

SCLT and BOE joint session meeting minutes
11.18.09
DHS Rehearsal Room in Performing Arts Center

School reports

WP strengths

1. Better sense of strengths and weaknesses of WP students; strong teacher voices (Charlie Kish and Merion Davis) to better understand struggling learners
2. Committed folks with a sense of humor as spirited and lively debate exists
3. Design and test one big idea to improve achievement for at-risk students

WP challenges

1. How to best use our time to benefit school
2. How to effectively engage WP community in design and implementation of SIP

OA strengths

1. Communicating with community
2. SIP
3. School committees stayed in placed (e.g., media, SIP); one SLT member on each committee
4. Representation on Reconfiguration Committee

OA challenges

1. How to get parents to come for public comment during SLT meetings
2. How to operationalize SIP to impact student achievement
3. How to train new members

CL strengths

1. Committees
2. Willingness to ask for help
3. Training

CL challenges

1. Have uniform training from central office
2. Challenging all students
3. Training for new SLT members
4. More established communication patterns to SLT
5. Quarterly communications to BOE
6. Make recommendations directly to BOE, not being filtered through Central Office
7. BOE member invited to a SLT worksession

GL strengths

1. Establishing communication with parent community
2. Who we are as GL (IB, meet needs of students)

GL challenges

1. How to gather feedback in a 2-yr school

RMS strengths

1. One SLT member invited to RMS Cabinet meeting
2. Open, respectful, trusting relationship with each other

3. More documentation of how goals have been met
4. SIP on agenda every month

RMS challenges

1. How to effectively communicate our goals & accomplishments to our parents and the larger community
2. How to effectively get more parent involvement / engagement, not just events but also understanding "the everyday business of school" and their role.
3. How to effectively recruit SLT members from economically challenged parents and community members. They don't have the time and other resources to commit to frequent regular, work, and subcommittee meetings that may be as frequent as three times a month during certain parts of the year.
4. In the post-elementary schools, it is more challenging to design effective and meaningful parent involvement activities.
5. Continuing to test, define and refine the roles, responsibilities and purposes under a Charter System; e.g. doing work at the school level to have it then be nixed due to really needing a system charter solution (elections), training SLTs on how to do better what they can do: participate in interviews, review and approve financial statements, work with principals on tackling issues affecting school improvement plan (gifted subcommittee, for example).

DHS strengths

1. Appointed members to support diversity
2. Appointed a student (SGA president)
3. Scheduling committee
4. SIP committee (trying to tighten up measurements and outcomes)
5. Increasing communication
6. Three standing committees (nominating, communication, policies/procedures)

DHS challenges

1. Increase parent involvement in meetings
2. Increase dialogue with BOE and central office

BOE comments and questions

BOE: Do you want more responsibility, different responsibility, more clarity?

SLT: Differing responses from schools

BOE: How are you not afforded the opportunity to do what you say you need to do?

SLT: Still not sure how roles are defined

Communications with central office unclear

SLT members feeling edited by central office

BOE: In this continued dialogue, we need to be very specific about these situations.

SLT: Useful to have a central office member on the SLT to clarify and offer content knowledge.

SLT: What does it mean to represent a parent body on a district-wide committee?

SLT: How to know what power we have (e.g., consent item for budget)

SLT: Told more from central office what not to do, what can we do.

BOE: communicate to what end? What is the benchmark indicating that it went well or not? Does the word "communication" become a substitute for other things?

BOE: tension is that principals do not work for SLTs. The budget is the ultimate responsibility of the BOE.

BOE: 5 yrs from now how will we know that we have been successful?

BOE: more uniformity in training is needed

BOE: use SCLT as a sharing and communication device

SLT: desire more systemic training re: budgets

SLT: growing pains for parent members as well as principals

BOE: putting meat to words on paper (charter responsibilities for SLT and BOE), need to change as we go

BOE: budget-setting issue stays with BOE (system issue), but understanding the budget-setting process is critical to SLTs

BOE: our job is to also advocate for public education; SLTs could also advocate for us and to us

BOE: quite a different job for principals in this paradigm, "How can a SLT help the principal be the school leader s/he needs to be?"

Dr. Edwards' comments

only one of four to even try this

have done a great job in accomplishing many of the items in the phases

rules, roles, relationships will always be the most difficult

personnel is always the trickiest issue

BOE still owns the budget process, SLTs have had some discretionary funds

BOE comments

true community engagement is difficult in Decatur

Communicating and educating parent community

Consider adding core beliefs

Don't want us to go back to separate, non-systemic schools, children were lost in that approach

Need more clarity around responsibilities

BOE does not get into personnel matters, act on recommendations by

Superintendent and Human Resources Director

Caution to SLTs re: speaking about personnel matters on blogs and over email

All of us need training re: BOE and SLT ethical responsibilities