

District Parent Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes September 24, 2013

Members present: Tori Harvey (Wiley), Pat Faust (King), Jonathan Manton (UMS), Nancy McElwain (Leal), Jaimee Gleisner (Thomas Paine), Janice Mitchell (District), Jennifer Frerichs (District)

Minutes:

Attendees signed in and collected DPAC information folders. The meeting began with introductions at 5:35p.m.. Jennifer Frerichs presented the DPAC member list and reviewed the goals and purpose of the DPAC committee by sharing the District Parent Engagement Policy & Action Statement 8:95. The statement defines to the following task for the committee: the committee examines student and school performance including methods used to encourage parent engagement, recommends how funds are used for District level parent engagement activities, assists and participates in the planning of professional development for staff around building parent-school relationships, provides parents and community members the opportunity to share feedback through discussion and an annual survey, and provides a summative report, posted on the District website, and shared with the Board of Education.

Next, Jennifer Frerichs walked through the documents in the DPAC folder presenting a "State of the District" informational PowerPoint to ensure that all members have a common knowledge of district programs, initiatives and mandates. Members reviewed enrollment numbers comparing 2012-13 enrollments to current numbers. The district increased overall student enrollment by roughly 107 students with numbers at Prairie and UMS increasing the most (123,124 respectively) and Wiley and King decreasing the most (-43, -40 respectively). DPAC members asked if Prairie's increase was due to the Dual Language program but Jennifer stated that it was a combination of the Dual Language program and new students in the neighborhood.

Jonathan asked about the use and availability of Skyward for announcements. He currently receives the weekly announcements from UMS and UHS and has found them to be very beneficial. Jonathan wondered if this was available to everyone or if parents need to sign up. Jaimee stated that she didn't really know what Skyward was for. She received a login and password with no explanation of what it was for or how to use the system. The committee recommended a short "how to" flier be sent with each log-in and password with a contact number for those who have additional questions.

Membership reviewed the "**Cheat Sheet: Comparing ESEA Reauthorization Proposals**". Jennifer explained that No Child Left Behind expired Sept. of 2007 however there has not been an agreed upon reauthorization plan from the Federal Government. We are currently continuing the old NCLB Accountability system until something new is agreed upon. Janice Mitchell inquired about whether students were participating in the Supplemental Educational Services (SES) required under the NCLB Accountability system. Jennifer responded that last year Prairie and Leal both offered SES and around 80 students participated however, most of the eligible

students chose to participate in the 21st century after school programs instead. This year all elementary schools (except Yankee Ridge) are required to offer SES to eligible families and fund them with Urbana's Title I money. The other proposals come from Harkin, Alexander and Kline and contain a variety of changes.

The DPAC members reviewed the process and strategies within the District's 5 year Strategic Plan. Jonathan asked if there was a review and evaluation of the strategies to ensure that they are being completed. Jennifer explained that the strategies are regularly reviewed and annually evaluated to determine which pieces are completed, which need to continue and which components are to be initiated.

Strategy 5: Action Plan 1: The District will approve positive character traits valued by our multicultural community, which are consistent with our positive behavior expectations has been implemented this year. Parents should see evidence of the following character traits within their student's school EC-12 and in conversations across the school year. The character traits are: Respect, Responsibility, Integrity, Cooperation, Compassion, and Perseverance.

Jennifer highlighted several accomplishments of students in our district and several programs: Dual Language (Prairie/Leal) and Splash 21st Century After School Program (UHS, UMS, Prairie, King & Leal).

The Committee watched a 3-minute video about **What are the Common Core State Standards?** (link to video: <http://www.commoncoreworks.org/Page/378>). The District's Project Implementation Timeline for Common Core was reviewed and shows that our district has completed the implementation and curriculum alignment for English/Language Arts, Math, and Technology strands. The Next Generation Science standards have recently been released by the National Committee in their DRAFT form and an Urbana Committee of teachers are reviewing those to make curricular recommendations. Jennifer shared a one-pager about the new performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA) that was legislated under Senate Bill 7 and mandated in the state of Illinois. The PERA eliminates tenure for teachers and uses a sequence of dismissal process for the Reduction in Force (RIF) process. It also requires a new evaluation system for teachers and principals that include a student growth component. This is a "hold harmless" year, which means that the growth component does not penalize a teacher or administrator since we are all still learning the new system. Next year, the full process will go into effect.

The committee reviewed an overview of the new state assessments through the **Partnership for Assessment and Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)**. This past week, the district was invited by PARCC to have some classrooms/ grade levels/buildings pilot the new assessment. The new assessment will be offered both on-line as well as paper/pencil since some districts may not have the ability to provide the technology necessary to conduct the assessment. The assessment is available on desktops and i-pads with some nice accommodation components. Some of the accommodations will not be available this year like the video sign language for hearing impaired students. The school district will provide more information about this recent development in the near future.

DPAC members were given the booklet "**Guide to the Collaborative Framework**" which was distributed to all staff at the beginning of the school year. The document explains how we meet the needs of the whole child using the following district-wide

systems: Response to Intervention (RtI-academic), Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS- Behavior) and Social and Emotional Learning Standards (SEL). The Guide outlines the importance of differentiating instructional for all students.

Jennifer gave a brief overview of committee work on Standards-based report cards for UMS and UHS. Jonathan recommended attaching a half sheet flier to this year's 1st quarter reports to provide parents with an initial introduction to "here are some things that will look different". Using a simple handout may ease parents concerns rather than waiting until the changes have already been made was recommended. Jennifer asked the committee to review the Parent Workshop booklet from 3 years ago and provide feedback regarding interest in creating Parent Workshops for this year. Committee members will talk with other parents and send Jennifer an email with suggestions on the needs of families and community members. Tori stated that a few years ago, Wiley had a "Make-It - Take-It" night for families. The event allowed parents to create materials to use at home with their children to support learning. Tori stated that all parents want the best for their children and want to help them but don't always know how.

Parent Involvement Day is November 21st this year. Jennifer asked for suggestions about how to highlight this day across the district.

The meeting concluded at 6:40 p.m.