



District Improvement Team (DIT)
Meeting
Thursday, October 8, 2013
5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE:

DIT Members in attendance: April Falcon-Blanco, Theron Brown, Ryan Cowell, Maria Cuervo, Mary (Anne) Daily, Alfonso Fernandez, Katherine Kennedy, Danielle Laborde, Allison Lee, Michelle Marcil, Rhonda McCary, Delia Medrano, Tina miller, Angelique Moulton, Gretchen Holtsinger, Penne, Irvin, Jeff Post, Chris Rice, Isaiah Rodriguez, Karen Rodriguez, Lynn Schneider, Susan Walter

Guests: David Sablatura, Assistant to the Superintendent and Board of Trustees, and LaWanda Coffee, External Funds

Percent of DIT members in attendance: **60%**

CALL TO ORDER:

Superintendent Klussmann opened the meeting at approximately 5:45 p.m., and welcomed all DIT members. All members and guests introduced themselves.

SPRING BRANCH PLAN UPDATE:

Dr. Klussmann updated the DIT on the Spring Branch Plan and affirmed that much work under the plan will occur in the next 18-24 months. He reviewed the process for the development of the Spring Branch Plan, noting that the process began with a task force. The Plan has a single-focused goal, known as Spring Branch T-2-4 which sets forth our ultimate aim for every student as successful completion of some form of higher education. We define higher education as a technical certification, two-year or four year degree, or military training. Everything in the system is being aligned to the goal. We are now at the next step of how we put this work into action. We are introducing a new concept of how to do this work, and that will be through the deployment of cross functional teams.

One area that will require much work is in the area of the teacher evaluation system. The state will eventually do away with the current teacher evaluation system, and we have two choices – (1) go with the new state system, or (2) create our own. Based on the DIT decision last year to develop a local appraisal system, most of our work will be on the teacher appraisal system. The bulk of the work sits with the DIT, so most of it will be done here. Some will be in the Cross Functional Team. We will have an opportunity to look at the state system. The law states that the DIT is the group that needs to guide this work. Others (such as the cross functional team) can be involved, and all CITs will need to be involved. We would use the same process to engage them as we did in development of the T24 goal. As part of the State's NCLB waiver, we won't have schools labeled as AYP, but part of the waiver says that the state has to have an appraisal system

with student achievement/performance as a direct factor. (Aldine has developed a model we can look at.)

Dr. Klussmann gave a presentation (see attached) that was provided recently to the SBISD Board of Trustees. Driving Results, he noted, is critical.

As part of the presentation, Dr. Klussmann reminded the DIT that our current metric for completion of higher education is 36% for the 2- and 4- year degrees, based on when we started the plan. The data looks at a six year timeframe for higher education completion. While 36% is better than the 30% national average and 21% state average, it is not acceptable for us. Our highest performing school is at 68%. Dr. Klussmann also confirmed that being ready for higher education is not a high school-only focus. About 85% of our work to reach the goal will be on the “getting kids ready” (PK-12) piece, about 10% on “getting kids to” higher ed, and about 5% on “getting kids through.”

On the “getting kids through” work, our research concludes that about 80% of our students attend 10 different universities. We hope to work with these universities closely to establish strategies for how they will better support our kids through to completion.

For most school systems, Dr. Klussmann noted, the goal is only on the percent of students graduating and/or passing the state test. Our goal is beyond that, and we want to be sure we don't close any doors for any of our students. This is why one of our five critical measures focuses on the percentage of students taking the SAT or ACT.

During the presentation, DIT Members posed the following questions:

Question: How do we track kids going to college?

Answer: We use the National Clearing House, which works with about 80% of universities. While it's not totally comprehensive, it enables us to assess trends.

Question: Are any other districts doing this?

Answer: Some systems are talking about this, like Pharr San Juan Alamo, but we have not identified another school system with a single focus. Most are more compliance driven.

Question: What are the top 10 schools our kids are attending?

Answer: HCC, University of Texas, UH, Sam Houston State, Texas Tech, Lonestar College, Texas A&M, UH Downtown, Steven F. Austin and Texas State.

As the presentation continued, Dr. Klussmann spoke about the various data points measured as part of our critical measures. We believe our SAT/ACT saturation point will be about 93-95%, so we still have some room to grow, though we are far ahead of the state average of 69%.

Our enrollment in higher education numbers are trending downward, and we are working on this piece as we want to see it upwards of 80-90%. For example, we are launching a project with HCC on a better enrollment process for our students.

Dr. Klussmann reviewed the TRIPOD survey that point to the types of things we believe make for great teaching and strong relationships, noting that we need really supportive relationships if we are to move the needle on T24. This year we will give the survey in grades 3-12. This is unusual data for a school system to track, and we are still learning how to use this best to move our system forward. When asked about how we gauge for Teach for America teachers, Dr. Klussmann answered that they would be gauged just like any other teacher. We hired about 300 new teachers this year. System-wide, we have about 50 TFA teachers.

Dr. Klussmann stated that we would talk more about the Internal Accountability Plan at the next meeting.

Dr. Klussmann reviewed the Cross Functional Team (CFT) process noting that they will be a way to re-engineer what we do, and that this is a different process from the last five year plan where we had a lot of taskforces doing the work. The model is based on research out of Harvard as well as our experiences with our Bond Program and the SKY Partnership. The teams will focus on: leadership pipeline, driving results, Spring Branch To and Through, culture, and teacher development/evaluation. This team's work will merge with the DIT. They will support the DIT work as researchers and the "legs" for how the DIT works on teacher evaluation. On October 23, the Board of Trustees will adopt the charge statements for each CFT and the roster of individuals who will serve on each team. There will be two Trustees on each team. While we will not have teachers directly on the teams, due to meeting time that would require them to be out of the classrooms, they will be involved through focus groups. CITs will have the opportunity for input.

Affirmation of DIT work on Teacher Evaluation:

Upon completion of the presentation, Dr. Klussmann did a formal check to confirm the DIT's comfort level with working on the teacher appraisal system. He posed this question, "Is everyone comfortable with the teacher appraisal being the most significant work for the DIT for the next 18-24 months?" The DIT members unanimously answered affirmatively, "Yes."

Questions posed around the teacher evaluation process included the following:

Question: How will going from one evaluation system to PDAS to a third system over a 6 or 7 year period work?

Answer: The issue is that the state necessitates this change. We have to change either way. Dr. Klussmann further noted that teachers and principals say the current system is very time consuming.

Question: Is this federal or state control issue and are we required to give in on this?

Answer: The state says use theirs (not local control) or develop our own (local control). However, the state sets the parameters, so we can control how it looks.

Question: Will we have a one-size fits all model?

Answer: We will start with a blank slate. We have to follow state components, but we will be able to do what we want so long as we are aligned. For example, for assessing what student performance looks like, we can do what we want, so long as we can defend our model. We don't want to be so complex that the system doesn't help identify how to help improve performance.

Teacher appraisal components should be the components of good teaching and not overbearing for the ones doing the appraisal or those being appraised.

Question: Do you perceive us continuing with digital domain?

Answer: It is hard to imagine a system that would not include technology.

Our biggest question – what is great teaching and how do we assess if great teaching is going on.

Dr. Klussmann noted that we may not have a November meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at approximately 7 p.m.