

Restructuring meeting Climate Sub-committee 12/3/08
5:30-7:30

Present: Don Owen, Patrick Russell, Deb Tamimie, GayleJeffries, Erin Lodes, Natalee Steffen, Janice Mitchell, Dionne Brown, Melanie Ferchow, Judith Pece

Patrick opened with a review of the information SEL survey: We need to review the information and the questions. What does the information tell us, what additional information do we need?

Climate Discussions:

How can we become a cohesive school? What are things that we can do school-wide? Why don't we have school-wide assemblies in order to build community and set building-wide expectations.

Assemblies that build a sense of community and acclimate the students/set expectations.

Are there school-wide expectations? For students? For staff?

There have been many things that have been done in the past that set building wide expectations:

Character Counts

Rules of the Road – hallway behavior expectations

PBIS was successful while it was supported

Block scheduling provided ways of staggering passing times

Advisory periods – homerooms

Positive Referrals

We (as adults) need to set the clear expectations and hold everyone accountable.

We (as adults) also need to acknowledge what is important to our students. We need to encourage, engage, and also empower students. There has to be some level of student ownership over the climate. (A PBIS/SEL committee with student involvement)

We also need to make the decision based on data – where are the biggest problems? – DR data as well as survey data.

Janice Mitchell shared several of the projects that she has been facilitating that target African American students:

- Partnerships for Urbana Schools and Neighborhoods: the group is working to get things set up before the holidays so that they are ready to go after the holidays.
- Book groups for girls
- MALE Initiative: Math and Literacy Enrichment: teachers being able to give the week ahead agenda: topics for focus. 7th grade math teachers
- Sistas United: with the power to change – will start with an overnight sleepover – open assembly activities focusing on life skills and break out into small groups to focus on how to be flexible in your school environment.
- Urbana Dance Team (36 kids came to practice today) Representation of self, family, school, no detention, no suspensions with consequences.

Parent Involvement/Engagement Discussions:

Provide training for parents on Family Access/Homework Wikis

Lots of discussion about PT conferences:

By only focusing on a few high fliers in team-wide conferences, teams are limiting the number of parents who they can see

Parents state that team conferences are intimidating

There was discussion of three-way student led conferences – encouraged student ownership.

How can we engage parents in a positive way in the first week of school? Move the ice cream social to earlier in the year, set the expectation that teachers attend (this is planned and set by PTA)

Can we take conferences or curriculum nights off site?

In addition to performances that involve students, we could hold curriculum nights... like a curriculum celebration – Egypt night, or China festival...

Parent meetings: food, specific events : math nights, make and take with door prizes

Performance pieces will bring in parents, especially AA parents, and then you can divide them into teams. NAAPID.

How can we encourage parents to come without food, or without the performances, without the bribes? Can we get the parents used to coming to the school and build those relationships?

Where do we go from here?

Should we break into two groups? Climate / Parent Involvement

Wed. 12/10/08 5:30 to 7 pm

Mon. 12/15/08 5:30 to 7 pm

The two sub-subcommittees are:

Parent involvement – Janice Mitchell, Carolyn Jenkins, Chris Bazzell, Deb Tamimie, Dionne Webster, Judy Pece

Climate – Patrick Russell, Melani Ferchow, Gayle Jeffries, Erin Lodes, Natalee Steffen