



MINUTES OF MEETING

GROUP: District Accountability Committee

DATE: Wednesday, April 20, 2016

LOCATION: ESC Board Room

PRESENT:

Jen Harrison	Shannon Kesselman
Jill Rickard	Cindi Seidel
Nevine White	Emma Kasahara
Cindy Durr	Ashley Miller
Amy Stivers	Lauren Tusa
Madi Perez	Laura Mutton
Victor Rosales	Tammy Harimon, Chair
Laura Mutton	Karen Johnson, Co-chair
Olivier Martin	Connie Bouwman, Administrative liaison
Jennifer Proal	Carrie Warren-Gully, Board liaison
Marcus Bianchi	

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jack Reutzel	Robert Reichardt
Jim Stephens	Brian Ewert
Susan Meek	

1. **Welcome, Approval of Minutes**

Tammy Harimon, DAC co-chair, called the meeting to order. She welcomed those present. The March 16, 2016 minutes were approved as submitted.

2. **Great Education Colorado**

Susan Meek, communications director for Great Education Colorado explained that Great Education Colorado is a nonpartisan advocacy group with grass roots activism. She presented information about investing in Colorado students to best prepare them for the future. The presentation focused on six questions: 1) Why do we care? 2) What does great education look like? 3) Where does Colorado stand in providing resources to schools? 4) Who decides how much we invest in schools? 5) When is someone going to fix this? 6) How can I help?

Susan reviewed school funding in Colorado and cited some adequacy funding statistics. She explained the budget constraints in Colorado that inhibit investments during a growing economy contained in Article 10 Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution. The Colorado Priorities 2016 ballot initiative is a way to support investments in Colorado in the short term and is a first step in a long-term solution to support revenue investment in Colorado. More information is available at greateducation.org.

3. **Board of Education Panel Discussion**

The Board made its annual visit to DAC to discuss topics of interest with members. All Board members except Kelly Perez were present and were joined by Brian Ewert, superintendent. Board members and Brian introduced themselves and invited DAC members to ask questions.

Q. What has the Board discussed concerning the graduation requirements that will be in place for the graduating class of 2021?

A. The Board had an overview presentation on graduation guidelines in January, and a workshop is scheduled in May. The district has a Graduation Guidelines Task Force working to develop the

new guidelines. The guidelines will offer multiple pathways to show competency. Right now the district is working toward compliance with this new legislation. LPS will identify what must be done then determine how to make it work in LPS. Brian said the school paradigm needs to change.

Q. Will the graduation requirements at the three high schools be aligned?

A. Alignment among the three high schools in core subject areas was completed several years ago.

Q. Is the district and the Board looking at other high school models?

A. Work is in the early stages. LPS knows the current model will not be the best option under the new guidelines. Concurrent enrollment is one avenue to get students as far as possible in the 12 years they spend in in the K-12 education setting. Individualized learning is a key factor and innovative work is being done in schools to support student learning.

Q. Will competency demonstrations become flexible with the new graduation guidelines?

A. This is what needs to be fixed. Schools need to allow teachers more time for innovation, and LPS has the capacity to do this. There will be associated costs. Districts need to think broadly about sharing resources with one another. Compliance with the new law is not an option, and the district needs to find ways to do it cheaper and better.

Q. Can the ICAP (Individual Career and Academic Plan) help document competencies?

A. Yes, the ICAP can be useful going forward.

Q. Foreign language education needs to be elevated in schools.

A. Agree. Students that come from other cultures and speak a language other than English can be an asset for all students in the classroom. Ideally, foreign language needs to be taught to preschoolers, and LPS elementary students are asking for foreign language instruction. The US is upside down when it comes to teaching a foreign language.

Q. Concern expressed about PTOs fund raising to pay for teacher points (FTE) at the elementary level. Larger classes are also a problem.

A. Teacher points (FTE) are tied to funding. LPS needs to build a system that works within budget constraints, and the current weighted staffing system is not working well in many schools because of changes in state funding. This is a state-wide issue and LPS is in a better financial position than many other districts. There are inequities in funding.

Jack Reutzler asked DAC members to comment on the recent breakfast with legislators at the Capitol. He heard it was disappointing and asked for suggestions. Carrie Warren-Gully said even though it was frustrating to have so little time to interact with legislators, the LPS community made an impact by the number of people that attended and their interest in talking to legislators. Carrie believes the day needs to be restructured.

4. **Board Liaison Report**

Carrie Warren-Gully, Board liaison said the Board is discussing the 2016-2017 budget, although the School Finance Act (SFA) has not been finalized yet. It is likely that the district will be upside down by about \$300,000 with no new programs. Carrie said there are many end of the year celebration coming in the next few weeks. Board members attended the National School Boards Association (NSBA) convention, which was a good opportunity for networking at the national level. Carrie thanked DAC members for their dedication and willingness to support LPS. She thanked Tammy Harimon for her years of service on DAC.

6. **Meeting Evaluation and Closure**

Karen Johnson 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

This was the final DAC meeting for 2015-2016. The first meeting in 2016-2017 is September 21, 2016. Have a wonderful summer break.

Submitted by
Kerry Schaper