



MINUTES OF MEETING

GROUP: District Accountability Committee

DATE: Wednesday, January 16, 2019

LOCATION: ESC Board Room

PRESENT:

Ellie Fajer	Cindi Seidel
Jill Rickard	Mary Michael Hawkins
Libby Stroup	Christine King
Garrett Arbuckle	Jennifer Proal
Victor Rosales	Megan Monroe
Elizabeth Weishaupl	Marcus Morgan
Tonya Brier	Jennifer Hicks
Denise Kelso	Beth Bednorz
Michelle Campbell	Jason Hill
Ashley Miller	Susan Perry
Tamara Nolting	Terese Rainwater
Kelli Eastmond	Sonja Nix
Vicky Salg	Lindsay Houseal
Michele Hanna	Laura Mutton, Chair
Becky Garcia	Tera Helmon, Administrative liaison
Erin Miller	Jack Reutzel, Board liaison
Amy Stivers	

OTHERS PRESENT:

Lyn Bajaj	Melissa Schneider
Melissa Cooper	

1. Welcome, DAC Business

Laura Mutton, DAC chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed those present. The November 14, 2018 minutes were accepted as presented.

2. Equity Initiative

Lyn Bajaj and Melissa Schneider, excellence and equity coordinators, presented information about the equity initiative in LPS. During the last decade, LPS has had ongoing efforts to address equity at the system and school level, but there was no formal equity initiative. In 2016, the book, *Excellence Through Equity* by Dr. Pedro Noguera was used to begin inquiry about excellence and equity. During the past two years, nationally recognized speakers have provided administrators with further information and the excellence and equity coordinators were hired. In addition, LPS established the 100% goal and all LPS staff members were asked to complete an equity observations and experiences inventory. On January 7, 2019, Dr. Noguera gave a presentation to all LPS licensed staff members and principals.

Equity is described as giving students what they need to be successful academically, socially, and emotionally, and recognizing that not all students are the same. Liberation is accomplished when all barriers have been attended to and eliminated. The district's 100% goal cannot be achieved without equity, and equity work is embedded in the work of professional learning communities.

The objectives for the LPS equity initiative include: 1) building system-wide awareness of equitable practices; 2) cultivating a willingness to examine and reflect on biases in order to better serve students; 3) implementing the six themes of culturally responsive education; and 4) developing meaningful

relationships, increase connection, personal agency and pathways, and sense of belonging among all students. DAC members participated in an 'equity walk' that highlighted the variety of life experiences students have. The PowerPoint is attached, along with the "All Means All" resolution adopted by the Board of Education in October 2017.

3. Special Education

Melissa Cooper, director of special education and student support services explained that special education is highly structured with many compliance factors to meet federal requirements. The law includes student and parent rights and the legal issues can be cumbersome. The separation model of students with disabilities receiving instruction in a separate classroom is no longer the typical model. Many students with disabilities receive instruction in general education classrooms with their peers. There are 1675 students with disabilities in the district with a wide range of needs. This is the largest number of students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP) the district has seen in many years, and represents about 10% of the total student population. The reasons for this increased number include 1) more students are identified who need special education services; and 2) more families are choosing to live in LPS because of quality programs. A 504 plan is used for students who need accommodations to access instruction and is not based on learning needs.

The continuum of support for students with disabilities begins with the least restrictive environment or general education classroom. About 72% of students with disabilities are in a general education classroom more than 80% of the time. About 3% of students with disabilities fall into the most restrictive service delivery model and spend less than 40% of the time in a general education classroom. Another 3% of students with disabilities cannot be served in a comprehensive school setting and attend a separate school tailored to their needs. Some of the LPS students who require a separate school due to significant instructional and mental health needs are served at the Nova Center, which is part of the district and is in its second year of operation.

Melissa reviewed the categories of students served in LPS, with the largest category being specific learning disabilities. Speech language impairment and other health impairment are the next largest categories. LPS has a variety of programs and services to serve students including: 1) Child Find, a free service to identify developmental delays in children from birth to age 5; 2) early childhood programs for students with disabilities, offered at both the Village at North and the Village at Ames; 3) deaf and hard of hearing support and visual impairment support; 4) special education teams in each building [special education teacher, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, school psychologist]; 5) continuum of affective needs center based programs, including day treatment; 6) continuum of significant support needs center based programs; 7) special education services in special programs; and 8) Transition services program for students with disabilities age 18-21.

Melissa explained that most of the funding for special education, 84%, comes from the general fund, with 11.5% from the federal IDEA grant, and 2.7% from Medicaid. Other grant dollars provide very limited funding. Special education challenges and opportunities include: 1) continuing to improve outcomes for students, which includes equitable access and opportunity; 2) graduation competencies and requirements; 3) professional development; 4) resources and funding; and 5) growing needs. The PowerPoint is attached.

4. Board Liaison Report

Jack Reutzell, Board liaison highlighted some discussion and action items at the Board meeting on December 13. The high school social studies curriculum resources were recommended after a robust review process by a task force of high school social studies teachers and administration. The Board received an update on the Next and Nova programs. Next provides an avenue for students who have dropped out of school to obtain a diploma and is exceeding its enrollment goal of 60 students, with 43 former LPS students enrolled, along with 34 additional students. The Nova Center serves students with significant learning and mental health needs and provides much-needed resources for LPS students.

The Bond election in November passed with 57% favorable vote, and the district is moving forward quickly with bond work. The Long Range Planning Committee will begin its work on redistricting

soon. The Board had a workshop to discuss the benefits and challenges of the change in school start time and the transportation challenges. DAC will have a presentation on school start time in February.

6. Meeting Evaluation and Closure

Laura 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. She announced that the district is looking for people to serve on the Citizens Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC). Anyone interested should submit a letter of interest and a resume to Nicole Moyer, nmoyer@lps.k12.co.us.

Wrap-up

The next DAC meeting is February 20. Agenda topics will include a budget and legislative update and a school start time update.

Submitted by
Kerry Schaper