



District Parent Council

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 18, 2019

BVSD Education Center

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Agenda

1. Welcome — Bob Kanick, Co-Chair
2. Introductions — Council Members
3. Purpose of the Council — FP Fournier, Co-Chair
4. District Updates — Rob Anderson, Superintendent
 - a. Margaret Crespo, Area Supt., Southwest Support Network
 - b. ~~Robbyn Fernandez, Area Supt., East Support Network~~
 - c. ~~Sam Messier, Area Supt., Northwest Support Network~~
5. ~~Q&A — Council Members~~
6. School Board Candidate Forum: **October 2nd.**
7. Next regular meeting: **November 20th.**

Meeting Evaluation

- DPC Rating: 8.6 out of 10 (sample size ~20% of participants)
- Net Promoter Score: +33 (a satisfaction index ranging from -100 to +100)
- Best impression: the great turnout
- Worst impression: Not enough time for questions or parent sharing
- Additional feedback and questions in appendix

Actions Items

- Rob, Margaret – Please email your slides to the [DPC members](#).
- DPC – Please email your future topics of interest, other input to the [DPC chairs](#).
- DPC – Please email [Mandy Nuku](#) to volunteer or submit questions for the candidate forum.
- Bob, FP – Please adjust the format of the next regular meeting to feature more dialogue.

3. Purpose of the Council (FP Fournier)

The word ‘council’ may give DPC members the impression that their role is to give BVSD advice. Unfortunately, almost none of us—the Superintendent included—act on advice unless it confirms something we already believe. A partnership with Rob is the more attainable goal, but a mutual relationship does require a give-and-take, and an effort at genuine communication.

Members can join the council simply to listen in, or to relay district information, but a more valuable purpose may be to seek influence over insight, and therefore to find the courage to engage the community you represent in order to speak up on their behalf. FP shared his desire to see more children achieve their dreams despite their lack of resources or “gifts”, and asked other members to describe their own motivation and topics of interest.

Presentation slide

Purpose of the Council

To give the district advice?
To partner with the Superintendent...

- 1) Quid pro quo
Insight ⇔ Influence
- 2) Communication effort



Share your thoughts!

Commonly Discussed	Rarely Discussed
Curriculum / Schedule	Assessments / Impact
Funding / Budget	Open Enrollment
Strategy / Organization	Transportation
Ed Tech / Privacy	Summer Learning
Bond / Innovation	Nutrition / FRL
Engagement (FACE)	Climate / Safety

4. District Updates (Rob Anderson)

State Assessments

Based on overall academic performance, the State of Colorado gives each school district a rating ranging from “Accredited with Distinction” to “Turnaround”. Last year, we received the highest rating; this year, the second highest. BVSD continues to outperform peer districts of comparable size, but better benchmarks may be found out of state.

The superintendent is pleased with the high level of test participation, the high level of achievement overall, and particularly with the high school scores (PSAT/SAT). However, significant disparities remain; for example, while 60% of primary students meet Colorado’s expectations overall (average CMAS test score ≥ 750), 70% of students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL) do not.

Rob also presented year-over-year growth data, and pointed to a few trends. While elementary and high schools tend to outperform the state (medium growth percentile >50), middle schools tend to underperform (MGP <50). Mirroring the achievement data, disadvantaged students generally have a slower growth rate than their classmates in the district. School-level data is available [here](#).

Strategic Initiatives

Initiative 1a: “Aligned instruction” – The [Colorado Academic Standards](#) are a set of teaching and learning expectations which the State has just updated. To reduce disparities between classes or schools, and to support teachers and students more efficiently, BVSD will start prioritizing which and when standards are to be taught.

Initiative 1b: “Best practices” – Teachers naturally approach the curriculum differently; some approaches may be more successful than others. BVSD will start researching best practices and provide professional development around them.

Initiative 3a: “Customized supports” – Like students, different schools have different needs: some are doing very well on their own and require little input, others require more. BVSD will start customizing its system of school supports accordingly.

Initiative 3c: “Effective spending” – Historically, it hasn’t always been easy to tell if and when a program had achieved its intended results. BVSD will start monitoring the academic return on investment (AROI) of all its programs, and terminate the ineffective ones.

Initiative 5a: “Coordinated partnerships” – Many organizations can or do provide services to our community, but these efforts are not always concerted. BVSD will start coordinating and aligning these external resources with its core objectives.

Initiative 6a: “School culture” – The district is receiving feedback from some families that discipline—for example around bullying—is not always enforced equitably, and to the detriment of student minorities. BVSD will start reviewing and adjusting its practices to ensure fairness.

Miscellaneous Topics

Proposition CC: This is a ballot measure to increase state funding for schools. The Board hasn't taken a position yet, but if they favor it, the district will spread the word and try to elicit support. The League of Women Voters is hosting an informational event in mid-October; if interested, please contact [Mandy Nuku](#) for more information.

Air conditioning: Financially and even logistically, the district could not equip every school with central air by the beginning of the school year. Mitigation measures were implemented (e.g., swamp coolers) and the Superintendent is committed to solving the problem ASAP. The district plans on opening up community conversations this spring to discuss the school calendar and look into the option of a later start date.

Immunization compliance: A few parents expressed concern about the relatively low vaccination rates in Boulder. In turn, the superintendent informed us of the elevated risk of a measles outbreak in our schools, and the costly consequences it would have for our community. On the other hand, Colorado law allows for a variety of immunization exemptions, and the district respects the rights of all citizens regarding immunization and complies accordingly.

Assessment day: The district acknowledges that there were legitimate concerns raised over the implementation of the elementary school day, specifically the inconsistent implementation between schools and the lack of clarity to the community that this was not a full instructional day for students. The superintendent understands the burden that was placed on families with two working parents, and he's committed to revisit the issue with teachers.

Pearson data breach: Pearson is a BVSD technology vendor which provides AIMSweb, a tool used to screen students for an IEP (Individualized Education Program). The data breach, which is under investigation by the FBI, concerned the unauthorized release of student names and birth dates. There is no information yet on how or why the data was breached, but the district is taking the incident seriously, and Pearson is making amends to families with a free credit monitoring offer.

Students with autism: To the maximum extent possible, students qualifying for special education services (SPED) are integrated into the regular classroom. For students with autism who require more services, the district offers [intensive programs](#) at an increasingly large number of schools. The superintendent understands that this overall approach may not work for every student, and special circumstances are best handled on a case-by-case basis. Finally, Rob mentioned that through the bond program, Halcyon—a school highly specialized in SPED—will soon be rebuilt.

Vaping restrictions: The superintendent is very concerned about the extent of teen vaping and its serious health consequences. The district is generally supportive of government measures aimed at curbing the illegal use of e-cigarettes, including the banning or taxing of certain flavored products, which many view as targeting children.

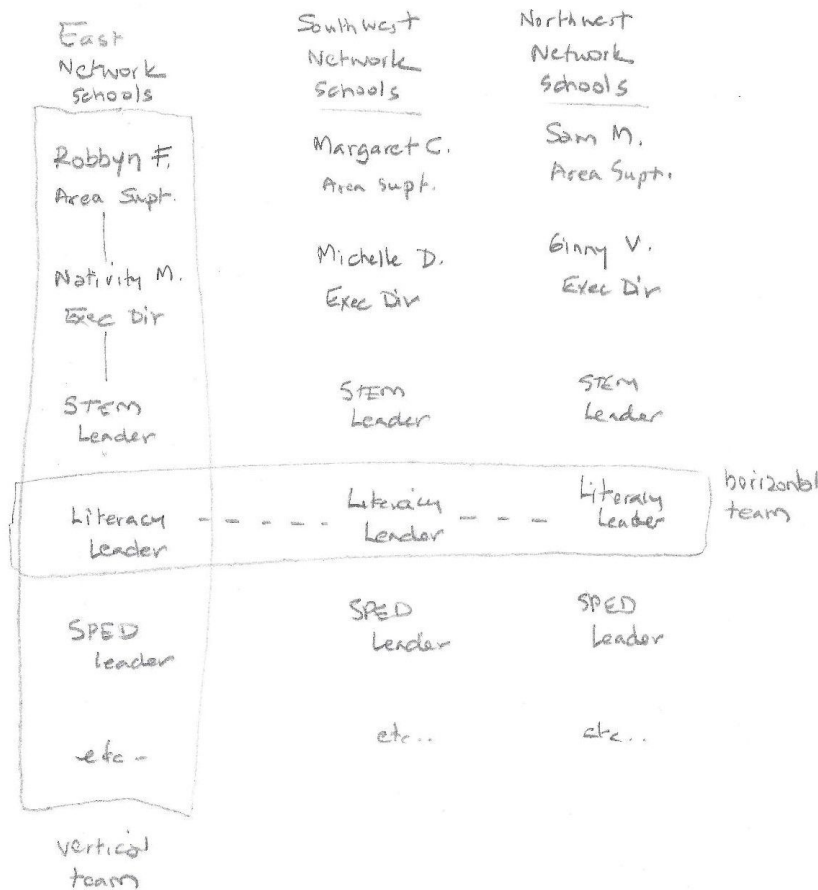
Teacher salaries / retention: There was a brief discussion of the enviable position the district finds itself in with regards to hiring. In part because of its relatively high teacher salaries, BVSD never struggles to hire and retain well-qualified teachers, with experience to boot.

4a. New Support Network (Margaret Crespo)

In the past, two assistant superintendents—one at the elementary and one at the secondary level—shared a central team of district professionals to support their respective schools. Going forward, schools are grouped in three geographic regions—East, Southwest, and Northwest—each headed by an area superintendent and supported by a dedicated regional (or vertical) team of specialists.

This new structure will provide more responsive, more flexible, and more customized support to a smaller number of schools than before. At the same time, team leaders in the various functional areas (SPED, literacy, STEM, etc.) will ensure that, when necessary, efforts are also coordinated across regions (i.e., horizontally).

Illustration of vertical and horizontal teams



6. School Board Candidate Forum (Mandy Nuku)

On **Oct. 2nd**, in lieu of a regular meeting, the DPC will partner with the League of Women Voters to host a forum, and give our community an opportunity to meet and evaluate the School Board candidates. Mandy asked for a few volunteer ushers to hand out notecards and collect questions from the public. FP also encourages members to pre-submit questions via [email](#). More information to come...

Minutes submitted by FP Fournier, 9/20/19

Appendix A: Meeting Feedback and Questions

Feedback

- Email info about exact meeting address + construction updates.
- Your meeting was excellent.
- Very pleased with the overall presentation and turnout / representation.
- I enjoyed meeting you last night – thank you for your presentation!
- Wow, I was impressed by the turnout!
- Missed parent sharing.
- While I appreciate wanting the intros and peoples' reasons for joining, it needed to be much shorter to allow for questions from the community.
- Please allow more time to resolve open questions instead of having speakers dominate the discussion with settled business.
- Looking forward to target single topics more in depth.
- Thanks again for your service.

Questions / Interests

Enrollment

- Enrollment trends by school.
- Incoming kindergarten enrollment.
- How is open enrollment factored in [the planned capacity of schools?]
- I'd love to see more information regarding open enrollment, school tours/open house schedules.
- Student enrollment process (open enrollment, change of mind, overall process, etc.)
- Definitely the connection between transportation and open enrollment and the basic inequity of not having transportation to open enrollment schools.

Curriculum

- The Colorado Academic Standards are written in a bureaucratic, abstruse manner. What leadership role might BVSD take in formulating standards that are inspiring and motivating?
- Can we make sure that parents and students also have a common understanding of what the learning standards are?
- What can BVSD do to make high school English classes more “boy-friendly”?
- Learning in an “Age of Distraction”: What can BVSD do to foster students’ ability to concentrate and do deep work?
- What can BVSD do to make apprenticeships and vocational training more “front and center” as viable paths to opportunity?
- Transportation students not arriving to school on time.

Gaps

- What does BVSD believe are the root causes of the achievement gaps, and which strategies specifically target these causes, as opposed to things that might “float all boats”?
- FRL: are we serving these students?

- Students come to the classroom with significant differences in general background knowledge/cultural literacy. What can BVSD do to ensure that every student has consistent exposure to classroom experiences that are content-rich so that all students, regardless of their family situation, can steadily build their knowledge base?
- Closing the achievement gap - specifically working with summer school programs.
- Paras & tutors: how are they trained? How will this work with the new strategy?

Health

- What can BVSD do to support the emotional health of students?
- Air quality around schools and [smoking?] students.
- I would like to introduce the topic of allowing parents to attend / experience a lockdown drill.