

District Council
Agenda
Nassau Conference Room
January 12, 2016
3:15

Attendees: Cindi Battistoli (elementary teacher rep), Marcella Byrne (support staff rep), Julia Caldwell (student rep), John Farrell (elementary principal rep), Justin Habert (Student Government President), Steve Malkischer (secondary school principal rep), Kerry Maslyn (Todd parent rep), Jay McAnney (support staff president), Leah Mozeshtam (student rep), Natalie Palome (support staff rep), Lois Powell (Superintendent), Vickie Setzer (HS parent rep), Caroline Sung (Hagan parent rep), and Mark Van Horne (secondary school teacher rep).

- Biennial Review of Shared Decision-Making Plan—Lois reviewed the following documents with the committee: shared decision making plan with suggested revisions, site-based teams' and District Council's self assessment results from last June, correlating self-assessment questions that relate to the biennial review questions, and the 2014 Biennial Review that was submitted to the State Education Department. We went through the proposed changes to the plan and members suggested others. We easily reached consensus on the attached version of the revised plan. We then used site-team self assessments to complete the biennial review for 2016. The agreed upon review is also included with these minutes. Lois will put the revised Shared Decision-Making Plan on the next Board of Education agenda for approval and will get the appropriate signatures for the Biennial Review and submit the review to SED.
- Parent Concerns Feedback—Lois shared the District responses to the list of concerns Vickie Setzer spoke about at first meeting. She stated that she hoped the responses did not appear defensive because she did not intend for that to be the tone. She has already shared these concerns with members of the administrative cabinet and had a discussion about communicating more effectively to prevent community members from feeling that they are not being heard. She did, however, state that there are differences of opinion, even among community members, and listening to some vocal people may not be what others in the community want. She also addressed the fact that, in the end, feedback is heard but decisions have to be made by the administration and the Board of Education.

We talked about what we could do to change the perception. Administrators feel that they try hard to communicate and offer opportunities, such as coffees, but get poor turnout from the community. PTA meetings, which used to be a good place to build relationships, have fewer and fewer people in attendance. One parent said that some community members focus on the negative. Someone else suggested having a meeting for parents new to the District. There was some

dialogue about parents feeling that they did want to “bother” teachers and administrators with questions and concerns and expressed that perhaps an overture from the principal or teacher, such as an email or a conversation could help build those relationships. We talked about having a parent liaison that parents could go to and then realized that is really what the site team parent members should be. We will advertise their names to the community and provide contact information. This is a topic that we will continue to think about and try to find opportunities for changing the perception.

- Parent Survey Results—Lois handed out the results, with names redacted, but we did not discuss at this meeting.
- Budget Forum—Lois shared that the budget forum is scheduled for March 12 (Saturday), at 10:00 am. She will get back to the Council on the location. The snow date is Monday, March 14, at 7:00 pm at Todd.

She also announced the forum for January 20th, at which the Superintendent Search Consultant, Dr. Hooley, will speak about the process and seek input via a short survey. All residents (including students) and employees are welcome to attend. The forum will begin at 6:30 pm and will be held in the Todd Dining Hall. The snow date is January 21. A video and the survey will also be available on our website.

- Lois asked that members send agenda items for the March 15 meeting. One member asked that we discuss school lunch.