



**District Improvement Team (DIT)
Meeting
Thursday, February 7, 2013
5:30– 7:30 p.m.**

ATTENDANCE:

Lynne Barry, Theron Brown, Linda Buchman, Anne Daily, Katherine Dawson, Allison Fowler, Harrison Lee, Michael Mackey, Delia Medrano, Reesa Nevarez, Gretchen Papazis, Lindsay Taylor, Cira Trevino, Susan Walter, Lisa Weir, Dr. Klussmann

Percentage of DIT in attendance: 48.5%

Call to Order

The February 7, 2013 meeting of the SBISD District Improvement Team was called to order by DIT Co-Chair Lynn Barry. Following the opening welcome of DIT members, Co-Chair Barry introduced Dr. Klussmann to launch into the meeting agenda.

District Update/Spring Branch Plan Update

Dr. Duncan Klussmann, SBISD Superintendent of Schools provided an update on the Spring Branch Plan. Superintendent Klussmann reviewed the Spring Branch T-2-4 goal, which challenges the system to double the number of our students successfully completing a technical certification or military training, or a 2- or 4-year degree by 2017.

Dr. Klussmann explained that the work required to reach this goal may be segmented into three main focus areas – Getting students **Ready**, Getting students **To**, and Getting students **Through** higher education. Eighty-five percent of the work will be in the “ready” category –grades PK-12. The work in the “to” initiatives will be in both elementary and secondary to build awareness about higher education options, and the “through” will be focused on partnerships with higher education to better support our students at their higher education institutions, as well as other initiatives to support our graduates as they pursue higher ed. The goal of the plan, he noted, is to create focus in the system.

Dr. Klussmann referenced critical and secondary measures. Two critical measures for the “ready” piece are (1) on grade level for higher education, and (2) graduation rates. He provided examples of secondary measures as well. System-wide, it was noted that every campus has room to improve. The campus with the highest percentage of students completing higher education is 68%, while the average for the state is 21.9%. Our goal is for 93-95% of students to take the SAT/ACT. It was also noted that the percentage of students involved in higher ed ranges from 68-74%.

Allison noted that she likes the increased emphasis on FAFSA and encouraged the college-focused Parent U.

Harrison questioned what kind of manpower is behind this goal. Dr. Klussmann responded that all 4500 employees are focused on T-2-4 success and that the district is working on aligning resources, shifting culture, and examining ways of changing roles, for example, that of counselor/academic advisors to reach the goal.

Dr. Klussmann was also asked about the impact on school budgets to which he answered that the reality is that we won't see the \$37 million in state budget cuts restored and that the district will need to consider possible redesign of how we spend our \$250 million budget. He further noted that campuses are already doing more and, sometimes, different things toward the accomplishment of the goal.

Delia noted that she has come from HISD and Lee High School where there was a college center. Dr. Klussmann noted that we do have college rooms but need to improve in reaching out to kids rather than waiting for them to come to us for help.

Gretchen questioned how the district is explicitly working to recover dropouts. Dr. Klussmann noted that this may not be addressed specifically in the plan, as the plan is not intended to necessarily address everyday routines that should already be in place. In the case of dropouts, we have a graduation coach who works directly with students to prevent and recapture drop outs, and programs like night school and Operation Graduation, to help prevent and recapture such students. Another question was asked around vocational education.

Dr. Klussmann noted the need for the plan to create focus and to help changing the culture of the district.

Cira questioned how one-way dual language has impacted the district. Dr. Klussmann answered that we are looking at the performance of our students in the program to make sure they are being well prepared through this program. We are only now having students who experienced one-way dual language throughout elementary years reaching middle school. We are studying the program and will make adjustments if the program is not meeting its intended outcomes for our bilingual learners. Dr. Klussmann further noted that we need to push our students in bilingual programs to a high level of rigor and that we have to be sure we are true to the model. To reach T-2-4, we need our students to go far beyond basic English skills. Dr. Klussmann also referenced the need for the system to consider how we program for after school, summer school and extended day/extended year programs.

Cira also questioned whether we saw a drastic drop in student achievement when Reading Recovery ended. Dr. Klussmann answered that the program impacted a small number of students and that Reading Recovery is a very costly program as it is one-on one. We may see

some decreases in student performance because we had to reduce specialist positions due to budget cuts.

Allison spoke to the large number of students in the middle – non special education students. She perceives that there may be a group of students falling through the cracks because fewer students are being identified for special education under the law.

Teacher Evaluation.

In the late 1990's the district had its own teacher appraisal system. The district then went with the state's PDAS system. Now, the state has said it will do away with the system as soon as possibly next year. However, there is a possibility that this will be delayed. Dr. Klussmann noted that this provides a great opportunity for us to develop own system. The DIT would be at the core of being involved in the process with others from the district. It would be a fairly sizeable group. The DIT would have to agree to take on this project. Lisa Weir noted that PDAS doesn't match to what we are saying matters – PDAS doesn't align with our philosophy and where we are going as a district. Delia suggested a model based on EAR – engagement, alignment and rigor. Gretchen noted that the previous system was too open-ended and that we need a hybrid.

Dr. Klussmann asked if the DIT would be interested later this spring and/or next year to be involved in this process.

Cira asked if we have seen improvements in teaching quality as a result of the current system. Dr. Klussmann noted that it probably hasn't driven what we want to drive in terms of priority in the system. Dr. Brown noted that in HISD, merit pay is part of the teacher evaluation system and questioned whether the state would include in the future and would SBISD. Dr. Klussmann noted that SBISD would believe in a team-based approach to merit pay consideration. Harrison noted the system in the Washington D.C. schools.

Following this discussion, the DIT agreed to work on the district's teacher evaluation program.

Legislative Update

Dr. Klussmann updated the DIT on the State Legislature, which has recently begun its session. Jimmy Don Aycock is Chair of the House Committee on Public Education, and Senator Dan Patrick is his counterpart in the Senate. This session will focus on finance and academics. Dr. Klussmann reviewed the lawsuit that districts won overwhelmingly and noted that the lawsuit is now at the state Supreme Court level. If the ruling is upheld, the process to create a new model for state funding of education would revert back to the legislature. This could be 4-6 years from the time of the ruling.

Dr. Klussmann reminded the DIT members that the local board of trustees has no control over revenues under the current system. While we would previously have been able to raise revenue without going to the voters, we can no longer do that. At this time, we anticipate that we will get \$2-3 million in new revenue over the next two years. We don't anticipate much movement

until the ruling comes out from the Supreme Court, and then there would most likely be a special session to address school funding.

With regards to academics, lawmakers have gotten the message about less testing and less high-stakes testing and that what is wanted are plans to help students be prepared for the highly skilled 21st century work force. Currently in Texas, about 85% are achieving high school graduation and 21% are achieving a 2- or 4-year degree.

Dr. Klussmann reviewed the history of how we have gotten to where we are today. A few years ago, the TAKS exit test was the state assessment/requirement for high school graduation. There were three graduation plans – distinguished, recommended and minimum. Then the 4x4 was put into place, requiring four years each of math, science, English and social studies. In the next session, it was made law that students had to graduate on the Recommended Plan to qualify for a four year Texas university. Finally, in the last session, the end-of-course exam model was put into place. While good in concept, the way the law was written, students would have to pass all 15 EOCs to graduate on the Recommended Plan. This, in turn, creates the scenario where out of state, homeschooled and private school students can be considered for UT, for example, with a lower standard of courses required than Texas public school students.

We want to give students an opportunity to stretch themselves and try new things, with high rigor, but more choices and options in their curriculum. Legislation introduced as Senate Bill 3 and House Bill 5 will be what we are watching. In HB5, the proposal would reduce required EOCs from 15 to 5. Dialogue on grades 3-8 is just beginning. Being proposed is a model that would create one graduation plan with endorsements in areas such as STEM, Business and Industry, and Fine Arts, with fewer credits required by the state. With regard to the top 10%, nothing will change until the UT discrimination case is settled.

Lisa questioned where we are regarding the amount of testing. Our current position is that we chose locally what assessments to give. On Monday, the Board of Trustees will decide what our position will be regarding testing.

Dr. Klussmann also noted that Common Core is impacting the development of instructional materials and research which go to the 46 states that have adopted these standards. As a result, the textbook industry and others will leave Texas out, with a potential impact being a drain of good instructional materials for Texas.

Leadership Pipeline.

Elliott Witney, SBISD Executive Director for Strategy and Innovation, introduced the DIT to the district's new Leadership Pipeline. He noted that the Leadership Pipeline represents a coordinated effort to develop leadership in the system and a model for SBISD to constantly be developing leadership from within. It also provides a model for succession planning.

Harrison questioned how big Elliott's department is. Elliott noted this is not a solitary effort, but rather a systemic effort to engage everyone in the work.

Dr. Klussmann noted that teacher evaluation and leadership development are important to focus any organization on human capital.

DIT Election Update

Linda Buchman gave a brief update on the DIT elections noting the timeline for DIT Campaigning period for staff is Feb 11-21, with elections to be held Feb 22-28 and announcement of DIT members the week of March 4. For parents, the DIT nomination forms are due by February 16, with the DIT lottery to be held on February 28. Announcements of parents will also be made the week of March 4.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.