



MINUTES OF MEETING

GROUP: District Accountability Committee

DATE: Wednesday, March 22, 2017

LOCATION: ESC Board Room

PRESENT:

Amy Stivers	Jill Rickard
Victor Rosales	Christine King
Emma Kasahara	Rachel Bryan
Melissa Rae	Gretchen Smith
Laura Mutton	Cally Hester
Rebecca Talley	Valerie Wassill
Cindi Seidel	Karen Johnson, Chair
Erin Weaver	Connie Bouwman, Administrative liaison
Nevine White	Carrie Warren-Gully, Board liaison
Kirsten Roen	

OTHERS PRESENT:

Clay Abla

1. **Welcome, DAC Business**

Karen Johnson, DAC chair, welcomed those present. The February 15, 2017 minutes were accepted as presented. Karen reminded everyone about the LPS Legislative Breakfast on April 6, and said it is important to have a presence there and have our voices heard. For information and to RSVP, go to: tinyurl.com/2017.

2. **Student Panel**

Clay Abla, director of secondary education invited students to introduce themselves: Tia Decolati, AHS; Paige Hostetter, AHS; Rafael Levy-Diner, AHS; Abigail Armstrong, HHS; Adam Downing, HHS; Reganne Fornstrom, LHS; Mason B, Options HS; and Alyssa P, Options HS.

Clay asked students questions provided by DAC members.

Q. What makes high school special?

- The high school community and the teachers, in particular.

Q. Is there anything missing at your school?

- Would like to have more college information from professional college experts beyond what the volunteers can provide.
- School spirit is not supported at my high school. There are too many limits on cheers and ways to express school spirit.
- Need more college information; could not get an appointment with the scholarship person until after the national deadline for scholarships.
- More unity between schools.
- Classes that allow more opportunities to pursue passions.
- Limited number of classes offered at Options and no sports; must go back to home school for sports.

Q. How have you achieved balance as a teenager?

- I don't. I expected to and want to do it all. It's a juggling act; there's no sense of steadiness. I want balance, but it's not attainable.
- I only allow myself to pick two things at a time to focus on.

- I feel kind of balanced but there is also the pressure to do it all.
- My excitement about classes and activities gives me balance.

Q. Have you been able to pursue your passion(s)?

- No, I had to beg to take French.
- I love history and politics, but the classes I'm most interested in aren't options until later. I wanted those classes earlier as preparation for college.
- The classes I had to take made me more aware of opportunities. Independent Study and other resources made opportunities available.

Q. What about homework?

- Never had homework at Pathways, and not at Options either. I work, and I probably couldn't do both if I had homework.
- I have 3-4 hours of homework a night. The best homework allows you to apply what you have learned. There is lots of busy work that is not worthwhile.
- Homework is not the end result, but the tool to understand the content. I don't think students are doing most of the homework assigned.
- For classes like statistics, homework is helpful because it challenges you to practice on your own to see if you really know the content.
- Math teacher says, 'do the homework if you want to understand math better.' My world languages teacher stopped assigning homework because it really doesn't help to understand the language.
- In IB, outside influences get pushed over on to homework.
- I took sociology because I was interested in the subject, but I also knew there would be very little homework, which was a bonus.

Q. How do you feel about the proposed changes to school start time?

- One hour later would be a little bit easier, especially as a varsity swimmer. I never saw the sun during the winter. A later school start time would help me stay more positive.
- Options already has a 7:40 start time except on late start days.
- Research shows different sleep patterns for teens makes it necessary.

Q. How much sleep do you get now? How much sleep do teens need? How does this connect to school start time?

- Average bedtime for the group was 10:30 pm or later each night.
- I work from 4 pm to 11 pm.
- Elementary school students' brains are wired to start earlier.
- Earlier start time would be bad for club teams using the pool, for example, elementary club teams who practice after the high school teams.

Q. What is a typical day for you?

- MWF, I have four classes with two off hours; TTH, I have full days of classes
- I have a 0 hour class and do homework during third hour. I have 30 minutes for lunch every day.
- I have five classes with no off hours, which is good because I would probably leave and because it compresses the day. There are only 18 students in my classes. I also have a leadership class.
- Because I don't have any off-hours, and because we have a closed campus, I get more done in the 60-70 minute classes than I would otherwise.
- I don't have a scheduled lunch hour; we eat when we can. Students who schedule a full day of classes have to eat in their classes.
- Schedule teaches how to prioritize and manage time.
- (Comment from a DAC student member): If HHS students don't have a scheduled lunch time, they are allowed to eat in fifth hour; other teachers are good about giving time also because they understand kids choose to pack their schedules with no off hours.

Q. What drives you to create the schedule (both life and school) that you have?

- High expectations to be competitive in AP classes to get into a good college, but also to show I am well rounded.
- To get into a good college. Some kids only take classes because they feel they have to, but I've taken some because I want to.

- Since I was eight, I've wanted to join the military. I know more jobs will open up in the military if I get a high school diploma rather than a GED.
- Outside pressure and expectations can make you hate a class.
- Finding motivation is kind of like finding a ghost. Twenty-five percent of high school students don't take part in activities because they don't want to. There's no formula that fits everyone.
- Fear drives motivation because you always have to answer the question, 'what do you want to be?' Expectation to know the answer overrides the ability to just enjoy today.

Q. Is there an experience you have had in high school that has inspired you to look at what's next? Has there been a pivotal time that inspired you?

- I volunteered with Restorative Justice. My counselors allowed me to think of possibilities, taught me to use words to communicate, and to be patient.
- All teachers. Being on a six-week schedule and getting to start new every six weeks.
- Math teacher, advisory teacher, and counselor have listened and helped me to think about next steps.
- Strong friends. I feel that there is a reason why it is better to have teachers rather than computers for instruction, it's about relationships.
- DECA brought me out of my shell, and two varsity sports as a freshman helped change who I am.
- I had a health issue and missed a lot of school, but counselors helped me. Now I want to do something to help others.
- Moving to the US gave me the ability to work toward the American Dream. I moved from Mexico City three years ago.
- Finding teachers with passion who make learning real.

Q. What have you really liked about high school?

- Math classes
- Science
- Meeting people; I recently met someone from South Africa.
- The opportunity to compete.
- The opportunity to lead a team; I am the captain for the varsity swim team. It's crazy to realize this is my last year to be on the team.
- Interactions, the ability to grow. I've loved being able to learn.

3. Board Liaison Report

Carrie Warren-Gully said the decision has been made to postpone any change to the school start times. The Board and administration want to gather more feedback about the possible domino effect changes could have. She emphasized this was just a postponement, not a final decision about school start time changes. Carrie commented that Cherry Creek School District has been in discussion about changing school start times for three years. They will make a change beginning in fall, 2017. Carrie said weekly PLC late start days are still under consideration, with a goal to take action at the April 13 Board meeting. She said this is a separate discussion apart from school start time, and has been under discussion for a much longer time than school start times. Carrie said negotiations between LPS and the Littleton Education Association (LEA) are in progress.

6. Meeting Evaluation and Closure

Karen distributed the meeting evaluation survey and explained that the information gathered each month helps in planning future DAC meetings and evaluating the overall success of DAC that becomes part of its annual report to the Board.

Wrap-up

The next DAC meeting is April 19, 2017.

Submitted by

Kerry Schaper from notes taken by Jill Rickard