
- Tekeshia Hollis: Explained that ELL students in first two years in country don't count toward data, making it harder to pull that specific data; ACCESS testing data from February is not yet available
- Marquita Moore: Confirmed ELL and Hispanic students have better attendance overall and their test scores reflect that
- Deonne Malick EI-Deiry: Suggested opportunity to provide transparency around ACCESS data or other standardized tests used for ELL students

• Conclusion

- ELL data will be presented in future with support from appropriate district department
- ACCESS data timing makes it difficult to include in spring MAP presentations
- ELL students show strong correlation between attendance and achievement

b. **Discussion Item 2: Planning for 2026-2027 School Year**

GO Team discussed strategic priorities and necessary conditions for achieving excellence.

Details

- Josh Griggs: Emphasized importance of continuity of school leadership and teacher retention, noting that losing leadership would be disruptive to progress
- Deonne Malick El-Deiry: Added teacher and staff retention to continuity priorities
- Josh Griggs: Suggested administration needs to allocate resources (not just financial) based on academic needs, including people resources for interventions
- Sudie Nolan: Emphasized continued messaging to parents about attendance importance, noting cultural shift needed around checking out early or missing school for travel
- Deonne Malick El-Deiry: Recommended providing teachers with resources and time to plan for instruction and its execution appropriately
- Tekeshia Hollis: Clarified these priorities represent continuation of current work, not new initiatives

Conclusion

- Strategic priorities identified: resource allocation based on academic needs, continuity of school leadership, high teacher retention, continued focus on student attendance, and communication with parents/caregivers
- Administration will spend summer preparing for next school year
- First business meeting in Fall 2026 will review strategic priorities and metrics

c. **Discussion Item 3: Community Request for Task Force**

Discussion of Stacey Barton-White's request for a task force to address achievement gaps

Details

- Josh Griggs: Asked whether administration would find a task force helpful
- Tekeshia Hollis: Stated a task force should not live at school level but potentially at CAT (Cluster Advisory Team) level since request addressed 6th-12th grade issues across multiple schools
- Deonne Malick El-Deiry: Explained that GO Team cannot establish a committee that outlives current term ending in April; district has designated staff constantly reviewing data and gaps; Equity Committee has discussed potential task force
- Josh Griggs: Clarified understanding that response to request is "no" with clear rationale: school has internal mechanisms driving progress, logistical constraints of GO Team timeline, and cluster-level would be more appropriate venue

- Tekeshia Hollis: Noted data has been presented regularly at GO Team meetings since September request was made, and school reviews data extensively in PLCs, vertical meetings, and faculty meetings

Conclusion

- School-level task force deemed not appropriate; cluster or district level would be more suitable
- School already has internal data review processes and governance mechanisms in place
- Request can be lifted to CAT for discussion of cluster-wide task force

Parent Organization Coordination Structure

Proposal to formalize coordination between PTO, Foundation, Booster, and GO Team.

Details

- Deonne Malick El-Deiry: Explained request from incoming PTO and Foundation presidents to include regular coordination meetings between supporting bodies in strategic plan under Focus Area 2 (supportive families, communities, and partners)
- Sudie Nolan: Clarified this would be a steering committee bringing together PTO, Booster, Foundation, GO Team designee, and principal to strengthen coordination and avoid crossing paths
- Jason Langbehn: Questioned why this couldn't happen within existing GO Team meeting framework and asked about documentation and member selection process
- James Baker: Expressed concern about creating something for next year's GO Team with less than a minute left in meeting
- Deonne Malick El-Deiry: Noted this is similar to Family Engagement Leadership Teams and steering committees at other schools like Sarah Smith and Midtown High School; strategic plan is living document that can be modified
- Initial vote on adding to strategic plan: 3 in favor, 3 opposed, 2 abstentions (Dr. Bryant and Heena)
- Josh Griggs: Motioned to discuss structural coordination at first GO Team meeting of 2026-2027 school year
- Final vote to table discussion until August: unanimous approval

Conclusion

- Discussion of parent organization coordination structure will be held at first GO Team meeting of next school year
- No changes made to current strategic plan
- Next GO Team can determine appropriate structure and goals

d. Discussion Item 4: Principal's Report

Brief updates on school operations and upcoming events.

Details

- Tekeshia Hollis: Reported enrollment has declined slightly and CCRPI attendance has declined slightly but expected to improve
- Tekeshia Hollis: Announced decision to table hiring of third hourly ELA reading intervention teacher until after leveling due to state retirement law changes affecting retiree work hours; two current reading intervention teachers will continue; money remains allocated for position
- Deonne Malick El-Deiry: Questioned impact on reading intervention and staffing; Hollis confirmed intervention will continue as currently structured in first quarter, with third person adding push-in support when hired (likely September/October)
- Tekeshia Hollis: Announced boys soccer won middle school championship, fields being turfed over summer through partnership with Inter-Atlanta, students published books and won awards, Earth Week activities Wednesday during lunches

Conclusion

- One reading intervention position hiring delayed but program continues with current staff
- Multiple positive student achievements and facility improvements underway

GO Team Elections and CAT Updates

Information about upcoming elections and cluster advisory team activities.

Details

- Tekeshia Hollis: Announced GO Team election voting open April 15-24; candidate information will be sent via Remind and IC Messenger with links to individual candidate profiles
- Deonne Malick El-Deiry: Reported CAT activities including facilities request form completion for East Bloss, data dig for Midtown cluster available online, and final CAT meeting scheduled for tomorrow night
- Deonne Malick El-Deiry: Noted CAT meetings typically start late in school year (October/November) and follow district-provided agenda with limited time for cluster-specific work

Conclusion

- Community members encouraged to vote in GO Team elections and review candidate information
- CAT data dig and meeting recordings available online for community review

Challenges

- Limited testing window in spring resulted in fewer data points due to 8th grade Orlando trip and optional makeup window
- Opt-out rates for interventions remain low (5 or fewer students) but community perception may differ from reality
- ELL/ACCESS data timing makes it difficult to include in spring presentations as testing occurs in February with delayed results
- Bottom quartile attendance data requires manual extraction by district data strategist and is not readily accessible at school level
- State retirement law changes affecting hourly employee limits create hiring challenges for intervention positions
- CAT meetings occur late in school year (October/November) limiting ability to respond to requests in timely manner
- Perception in community that attendance messaging targets only Black subgroup when data shows it affects multiple subgroups

Action items

Tekeshia Hollis

- Send candidate information for GO Team elections via Remind and IC Messenger with individual profile links (by April 21)
- Request bottom quartile attendance data from district data strategist for end of school year baseline
- Post complete ELA cohort tracking data online (ELA portion was cut off in presentation)
- Bring ELL/ACCESS data presentation with support from appropriate district department to future GO Team meeting
- Post hiring position for third hourly ELA reading intervention teacher after leveling and budget allocation (September/October timeframe)
- Spend summer with administrative team preparing for 2026-2027 school year

Deonne Malick El-Deiry

- Submit formal request to district data team for bottom quartile attendance data with specific parameters for how data should be delineated
- Lift cluster-level task force discussion to final CAT meeting (April 21)
- Share Midtown Cluster data dig with community

Next GO Team (2026-2027)

- Discuss and consider parent organization coordination structure at first business meeting in Fall 2026
- Review strategic priorities and metrics for the year at first business meeting
- Consider proactive finance meeting with Principal Hollis in fall
- Organize GO Team after July 1, 2026

Current GO Team Members

- Complete end-of-year surveys
- Complete required trainings as soon as possible

- Provide principal feedback

Marquita Moore and Darice Williams

- Continue targeted support through stations during testing week
- Continue small group pull-outs and co-taught class support daily

V. Adjournment

Motion made by: Joshua Griggs; Seconded by: Deonne Malick El-Deiry

Members Approving: 8

Members Opposing: 0

Members Abstaining: 0

Motion Passes

ADJOURNED AT 6:28pm

Minutes Taken By: Heena Patel

Position: Secretary

Date Approved: [Insert Date When Approved]