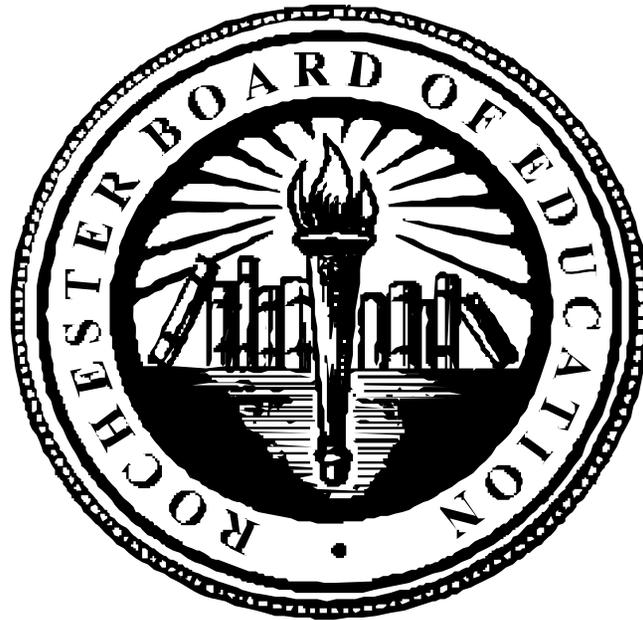


OFFICE OF AUDITOR GENERAL



Office of Parent Engagement Audit

October 2015



Office of Parent Engagement Audit Executive Summary

OBJECTIVE

To evaluate the Office of Parent Engagement for effectiveness of activities and efficiency of operations.

BACKGROUND

The Office of Parent Engagement's mission is to reach parents by responding to the needs of parents, encouraging partnerships, advocating on the behalf of parents, collaborating with community partners, and helping parents support their students to achieve academic success. The District encourages parent involvement in their students' education and has developed the Office of Parent Engagement with the intent to provide parents with resources to enable their participation. Parent Representatives, Parent Liaisons, Outreach, Parent University, and school-based support have been provided to support parents and encourage parent participation. The District budgeted \$659K and \$735K for the Office of Parent Engagement for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years, respectively. The budgeted amounts include the school-based parent improvement plan funds.

SCOPE

We collaborated with management and staff to obtain an understanding of the Office of Parent Engagement operations. We evaluated the problem resolution process and determined if adequate procedures have been implemented to ensure all parent concerns are addressed and resolved centrally, as well as at the school level. Parent University was evaluated for effectiveness. We assessed the Parent Liaison and Home School Assistant role at the schools to determine effectiveness and consistency. Parent Groups were assessed for compliance and functionality.

CONCLUSION

Parents and families play a significant role in supporting their children's learning. The Office of Parent Engagement has been charged with providing technical support to schools and families, increasing parent involvement and monitoring schools to ensure family engagement activities are performed throughout the District. The Office of Parent Engagement needs to further develop comprehensive protocols and procedures for the various functions they are responsible for. Alignment with Board Policies and Superintendent Regulations are required, while bringing clarity to the roles, responsibilities and deliverables. Schools require more training, monitoring and oversight than the Office of Parent Engagement is currently providing to ensure compliance with National Standards for Family-School Partnerships, Parent Groups, and Parent Improvement Plans. The overall parent feedback and complaint process needs standards and criteria for the handling, documenting, reporting and escalation of complaints. Compliance with all protocols and procedures established must be adhered to and enforced. Comprehensive monitoring and oversight would greatly improve the functionality of this department.



Office of Parent Engagement Audit Summary of Recommendations

Rec #	Recommendations
1	<i>Establish and implement a monitoring process to comply with the requirements of Board Polices 2265 School Based Planning and 1900 Parent and Family Engagement Policy, and Superintendent Regulation 1900-R Parent and Family Engagement. Develop a work plan which incorporates the expectations of these policies and regulations into the Office of Parent Engagement's functional role. Ensure all deliverables are being met within the specified deadlines and report to the Superintendent and Board of Education timely.</i>
2	<i>Develop and implement comprehensive written policies and procedures for the entire Office of Parent Engagement, including, the parent complaint process, obtaining parent input, communication, contact log database, Parent/Teacher groups, School Based Planning Team, Parent Involvement Plans, Parent University, Parent Connect, records and reporting, and deadlines. Develop and implement desk procedures to ensure consistency in procedures and documentation. Communicate and enforce compliance with established procedures.</i>
3	<i>Develop and implement a process to assess District and school compliance with the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships on a periodic basis. Utilize the National Standards Assessment Guide to assist in periodic assessments and regularly monitor for compliance.</i>
4	<i>Clearly define, document and implement roles, responsibilities and deliverables for each role in Office of Parent Engagement. Specifically identify roles and responsibilities for Parent Support Services staff and establish formal monitoring procedures to ensure staff compliance.</i>
5	<i>Utilize the Contact Log Database as the Office of Parent Engagement's system of record of all parent complaints. Ensure all complaints are logged as they are received, then provide updates as information is made available.</i>
6	<i>Develop criteria for the information entered into the Contact Log Database. Specifically provide criteria for the date the complaint is logged, the detail required regarding the complaint, resolution status and criteria for closing a complaint. Monitor the database for staff compliance with data entry to facilitate the collection of quality data.</i>



Office of Parent Engagement Audit Summary of Recommendations

Rec #	Recommendations
7	<i>Ensure all complaints are entered into the Contact Log Database in a timely manner. Develop and implement procedures to ensure data integrity and regularly monitor data entry. Utilize analytical tools and reporting in the database to assist in operations and trending.</i>
8	<i>Develop documentation and communication standards for parent complaints, including the type of documents to be retained, and the retention period. Assess the feasibility of utilizing electronic storage for parent complaint documents.</i>
9	<i>Develop standard deadlines for resolving and closing parent complaints. Communicate established deadlines and ensure adherence through periodic management monitoring. Review open complaints in the database and bring timely resolution to families.</i>
10	<i>Develop a process for communicating parent complaints between schools and the Office of Parent Engagement. Assess the feasibility of maintaining a database that is shared between the schools and the Office of Parent Engagement. Implement access controls to protect student data and reporting to facilitate review.</i>
11	<i>Ensure adherence to the escalation process for parent complaints and resolve the issues within Office of Parent Engagement. Develop a process which documents parent complaints requiring escalation. Implement monitoring procedures to evaluate frequency and reasons escalation was necessary.</i>
12	<i>Provide training to the Office of Parent Engagement personnel on mediations and conflict resolution. Ensure a consistent approach is shared by each representative.</i>
13	<i>Develop and implement a process to ensure all Parent Liaisons and Home School Assistants receive the necessary professional development. Consider mandating the professional development meetings.</i>
14	<i>Develop a process to monitor Parent Groups at each school to ensure they exist and are operating effectively in accordance with National Standards. Document and retain supporting documentation to substantiate monitoring efforts.</i>



Office of Parent Engagement Audit Summary of Recommendations

Rec #	Recommendations
15	<p><i>Develop a comprehensive guidance document for Parent Groups. At a minimum include the following: establishing a Parent Group; required officers; required membership, including the total number and number of parents needed; bylaws; meeting minutes; dues; information required to be posted on school websites; and financial controls.</i></p> <p><i>Clearly define roles and responsibilities for the Office of Parent Engagement, Home School Assistants, Parent Liaisons and Parent Group members. Communicate and disseminate the guidance document to Parent Liaisons, Home School Assistants and Parent Groups to provide greater clarity.</i></p>
16	<p><i>Create a forum for Parent Groups to be a resource to one another. Promote information sharing with this forum to communicate ideas and activities of the Parent Group.</i></p>
17	<p><i>Evaluate the Parent University class offerings available to parents. Provide diverse course offerings including topics that the Parent University will provide. Schedule Parent University classes far enough in advance to allow parents an opportunity to plan on attending and increase parent participation.</i></p>
18	<p><i>Enforce completion and submission of the Parent Improvement Plan within the stated deadline. Escalate noncompliance to School Chiefs.</i></p>