



Program Evaluation Committee

Thursday, April 21, 2011

Minutes (Approved, May 12, 2011)

Department of Education and Early Development Auxiliary Conference Room

In Attendance

Board of Education Committee Members: Mark Choate, Kim Poole, Andi Story
Sally Saddler, Board President

Staff

Laury Scandling, Ryan Alsup, Jessica Chester, Barbara Cadiente-Nelson, Michelle Martin, Frank Coenraad, Karina Reyes, Sarah Marino

Public

Trish Makailey, Mariana Moreno Godwin, YashKandaets', Edward Hotch, Annie Calkins

Convened 12:08 p.m.

Agenda Approved

Minutes Approved

Public Testimony

Mariana Morena Goodwin, ANS Camp 70

Ms. Goodwin expresses concern regarding committee process. Focus is on a very specific cadre of students; not all Alaska Native students are at risk. She sees conflict because of employment of staff that attend the meetings. Not all students fit the profile presented; some are proficient and advanced. Parents need to know about students that are succeeding. Staff and administration could bring attention to the successes. There are social and racial dynamics and disparity in the system. Difficult situation to address; do some programs perpetuate institutional racism? Hope you deal with diverse families in a diverse and expansive ways. Look at the concerns of the community. Announces a meeting at ANS GV 70.

Programs representatives presentation to Committee.

Early Scholars, Karina Reyes , JDHS, The program is geared to college-bound Native students.

Participants are self-selected; an essay and list of aspirations used in entrance. Highlights the higher achieving kids, the success stories. It is amazing to see the success level of Native kids. Numbers do not tell everything, lots of human stories behind the numbers. Our students wanted to come to testify. The program reflects the positive nature of student achievement. There are 22 students in one class; 14 who will be graduating

I use Facebook to track past students. I estimate 90 percent go on to college. Of the 14 seniors, all are planning to attend college. Mr. Coenraad is our counselor.

Mr. Choate addresses the nature of absences – usually points to failure, but this group is doing better. Looking at the data that Mr. Loseby sent out is confusing. Why do we have so many unexcused absences?

Mr. Choate asks for percentage of Alaska Natives going to college. – roughly 25%

Mr. Choate asked about the pending increase in graduation requirements before the Board – would your group of students agree? Ms. Reyes stated the students are already focused on similar course selection for college prep. Mr. Choate asked if enlarging the program would be a benefit? Ms. Reyes pondered logistics and staffing. Mr. Choate praised finding systemic ways for more success. Mr. Coenraad pointed to the middle school AVID program. Mr. Choate asked for a percentage of students who are enrolled at UAS? Ms. Reyes thought 90 percent of Early Scholars graduates go to UAS. Although I wish they could go to other schools, in some cases, these are the first in generation to attend university.

Ms. Story asked if any students are turned away. Ms. Reyes states that Early Scholars has an open enrollment. Ms. Story asks about advertising. Ms. Reyes is talking to other classes. Students also offer encouragement to others.

The committee asks Ms. Reyes to verify the absences and to send prepared notes or any further questions or comments.

Sarah Marino, principal, Yaakoosge Daakahidi

Just saw absentee data this morning. We are attendance-based. There is a strict attendance policy: **all** absences are considered unexcused. This may be a reason why our absences look high. In cases of extended leave, such as a pregnancy or treatment, we allow some independent learning, but if they are enrolled as a student, with absences showing, we are not able to keep them on record. School has thirty-eight homeless students currently, almost a third of population. It does have to be a conscious choice to come everyday.

Ms. Scandling notes that students switch every quarter. That may also show in the higher absences for YDAHS. Mr. Choate compliments the involved and dedicated staff. How could the Board help? Ms. Marino suggests that they keep Pupil-Teacher Ratio low. We try to secure grants to hire more teachers. Support for social systems are helpful. WIC, Heating Assistance, T&H housing – Students need assistance for “Social Work.” She notes that they are piloting program called Brain Paint – which is showing amazing outcomes in our students. Pointing to a student as a case study – another staff that knew him since early in youth has noticed amazing changes. The student also was complementary about seeing changes in his own behavior and attitude.

Andi Story noted that a child care facility on site was not possible, is that status the same? She also asked about teacher support training, secondary literacy coaches – and other skills development and the One to One Laptop program.

Principal Marino stated that child care is cost prohibitive and space intensive. Laury Scandling noted that an analysis just became available. Principal Marino says they are trying to find resources and connections for our parenting students. On a recent trip to Anchorage and Mat-Su a cadre of YK teachers saw an alternative school that was just delivering a babysitting service. We want to do it well, as training for parenting and potential employment as childcare teachers. Mr. Choate asked about avoiding pregnancy. Principal Marino stated that Myths persist. Ms. Marino stated that in the last year there were 30 families. At beginning of year it was very high. This year only a couple students have gotten pregnant.

Ms. Marino noted that Professional Development, especially literacy coach is amazing and collaborative. Lap top program is so beneficial providing so many tools to students . Ms. Story asked for any surveys with kids, may we see some?

Tlingit Cultural Language Program

Michelle Martin notes that Pam Morris was very helpful with getting data to Phil Loseby. The grades 3-5 reporting follows the states mandated combination of Language Arts.

The program consists of three classrooms that are multi-graded. There are six teachers. All have seen definite growth with the DRAs when they were last tested.

Jessica Chester stated that the program has started with very low language development. TOLD tests have been used in the past assessment tools. As the Language teacher, I want language to flourish with more kids than just our kids learning it. The balance and choices of whole school, or our situation, with teaching on the spectrum of low loaded classrooms and providing challenges for higher performing students is very challenging for the teachers and staff.

Mr. Choate asked if head starts doing a good job? Maybe we should look to expand our PreK programs. We know that ages 3-5 are essential to learning. Do we need a pre-K?

Ms. Martin responded that Head Start is isolated whereas PreK is inclusive. She applauds using Conscious Discipline techniques, communicating, higher order thinking, and she noted that family partnerships are important. Always been a personal passion to get native parents into interact with teachers and learn about IEPs. My learning is increasing. She is exploring Action Research and wondering "What help can TANF provide?" I feel like we are starting small but I see some good growth with this new team.

Koo.eex are helpful. Parent education at the beginning of the school year is important. We appreciate learning the testing reports and data interpretations so that we can help parents become more involved. All staff are reporting progress with students, and we want to keep it going. Ms. Story wonders about working better with Head Start. I would think we want to strengthen those ties. All our optional programs are parent choice, how come you are reporting the program was a dumping ground? In past counselors and other teachers that reported or found many behavioral issues in students then would recommend placement in TCLL— as though the culture would fix them. We do not see it as much this year. Family connections seem to be helping.

Annie Calkins noted that of the 11 students who started in this program, 10 will graduate this year. I keep them on a longitudinal study and interview yearly.

Mariana Mareno-Goodwin stressed that over the years that she has been interacting with the district that our current Strategy 2 is not working – HS professionals are not trained. She is concerned about special needs put into isolated groups. They are invisible as they progress through school, and face only one choice — UAS.

Barbara Cadiente-Nelson compliments staff who brought students to the recent staewide meetings. Students were energetic and brought their strengths and pride to interact with adults and elders at the meetings. Historically, ethnicity based information was sought by the native community as a strengthening, nurturing program. Community involvement exists in this program, Goldbelt Heritage supports and supplies teachers like Jessica and Michelle. Culture, tradition, and language matters. Students need other supports from public school, not only from the culture.

1:15 p.m. End of interviews

Andi Story: Our data does show that students who are not in poverty are doing well. Community members were recently spoofing me about being "just a JDHS grad"
Need promotion of good things happening in the JSD and to look at other programs across the state.

Adjourn 1:17 p.m.