



District Improvement Team (DIT)

Meeting

May 13, 2010

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

In attendance: Kathy Abshire, Janet Balke, Jenniffer Barrett, Allison Birney, Linda Buchman, Elaine Castello, Barbara Cofer, Ellen Davis, Alfonso Fernandez del Valle, Sara Guillory, Vivecca Hartman, Richard Jennings, Susan Kellner, Jessica Kinzelman, Melissa Knop, Lisa Lafferrandre, Myra Lewis, Martha Macris, Claudia Martinez, Kristin Pavlik, Eric Pierce, Mary Reed, Oswaldo Rios, Ruth Rivera, Catherine Roth, Joan Salamanchuk, Martha-Leigh Scurlock, James Shaddix, Janet Smith, Elaine Sorsby, Michael Stokebrand, Katie Teeters, Jennifer Thorpe

Percent of DIT members in attendance: 50%

Ellen Davis and Kristen Patrick, co-chairs called the meeting to order.

Ellen and Kristen made opening remarks and invited all attendees to introduce themselves. Following the introductions, Kristen thanked those whose terms are coming to an end and presented them with a framed thank you for their service.

Duncan echoed the thanks to the outgoing members and welcomed the new members to the DIT.

Task Force Reports

Retention Task Force. Orlando reported that the Retention Task Force has reviewed research that shows there are often negative impacts for students who are retained. Having participated on this task force has given Orlando more opportunity to reflect on his own low-performing students relative to retention consideration.

Duncan informed the DIT that House Bill 3, from the last legislative session, impacts the work of the committee because TAKS is no longer the gatekeeper for retention at Grade 3. All districts must develop new policies for promotion/retention in light of the new legislation.

Duncan informed new members that the opportunity to serve on a task force is a great way to be engaged and to keep the DIT apprised of what the task forces are doing.

Waiver:

It was explained that the DIT has responsibility for approving all waivers before they can be sent to TEA.

Becky Wuerth addressed the DIT to seek its support for the Waiver for Six Modified School Days for Secondary Campuses in 2010-2011 school year. The DIT had approved the waiver several months ago, at which time Memorial High School was the only secondary school seeking six late arrival/early dismissal days so that teachers could meet for campus-based planning and/or professional development. Because of this professional development model's success, the other high schools would like to implement the schedule for the upcoming school year.

The DIT was asked to support the modifications of Section Five of the Waiver document so that it could be resubmitted to TEA, which had advised that we bring back to the DIT for its support. Becky informed the DIT that the waiver must be filed annually, even though the calendar is approved every two years. A back-up document explaining the waiver rationale will be included when it is sent to TEA. No questions were posed. The DIT supported the waiver. Becky obtained the necessary signatures to move forward in submitting the waiver.

Calendar Development Process:

Dr. Jennifer Blaine, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, presented an overview of the district's process for developing the Academic Calendar. Dr. Blaine also requested that the DIT serve as the SBISD Calendar Committee based on its broad based composition and the fact that the calendars/waivers must be approved by the DIT before submission to TEA. DIT members were provided with the Calendar FAQs, blank calendars for the 2011 and 2012 school years as well as the Board of Trustees Calendar Parameters as background for their work which will begin in Sept. 2010.

Dr. Blaine reviewed the timing of the process, with the goal of making recommendations to Duncan, who, in turn, will make the calendar recommendation to the Board of Trustees in November 2010. The DIT will develop calendars for the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years.

Review of Federal Grants Program:

Dr. Eloise Hambright-Brown presented to the DIT an overview of the district's use of Federal Funds and supplied a one-page summary document. In summary:

The District is using State Stabilization Funds (\$9.3 million) to support our Pre-K program. These funds were used to offset the funds lost when the state cut funding for our pre-k program. Duncan noted that the state used stabilization funds to decrease the state budget by \$1.8 billion. As a result, it is much more difficult to gain access to these funds, which otherwise would have come from the state as part of our general fund budget. Duncan noted the hypocrisy of the state to take stabilization funds, supplanting the state budget, but then say no to Race to the Top Funding.

Stimulus funds (Title I, Part A ARRA -- \$6.4 million) are being used to support Pre-K programming and to provide supplemental after school programming and parental involvement.

Stimulus funds (Title IID, Part A ARRA -- \$201,056) are also being used for Educational Technology Acquisitions and technology professional development.

IDEA Stimulus Funds (\$6.6 million) are being used for professional development for inclusive classrooms and to increase teacher skills in developing IEPs, increasing educator's skills for

improving outcomes for students with disabilities and for purchasing 13 buses for meeting the needs of students with disabilities.

Title I Funds (No Child Left Behind ESEA-- \$9 million) are used to provide additional staff, resources, and increased parental involvement on 28 Title I campuses.

Title I Funds (No Child Left Behind ESEA – Title IIA --\$1.5 million) are being used to provide additional professional development and staff recruitment.

Question: Ellen asked if SBISD can apply for Race to the Top funds.

Duncan: SBISD will be eligible for round two Race to the Top Funding, which has very strict parameters. He noted that Texas would not have been eligible for round one of Race to the Top because we are one of only two states that did not agree to support national standards. Duncan also noted that Title I campuses determine how to expend their Title I funds.

Question: Allison asked whether IDEA funding covered professional development for this year and next.

Eloise: Yes, it covered both professional development and additional staff in the form of RTI (Response to Intervention) specialists.

Duncan noted that in the past, federal funding has helped to add additional staff, while now it's being used to maintain staff. For special education, the staffing ratios have not shifted, but as the number of students receiving services has declined over the past few years, this year we did have to reduce staff to be in line with staffing ratios.

Budget

Duncan apprised the DIT that the Board was set to approve the 2010-2011 Budget on Monday night. This Budget reflects real cost reductions of \$8million+, with a \$3.5 million deficit. The budget includes a 1.5% raise and \$200 flex accounts for health insurance (vs \$500 this year) and \$3000 health savings accounts. We are waiting for a ruling from the Attorney General's office on how certain mandated step increases will be calculated. We will message out to staff that we are not facing the same situation as other districts that have had to take actions such as Reduction in Force to meet severe budget scenarios.

Other Questions:

Question: Natalie expressed that there is concern in the Stratford Community that the Board will deny the request to name Cripps Field.

Duncan: The board has received a complete packet of information regarding the issue. All positions must be considered. A high standard is required for the naming of a building, with 5 votes needed.

Question: Kristen asked if the board vote on Monday will be a definite final approval for the budget and expressed that the Pre-K assistants are concerned about where they stand.

Duncan: Their positions are maintained in the budget the Board is being asked to approve on Monday.

Question: Allison asked whether the 1.5% raise will apply for paraprofessionals.

Duncan: Yes, the 1.5% raise is a straight raise across the board.

Meeting Schedule for 2010-11 School Year.

Duncan proposed that the DIT meet in September, October and November in order to complete the Calendar development process, and to then take a break in December. Beginning in January, the DIT would meet every other month. Thus the meeting schedule for next year is tentatively set as:

Thursday, September 2nd

Thursday, October 7th

Thursday, November 4th

Thursday, January 6th

Thursday, March 3rd

Thursday, May 5th

Duncan suggested that the September meeting include special presentations on new technology initiatives and on the Bond Program. As a result, the comprehensive review of the five year plan will be conducted over several meetings in the fall.

Duncan thanked everyone for their hard work this year and thanked the new members for their commitment to serve in the future.