



District Improvement Team (DIT) Meeting
Thursday, September 2, 2021
5:00 – 7:00 p.m.
MINUTES

Meeting start time: 5:01 pm

Meeting end time: 6:13 pm

Current Member Attendance (36)

Crystal Arrington, Lynne Barry, Jennifer Blaine, Carter Breed, Minda Caesar, Valentina Chelala, Lisse Colon Melendez, Kristin Craft, Cara Cullen, Anne Daily, Laura Dawson, Lucy Gaines, Dominique Harvey, Darya Hasanova, Kathleen Holder, Vanya Karia, Richard Kelvin, Matt Kiger, Julie Knapp, Noemi Lopez, Larry Maple, Buffie Matthews, Sarah Morris, Heather Morse, Michelle Nall, Abena Ntoso, Yehee Perry, Victoria Putnam, Rebecca Ramey, William Schwartz, Jennifer Sharp, Emily Sperandio, Jennifer Stuart, Joy Stuart, Kevin Villalobos, Kate Waldorf

Percent of current DIT members in attendance: 87.8%

Non-Member Attendance (6)

Amy Accardo, Linda Buchman, Lawanda Coffee, Karen Heeth, Christine Porter, Annie Wolfe

Welcome

Linda Buchman, Associate Superintendent for Communications and Community Engagement, welcomed DIT members and introduced Dr. Jennifer Blaine to provide a District Update.

District Update

Dr. Blaine provided updates around mask mandates and virtual learning. SBISD currently follows the Governor's Executive Order, which prevents state-funded institutions from requiring masks. Because County authorities want to issue a local mask mandate, the Texas Supreme Court will make the final decision about which entity has authority. Until then, SBISD will continue with masks optional - but strongly encouraged. Enforcement of a district mask mandate now is difficult compared to last year when masks were required statewide and virtual learning was an option for those who wanted it.

At this time, a Senate bill (SB15) is on the Governor's desk for consideration. This bill would allow districts to offer a virtual option for up to 10% of a student population without funding loss. If the bill passes, SBISD will offer this option to students in Kinder to 6th grade, since they are ineligible for the Covid-19 vaccine. Though other districts used ESSER funds to continue virtual programs this year, even without legislative approval, SBISD did not due to the expense. In addition to loss of average daily attendance funding, SBISD recapture expenses would increase significantly.

Finally, Dr. Blaine noted the creation of a Career and Technical Education (CTE) Bond Advisory Committee, charged to provide recommendations to the Board about expanded CTE programming for secondary schools. This effort supports the "T" in the T-2-4 goal.

Introductions and Approval of Minutes

2021-22 DIT Chair Anne Daily introduced herself and asked each meeting attendee to do the same. Following introductions, Ms. Daily asked DIT members in attendance at May's meeting to approve minutes by typing their approval into the chat box. Nineteen (19) members approved.

DIT Roles and Responsibilities

Ms. Buchman briefly reviewed the DIT's purpose, which is serving as advisory board to the Superintendent on district-level matters and decisions. DIT business this year is expected to be light, but will include participation in a District Improvement Plan review and a joint public hearing around the TAPR report in January. Occasionally, the DIT is asked to provide feedback on waivers sought by the district.

2021 Strong Start and ESSER Plan Updates

Dr. Kristin Craft, Associate Superintendent for Academics, introduced the Strong Start Learning Plan, which replaces last year's LearnSBISD Plan. In developing Strong Start, campuses and district leadership reflected on lessons learned last year, along with STAAR results and other data points. Staff participated in extensive professional development over the summer and provided robust summer programming for students, with the goal of having a Strong Start to the 2021-22 academic year.

Dr. Annie Wolfe, Executive Director for Instruction, reviewed the framework of the Plan, organized in three ways:

- Understanding the impact of interrupted learning
- Planning how the district will enhance instruction to close learning gaps
- Adjusting instructional supports based on Key Performance Indicators and formative assessments

SBISD is taking an accelerated approach to learning rather than a remediation approach. Instead of backtracking to re-teach prerequisite concepts, instructional staff will use mini lessons, checks for understanding and small pieces of instruction throughout the year while students progress through their program of studies. The Plan also aligns to Superintendent and Board priorities: Literacy, Numeracy, English Learners, Social-Emotional Supports, Digital Expansion and Career & Technical Education.

Texas House Bill 4545 supports accelerated instruction by asking districts to provide at least thirty (30) hours instruction in content areas where a student did not meet STAAR standard. Additionally, students on temporary medical leave are able to access remote conferencing to receive instruction when away from classroom.

Ms. Lawanda Coffee, Director for External Funds, provided an update on the ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief) Plan, which was developed to support Strong Start. While most ESSER I and II funds were earmarked to offset hold harmless ADA adjustments, ESSER III requires a Use of Funds Plan based on district needs and stakeholder feedback. The purpose of ESSER III is to provide a safe return for in-person instruction and address learning recovery.

The ESSER Plan focuses in six areas:

- Supported Teachers
- More time for Learning
- Rigorous Instruction Materials
- Social-Emotional Supports
- Parent/Family Supports
- Other Resources, including a new Learning Management System

Closing

Following the presentations, Ms. Buchman reminded members that DIT policy requires the group to meet twice per semester. The DIT will meet in October via Zoom, and decisions will follow about November and December.

Ms. Buchman thanked all attendees, and the meeting adjourned at 6:13pm.