

DPAC Meeting Minutes
April 23, 2013

Present: Lashaunda Cunningham, Jonathan Manton, Darcy Silver, Dr. Donald Owen, Jennifer Frerichs

The meeting began at 5:35 p.m. with a review of Strategy #3 of the USD 116 Strategic Plan – **“We will actively engage students and families in all aspects of the learning process”**. The Family and Student Engagement Update that was presented to the Board of Education was reviewed and discussed. A recommendation was made to have the CAFÉ group (Community and Family Engagement) return annually to gather comparative data. The goal would be that this unbiased data would provide each building and the district with ongoing information regarding accomplishments and direction for next steps. Next, the committee reviewed the Action Plans established by the Strategic Planning Committee to determine which tasks have been completed, which ones were on-going and which tasks were still to be addressed. The group agreed that we had completed or were working on many of the tasks set forth by Action Plan 2. A recommendation was made to figure out an appropriate way to share some of the “best practice” strategies that are being implemented in order to support others in the district. A discussion about communication methods resulted in a suggestion to create a Parent Handbook or Reference Guide that would be individualized by school and provide easy to understand responses to questions like “What do I do if....., Who do I contact for.... The Handbook must not be too wordy. Jenny will work to create a template for the Handbook over the summer.

The committee then reviewed Action Plan 3 that looks ahead to our next steps in the Strategic Plan. The main component of Action Plan 3 establishes a Family Engagement Center (FEC) at each building. Jenny explained that we have started these Centers in some of our buildings that have space and that King School has piloted multiple new programs through their Center. The on-going concern of the committee is how to ensure the Family Engagement Centers are utilized and beneficial to the school community. A suggestion was made to focus on utilizing low resource intensity types of programs that could be managed easily. The idea of a Kiosk (as utilized at UHS) was discussed which would provide services that families need and could access easily. The FEC’s could host a variety of Community Services that would be beneficial to families but not require a lot of management or work from school personnel. The vision could be a type of Parent Focused Community Center within the schools. The side benefit to these FEC’s would be an increased familiarity with the school, partnership with community organizations and hopefully an increased comfort level in the schools for families.

The meeting concluded with a discussion about the work of the District Parent Advisory Committee and its role in the future. Participants expressed their support of the continuation of this Committee as is, and believe that the work the committee has done has been evident in the schools in a positive way.

Dr. Donald Owen presented the Committee members with a Certificate of Appreciation for their service and thanked them for their work. The meeting concluded at 6:30 p.m.