

District Accountability Committee
Meeting Notes
December 2, 2008

Meeting Called to Order – DAC Chair, Peter Ruh

Welcome & Introductions

Board Report - Ken Roberge gives report on board activities.

Discussion of improvement needed for Review Process –

Jonathan gives brief summary of results of interview night. Those schools needing improvement were mostly in the areas of Family Engagement and more specifically high schools.

Positive Remarks

Enjoyed having the rubric.

Appreciated the paired down version of the summary document.

Suggestions for Improvement

Lane - Should be able to sit on the interview team for your own school or be an interviewee. DAC members are becoming more intimate with the schools that they are interviewing than with the school that they represent. Due in part to the varying degrees of involvement of parents in writing the SIP plans.

Jeff Anderson expresses concerns about results not being distributed to SIT teams. He feels that the report/summary should be distributed via the DAC rep for each school and should not be only given to the principal. It is a public document and should be public. It feels as though we are keeping them from being distributed.

Jeff expresses further concern over the involvement of TIES in the SIP process. It is written in educationese – that requires training to understand or access. It is not approachable by the general public/community. TIES is fine for the educators to use but there should be a translation of the TIES backed SIP plan for public consumption.

(Is the parent community that is not involved in the SIT interested in seeing a document like this?) Kent Cruger (Bear Creek) has a translated version at his school posted for parents to view.

Paula - There should be evidence of decision making. Recommendation to the district that principals lack the networking and collaboration of methods used to solve problems that have been identified. Be systematic about sharing information. What programs are others schools using for this same sort of problem. What successes are they seeing? How are principal sharing this? Jonathan adds that there is an avenue for this in the section “Theory of Action” which is part of the TIES process. Kent Cruger adds that it is a fair question to ask and most principals will have evidence and are they are sharing information at monthly principals meetings.

Chris King – we have to restrict what programs can be used because we cannot support 55 different literacy programs. We have a literacy director who sifts through the programs and comes up with best of those to be implemented.

Barry – plans are written for the principal to work the TIES process and the documents don't necessarily have to be written for an audience.

Timing of the document – too soon into the start of the school year. Tough to get the document together. Too front loaded. Hard to get parental involvement in writing the plan.

Kent Cruger – feels that it is a road map – current format is much better than the previous versions. He used to feel like he was the only one to read it before. Now it is a roadmap that is continually used throughout the year. A living document.

Megen – dates of accreditation – December 1st working back to October for our timeline so there really isn't anything to be done about the timing.

Adam – yes there is a lot on the plate of principals in the first few months of the year but that is part of the job. You get used to it and learn to expect certain realities.

Barry – Look at long term CSAP trends.

Chitra – questions to principals before hand to allow them time to process the question and formulate a meaningful response.

Josh – can we get feedback from the principals about the questions that we asked? Survey should be distributed on interview night. Jonathan adds that he did email a request for feedback to principals and did not receive much of a response.

Climate regarding the SIP plans – are the plans and the process helpful to schools. Kent says yes but he is only one principal, it would be interesting to know whether the other schools feel that way.

Part of the SIT's responsibility to make the SIP transparent

Jeri/Paula – SMART goals – are they really smart? And are they attainable?

Peter asks everyone to cast 3 Votes on topics identified to focus on for changes for next year – go around the table – each person gets up to mark the pages.

Overview of Work Items:

Jeff – Are we fulfilling our statutory requirements? Review of bylaws and Operating procedures. New DAC chairs not knowing exactly what to do because there is not written history of what was done in previous years. This will be a focused and aggressive team that will meet often to attain this goal.

Barry – Destratification – Open Enrollment – schools that are heavily loaded with certain groups – FRL – ELL etc. Reduce stratification – limiting access and opportunity for certain groups to education.

How do you measure stratification? Review the metrics, are they adequate? Have the district plans had an effect on stratification, have they improved? Board vision?

Chitra – large variation in the SIP reports. Schools don't see other schools SIP reports – we are in a unique position of seeing them all. Report on exemplary schools to allow all schools to benefit from the “Best Practices” as well as benefitting new and existing DAC members in what to look for. Consider SIP mentors – based on the schools that are doing well – this must come from the administration. Jim – identifying exemplary processes in the schools not necessarily who does the TIES process best.

Megen – improving community involvement. Sending out a consistent about the review/TIES process and what is expected of a good plan? Frances – if the scope is too big then the product will not be terribly helpful to

anyone. Focus and figure out how to communicate and involve the parent community in a meaningful way? And how to we make sure that the schools create meaningful and attainable goals?

Peter – refining the school report card and what is communicated via the report card. What information do we give to parents to help them make an informed decision about their community school or what school they want their children to attend. A more comprehensive measure that will tell them about the school.

