

Educational Improvement Committee

Minutes for the Meeting of October 7, 2019

Attendance

From STPA: Jocelyn Alejandro, Lilia Liguez

From Rising Scholars: Fernando Andrade, Christopher Wiley, Amy Pena, Brian Arriola

From World Scholars: Kimberly Garza, William Prock, Patty Herrera, Jeffrey Pierce, Isabel Hernandez, Virginia Leonardelli

From Medical Professions: Mayela Solana, Jose Colon, Patricia Hernandez, Gilberto Arreola, Hanani Vasquez

From Health Professions: Maria Nevares, Fernando Almaguer, Lois Bauer, Yael Leal, Stephany Bauer, Ileana Garcia-Spitz

From Science Academy: Michelle Guajardo, Elizabeth Arriola, Lorena Madrigal, Michael Overton

Parent Representatives: Maria Alicia Garcia (WS), Elena Rashid (STPA)

Business and Community Representatives: Omar Rodriguez, Dr. Patricia M. Blanco

Student Representatives: Michael D. Garcia (WS), Noor Rashid (RS)

From Administration: Dr. Marco A. Lara, Jr. (Superintendent), Mr. Jeff Hembree (Deputy Superintendent)

NOTE: All reports and documents referenced in the Minutes below are to be found in the relevant EIC folder, http://www.stisd.net/about_us/district_councils___committees/educational_improvement_council___e_i_c

Minutes

1. Welcome: EIC Chairperson Virginia Leonardelli called the meeting to order shortly after 5:00 PM, and welcomed the new and returning members of the Committee.
2. Election of EIC Secretary: Mr. Jeffrey Pierce of World Scholars was nominated to be EIC Secretary; no other nominations were proposed. After he agreed to accept the nomination, Mr. Pierce was elected Secretary by acclamation of those present.
3. EIC Calendar of Meetings: Dr. Marco Lara, Superintendent, announced that EIC would be meeting quarterly instead of monthly going forward. The next EIC meeting dates will be January 13th, March 9th, and May 11th. Dr. Lara explained that only four EIC meetings were being scheduled “for reasons of allowing for better attendance by its members, and to permit more comprehensive agendas at each meeting.” Any additional meetings of either the full EIC or of its subcommittees will be announced as needed.

4. Federal Programs Report for 2019-2020: Mr. Jeff Hembree presented this information, which documents the final amounts allocated to federal programs for STISD and each of its campuses. (See EIC website for full details.) Mr. Hembree explained that allocation of federal funds is based on a combination of administrators' input, campus plans, department needs/requests, and special needs assessment. An important aspect regarding allocation of federal funds is that it is also based on free/reduced lunch information from families, which continues to be an issue at some campuses. "We are still struggling to get these forms," Mr. Hembree said, "with 40% being the threshold percentage that would allow federal funds to be used for all students on campus. Right now, STPA and Science Academy are right at that percentage; if they fall below 40%, then federal funds at those campuses could only be used for qualifying disadvantaged students." He indicated that efforts will continue to ensure that all families have turned in their free/reduced lunch information to their respective schools.
5. Annual Needs Assessment Reports for 2018-2019: Mr. Hembree presented a number of related reports, which are summed up as follows:
 - a. 2019 State Accountability Report: STISD and each of its campuses were awarded "A" ratings. "Student Achievement" and "School Progress" ratings are based on STAAR scores, which Mr. Hembree suggested was a flawed measure but nonetheless the one that the State uses. The "Closing the Gap" rating is based on how well disadvantaged students do compared to regular students. STISD also got the "Post-Secondary Readiness" distinction, while each campus earned other additional distinctions. (See EIC documents for full details.)
 - b. AP/IB Programs Report: AP scores and accomplishments are holding steady (that is, passing rates for our students are equivalent to the national passing rates) despite rising participation by our students in AP classes and examinations. The International Baccalaureate program at World Scholars has been dropping the past couple of years; Mr. Hembree said these rates need to stay up!
 - c. Graduation Report: Mr. Hembree reported that 99.7% of all STISD seniors graduated Distinguished with Endorsements. "Now," he said, "what should we look at?" in terms of better measuring the readiness of our graduating seniors for post-secondary work and study. This is a question that will be considered further as we go forward.
 - d. Gender/Ethnicity Report: The main takeaway from this report is the strong gender imbalance on certain campuses. For instance, our two health care-related high schools have considerably more female students than male ones; while Science Academy has the opposite ratio. This raises the possibility of a future intervention by the federal Office of Civil Rights. "The federal government does not care about historical trends regarding gender inequality on campuses," said Mr. Hembree. They must try to address these imbalances, otherwise D.C. will eventually take notice and require corrective action."

- e. Demographics and Home Districts Report: This is a relatively straightforward analysis of the demographic breakdown of our student population and their home district origins, both for STISD as a whole and for each campus.
6. There being no further business or discussion, *Chairperson Leonardelli* called for a motion to adjourn. *Micheal Overton* moved to adjourn, and it was seconded by multiple members. *Mrs. Leonardelli* then adjourned the EIC meeting at 5:45 PM.

The STISD Educational Improvement Committee will next meet on January 13th, 2020, at 5:00 PM at the BLA Lecture Hall in Mercedes.

Jeffrey Pierce
EIC Secretary
December 10, 2019