

## ACE Meeting Minutes

*The purpose of the Advisory Council for Education is to provide a systematic representative public involvement in educational decisions under consideration by the Board of Directors.*

**Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2017  
6:00-8:00 p.m.**

### **Members Present**

Ed Aylesworth, Maggie Bagwell, Ryan Barci, Linda Bollinger, Eric DeJong, Kathy Ehman, Jen Fuller, Yvonne Gallardo, Kari Henderson-Burke, Mike Johnson, Sheri Kelly, Mary Levesque, Brian Lewis, Casey Miller, Will Nelson, Hanna Novy, Mike Ray, Gary Sabol, Chrys Sweeting, Jenny Taylor, Marcy Taylor

### **Members Absent**

Cathy Clark Smith, Lisa Coghill, Pedro Gonzales, Dave McKeller, Kimberly Meno, Nikki Starup, Matt Washburn

### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes were approved for the September, October, November and December meetings. The minutes had previously not been approved due to lack of a quorum at previous meetings.

### **School board policy enhancements and revisions to ACE**

Dr. Sweeting explained the changes to policy and procedure 4110 Citizens Committees and Task Forces. One reason for the change was to make the ACE committee more efficient. It also clarifies the board's intention for the ACE committee, which is commissioned by the board. Dr. Sweeting said she is developing a charter for the committee. She will bring the charter to the next meeting.

### **Data Dashboard**

Presenter: Eric DeJong, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning

Mr. DeJong provided an overview of the data dashboard, a dynamic tool on the district website that shows various forms of district data. One area of the dashboard showed the 2016 Smarter Balanced assessment results in English language arts and math. It also showed the test results by grade level. One committee member asked if the 11<sup>th</sup>-grade test was a requirement for graduation. Taking the 11<sup>th</sup>-grade assessment is not currently a requirement for graduation. As a result, some students have chosen not to take the test and this has affected assessment results at this grade level. However, beginning with the class of 2019, the Smarter Balanced assessment will be a graduation requirement.

The data dashboard is available under "Quick Links" on the front of the district website ([www.asd.wednet.edu](http://www.asd.wednet.edu)).

### **Improvement Planning**

Every school and district department puts together an improvement plan each year. Department administrators gave an update on their respective plans.

## **Indistar Improvement Planning Strategies**

Presenter: Kathy Ehman, Assistant Superintendent

- By June 2017, the district will maintain "full implementation" in 4/7 Office of Student and School Success/Indistar district-level expected indicators.
- By June 2017, the district will reach "full implementation" in 3/7 Office of Student and School Success/Indistar district-level expected indicators.

Ms. Ehman talked about the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the successor to No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Schools are required to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in reading and math assessment scores. If they fail to reach AYP, they are considered to be in "Improvement" and need to develop a school improvement plan. The district is also required to develop a district improvement plan.

The district uses a tool called Indistar to help districts create improvement plans. The Indistar tool focuses on seven principles:

1. Provide strong leadership.
2. Ensure that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction.
3. Redesign the school day, week or year to include additional time for student learning and collaboration.
4. Strengthen the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensure that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous and aligned with the state academic content standards.
5. Use data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data.
6. Establish a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addresses other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional and health needs.
7. Provide ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.

## **Financial Services Strategies**

Presenter: Deb Borgens, Executive Director for Financial Services

- This is a year for reporting the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC). Due to the district-wide emphasis on equity and access, by April 30, 2017 the Financial Services Office, in preparing the CRDC Report, will provide the data from the CRDC report to the District Leadership Team to share/use in training with staff.
- Evaluation of Leadership Team Summer Conference indicated a desire for Skyward Data Mining training. By Nov. 30, 2016, opportunities for this training will be offered/provided to principals and assistant principals which will result in administrators having access to better student information.
- By April 30, 2017, complete analysis of department workload/efficiency to determine need for and additional staff member.
- By May 1, 2017, complete 2007 bond refund process to lower bond rates as a result of refinancing current bond at a lower rate.

Ms. Borgens went through the Financial Services improvement plan strategies. She indicated that the board approved refinancing the bond, which could save taxpayers approximately \$282,000.

## **Teaching and Learning Strategies**

Eric DeJong, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning

- Provide consistent, proactive support and resources to principals and staff for meeting the instructional and program needs of all students.

Mr. DeJong shared what Teaching and Learning is doing to support buildings and schools. DeJong indicated that they started a 6-12 ELA adoption and are reviewing new health and fitness standards.

## **Human Resources Strategies**

Mike Johnson, Executive Director of Human Resources

- Recruit and select high-quality candidates for positions in the district.
- Improve communication and employee access to Human Resources information to increase employee wellness.
- Create clear expectations and performance standards for classified staff members.

Mr. Johnson said that department staff will attend more career fairs to recruit and retain highly effective employees. The department is also working with a new evaluation system, recruiting substitutes, holding a boot camp for new teachers, implementing a new classified evaluation form and working to attract and retain a diverse work staff.

### **Operations Strategies**

Presenter: Brian Lewis, Executive Director of Operations

- Focus on grounds maintenance operations.
- Increase readiness of support staff to respond to emergency events.
- Reinforce Transportation Department relationships with community.

Mr. Lewis explained that the Operation department oversees child nutrition, custodial, maintenance, risk management and facilities. He explained that it's important to have the right people in these roles.

The department has been working on emergency response through the district's Emergency Management and Response Team (EMART). This committee is currently working on reunification during emergencies.

He also discussed efforts to obtain funding via grants to offset the cost of purchasing replacement buses. Sixty percent of the district's fleet is off the depreciation schedule and not generating additional dollars to support school bus replacement. Grant funding, if awarded, would only cover 15 percent of the cost of purchasing a new bus.

### **Communications/Public Relations Strategies**

Presenter: Gary Sabol, Public Information Officer

- Increase communication with our community (external).
- Increase regular communication to our principals and staff (internal).

Mr. Sabol talked about how the department is increasing communication with the community. The district's community newsletter was renamed and redesigned this year to better indicate the focus of the publication. Twitter was added to the district's social media presence and a "Throwback Thursday" feature was started in 2017 to better engage our audience. Guest editorials written by administrators also continue to be published in the *Arlington Times*.

The employee newsletter distribution has been increased to monthly to provide employees with more timely information.

### **SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Exercise**

Presenter: Shari Campbell, Campbell Communications

Ms. Campbell had committee members divide into teams to participate in a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Exercise. She explained that Strengths and Weaknesses are things we can control whereas Opportunities and Threats are what we can influence. She wanted the teams to think of SWOTs related to the district.

#### **Strengths**

- Community engagement and high performing teams
- Adequate fund balance
- Strong leadership and staff
- Steady projected enrollment
- School board longevity
- Arts and sports

- Transportation

### **Weaknesses**

- Bus funding needed for aging fleet
- Lack of continuity in communication between schools and employees, more streamlined, efficient
- Facilities not prepared for growth
- Poor math scores on state tests
- Reactive mode versus preventive mode for some facilities maintenance
- Not able to keep up with work orders for facilities
- Better tell our story (listed in opportunities, but should be internal)

### **Opportunities**

- Hispanic largest ethnic group; opportunity to better connect with them and improve engagement and student achievement
- Partnerships with businesses, especially related to CTE
- Affordable housing, cost of living and community might be advantages to teacher and staff recruitment

### **Threats**

- Educational resources (levy cliff, construction costs, unfunded mandate,)
- Teacher shortage
- Graduation requirements
- Increasing construction costs
- Growth and how to manage it
- Educational resources

### **Revisiting APS Mission**

Dr. Sweeting revisited the APS mission with the committee: "*Arlington Public Schools educates all students, preparing and inspiring them to achieve their full potential.*" She asked the committee to think about the measurability of the mission to help keep the district accountable.

Some ideas included:

- Career, college and life
- Is educating and preparing the same thing? Can we eliminate educating?
- Success. It all depends on what success means to you. Long term success.
- Happiness!

### **Final Thoughts**

Ms. Campbell asked if there were volunteers for a survey sub group. Several committee members signed up for this group. The group will meet an hour before the next ACE meeting.

Ms. Campbell also asked the committee to share any thoughts on the mission with her by Jan. 17.

The meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.

**Next Meeting: Monday, Feb. 6, 2017 at 6 p.m.**