

PARENT ENGAGEMENT FORUM

October 19, 2007

Minutes

In Attendance

Angela Lathan, Buffy Kilarski, Mary Jo Malloy, Erin Cranor, Donna Anspach, Dee Ann Bauman, Cathy Rosenfeld, Georgeann Ray, Skip Rapoport, Beverly Waters, Beverly Patton, Phil Brody, Cynthia Sell, Holli Kalaleh, Joyce Haldeman, Mike Englert, Lauren Kohut-Rost.

Parent Communication System

Dr. Kohut-Rost provided a brief background regarding steps the district had taken in moving towards identifying and supporting one parent communication tool. A central committee was assembled to identify one system to provide the most effective parent and student communication. Ultimately, the committee selected Parent Link to be presented to the Board of School Trustees for their consideration. Dr. Brody stated that 34 functional requirements were identified and weighted by the committee. These requirements were reviewed and assessed by a parent focus group composed of members recommended by each region. An evaluation panel of nine people – five principals, the Director of Guidance & Counseling, a representative from Curriculum & Professional Development, a representative from Research & Accountability, and a representative from the Technology Division made the final recommendation. The Board of School Trustees is scheduled to make the final determination at their November 15th meeting. Following the explanation of the process, Dan Nelson was introduced to make a presentation on the system's capabilities. The focus of the presentation was that of communication from the parent's vantage point. Both online and phone based components were demonstrated. Although the group was receptive to the system's capabilities, concern was voiced that the system must be fully utilized by all schools and teachers. Dr. Kohut-Rost noted that since this communication tool would be central in nature, as opposed to being implemented on a school-by-school basis under the current program of using the two current tools that are in place, guidelines can

more easily be created for all schools and teachers to follow. Additional questions regarding support capabilities, expansion options, safety features, and cost were responded to by Mr. Nelson.

Instruction Unit Update

Dr. Kohut-Rost explained the newly developed partnership with local business and government entities targeting the enhancement of effective communication between parents and schools via the existing computerized parent communication systems. She shared that a recent training was held with human resources representatives from Harrah's, the Four Seasons, and the City of Henderson (HSBC Bank has also requested inclusion in the training) on the two parent communication tools currently in use in most of our secondary schools. The decision was made to move forward with training on the existing systems so that parents who otherwise might not be able to physically volunteer at their children's schools will have the opportunity to track their children's attendance and academic performance. Several of the handouts provided at the training were shared with the Parent Engagement Forum. A proposed Cell Phone Use Letter was also discussed. This letter is designed to educate parents as to the problems being encountered on school campuses due to cell phone use during times other than those specific in CCSD Policy 5136. Parents were asked to review the draft document and provide comments and suggestions at the next meeting.

Miscellaneous

It was suggested that any items for the open discussion period of the meeting be submitted in advance of the scheduled meetings to Eva Melendrez for inclusion on the agenda. Erin Cranor briefly discussed the MAPPS Training which provides mathematics instruction for parents. She noted the usefulness of the program but added that it required a commitment to multiple sessions in order to achieve the full benefit. The group voted to cancel the December meeting. Due to a scheduled staff development day, the January meeting date will be

moved from the 25th. A specific date will be determined at the next meeting. Dr. Kohut-Rost thanked the group's participants for their attendance and dedication to education.

Next Meeting: November 30, 2007.