

DOWNERS GROVE GRADE SCHOOL DISTRICT 58

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM COMMITTEE MEETING

November 18, 2019

The District Leadership Team (DLT) met on Monday, November 18, 2019 at Longfellow Center.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:48 p.m.

Present

Co-Chairs Darren Hughes and Tracy Weiner, Todd Drafall, Matt Durbala, Erin Guth, Megan Hewitt (*Ex Officio*), Katie Hurckes, Melissa Jerves (*Secretary*), Jason Lynde, Bill Riban, Kevin Russell, Justin Sisul, Craig Young, Jayne Yudzentis.

Absent

Michael Cassa, Emily Honn, Erin Menet, Angie Rybarczyk.

Approval of Minutes

Katie Hurckes moved and Craig Young seconded the motion to approve the minutes from the August 27, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Review Goals Progress

Goal 1

Justin Sisul reported that the Curriculum Council completed a definition of “rigor” as it relates to academic instruction. The strategy of promoting and sustaining a District culture of rigor will always be “in progress.” Work continues regarding state assessments and the rigor of District assessments.

The Curriculum Council has begun discussion about the Portrait of a Graduate, defining what those characteristics mean in action. The council will also address vertical alignment; specifically, existing and potential transitions from one grade level cluster to the next. The council has completed a timeline and process to ensure consistent review of each curricular area.

The Instructional Model Review Council spent last year focused on the 6-8 middle school concept. This year, the council will focus on defining quality instruction in general for each curricular area across the District.

The Professional Learning Council has completed much of its work, but will continue review of the effectiveness of Professional Learning Mondays.

The goals of fidelity in resource implementation and parent education and support overlap with communication goals. Mr. Sisul is working with both the Curriculum Council and the

Superintendent's Community Advisory Council to develop opportunities for parents to learn how to support their children at home with the new resources.

The Differentiation and Assessment Committee is focusing its work on best practices for building level teams to analyze student data.

Goal 2

Megan Hewitt addressed Objective 2.1: Communication, and 2.2: Collaboration. A communication plan is in development, and regular quarterly updates are being made to the Board of Education. The Inside Scoop, an internal staff newsletter, was renamed 58 Connects and redesigned with a more polished presentation. The most recent issue was opened by 73% of staff. The District has been heavily promoting Twitter use by staff, and interesting tweets are repackaged for the newsletters and Facebook. The DLT discussed the role of the staff newsletter: it is one of several avenues for information, and should not be relied on to transmit essential information necessary to perform the job. The Superintendent's Community Advisory Council has suggested making the website more user friendly with a more powerful search function. An initial website redesign has been completed on paper; the possibility of outsourcing the website host will be explored. Communication survey results are being reviewed, and a "Questions from the Community" page is being considered. The Communications Feedback Council met in September to review survey results. The Strategic Plan calls for a Joint Communication Team to monitor progress, and it was agreed that the DLT take on that role rather than create a new group. Stakeholder Service Expectations have been discussed with all principals and shared with all staff through the staff newsletter.

Jayne Yudzentis addressed Objective 2.3: Consistency. The Resources Review Council has recommended that the District should not continue with the combination class model in grades 1-6. The council recommended the following class size targets:

- K-2: 24 students or fewer/25-27 triggers communication to parents/28 triggers action from District
- 3-8: 26 students or fewer/27-28 triggers communication to parents/29 triggers action from District

To ensure equity across buildings, the council concluded that 29 students is the ideal class size limit. The DLT agreed with this limit in principle, but discussed how to develop a next-step plan to account for circumstances of budget, classroom space and timing. The council has begun discussions related to equity across schools in math instruction and intervention.

All building administrators initiated a weekly parent newsletter and have been working to refine the content. A Principal Communication Toolkit has been created, which includes content (i.e. safety, lice, winter, active threat drills) that can be copy/pasted into regular communications. A small group of principals and administrators met to begin developing website content expectations, and explore how schools can better communicate with non-English speaking parents.

Goal 3

Kevin Russell and Todd Drafall reported that significant progress has been made on facility planning. The Board addressed a possible conflict of interest between the District's architect and

community engagement consultant in a transparent manner and included specific provisions in their contracts. The community engagement process is moving forward. 70 individuals have been invited to serve on a Citizen Task Force (ideal size is 30-35), and several opportunities for bigger community engagement nights, as well as phone surveys and mailers, are planned. The goal is to have the information gathering completed by June; a decision to put a question on the ballot must be made by August. Difficult questions such as boundaries must be discussed.

Though the initial timeline was very aggressive, it was designed to gain momentum and get information to the Board with the awareness that the timeline could be adjusted. The District cannot maintain the status quo with its current and developing maintenance needs. Community education will be necessary to inform the community about the condition of buildings and facility needs. It will also be important to educate the public about the limiting rate. District 58's limiting rate is so low the District cannot capture sufficient tax base to support borrowing for significant facility projects.

Public Comment

No visitors attended the meeting.

Adjourn

Bill Riban moved to adjourn and Matt Durbala seconded the motion. Motion carried.
Meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.