

DAC Meeting Minutes

PSD Boardroom

Wednesday, August 16, 2023

6:30 p.m.– 8:30 p.m.

Present

Nikki Arensmeier	Clare Barquero	Erica Daniell	Tena Green
Marcy Lewis	Angela Lindquist	Kathy Mackay	Jodi Quass
Marybeth Rigali-Oiler	Susan Sasson	Scott Schoenbauer	Mark Strasberg
Michael Werner	Becky Woodcox	Jessica Zamora	

Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

Dwayne welcomed the committee members.

Approval of Minutes

The May 17, 2023, minutes were approved and seconded as amended via email in July.

Review UIP Literacy Instruction & Practice – Dwayne Schmitz

Adopt and implement high-quality, standards-based literacy instructional materials that are representative of multiple cultures and identities.

Early Childhood and middle schools have been added to this priority. All schools will consistently implement high-quality materials, systems, and pedagogy; every student will have the foundational and critical literacy skills needed for success.

PSD is in the process of de-implementing old literacy materials and implementing new literacy materials. This is a process that will take time.

Committee discussion included:

- The new elementary literacy curriculum has a multi-year implementation plan.
- Thankful that middle schools have been added to the plan and have a voice.
- The elementary school level trainings have been going well. This will be a difficult switch but well worth it. Encourage parents to be supportive of the changes.

The DAC agrees that the UIP Literacy plan should be moved forward to the Board of Education for the year 2023-24.

Review UIP Mental Health/Belonging - Dwayne Schmitz

Increase student access to mental health providers and opportunities for meaningful connections.

Dwayne went over PSD's Healthy Kids Colorado Survey data and why this priority is so important. Colorado reports data by region, not district, every other year. PSD sends the survey to all middle and high school students. Other districts survey a sampling of their schools.

A new item added to this priority is MTSS-SEB (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support-Social Emotional Behavioral) Staffing. PSD will hire and train additional mental and behavioral health staff and trainees to actualize the MTSS-SEB framework and better supports for students. Refine and continue implementing a comprehensive community partnership strategy to better support mental health and belonging.

Committee discussion included:

- The Healthy Kids Survey upset some parents of 6th grade students. They are not comfortable with the passive-consent “opt out” process. They voiced that they were given no notice or awareness of what the survey was about and would have liked to have discussed the survey questions with their students beforehand. Parents felt blindsided by the questions their kids had after taking the survey. The parents wanted to be aware of what the questions were before giving the survey to students.
- This is a good DAC topic for a future meeting to make sure that the communication around the Healthy Kids Colorado survey is clear and concise.

Review UIP Graduate w/Options - Dwayne Schmitz

Update high school graduation requirements to support multiple post-secondary pathways and ensure students are supported in attaining all credits necessary to graduate with options.

PSD will be revisiting graduation requirements to allow students to have more options, with freedom and flexibility, that align with their post-secondary options. We do not want to limit the choices students have in creating schedules in high school that align with their post-secondary pathways. The district has a committee that will be reviewing graduation requirements while taking post-secondary options into consideration.

New items in this priority:

- Chronic absenteeism – all levels
- Systematizing syllabi
 - Systemizing syllabi emerged from students on the Student Advisory Council (StAC). The district is working with the (StAC) on this priority.
- Equitable grading practices
 - Equitable grading practices are being codeveloped by using other grading systems, not just 100-point grading scales. Middle school administrator and team readiness being targeted in 2023/24.

Committee discussion included:

- Chronic absenteeism is already being talked about at high school orientations. Chronic absenteeism typically is doesn't mean that the student doesn't want to attend school, it is more about mental health, and this should be a red flag for schools.
- Involving students and giving them ownership in the process is valuable.

The DAC agrees that the UIP Graduate with Options plan should be moved forward to the Board of Education for the year 2023-24.

Mental Health & Belonging Q&A – Liz Davis

Liz went over MTSS-SEB staff funding and community partnerships.

There is a lot of federal and state funds available for mental health. Liz and her team brought in approximately \$12 million in funding.

- Mental Health Service Professional (\$9.7 million)
 - Federal CDE grant written in collaboration with the CSU School of Social Work (the most diverse program at CSU).
 - Five-year grant to build and diversify the mental health workforce.
 - Built an internship to fellowship program (two-year program).
 - This will bring in 45 students over 5 years and 10 students were just onboarded.
- Project Aware (\$1.56 million)
 - Collaborating with CDE. This is a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA) federal grant that is funded to states and the states select partners to work with.
 - To build mental health infrastructure; building teams, systems, pay for staffing, and training.
 - There is flexibility with this grant. The district will be offering funding this fall to support grants for schools in the amount of \$30,000 or more.
 - This money must be spent by the first of the year.
- Stronger Connections (\$200,000)
 - CDE grant to build Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) training.
- Student Engagement and Reengagement - Truancy Grant (\$200,000)
 - To serve four high schools (two schools last year, two this year)
 - This grant helps at-risk students with connections and involvement with tier two intervention.
- School Counseling Grant (\$600,000)
 - To fill gap areas in school counseling, this includes drug and alcohol counselors.
- New mental health staff will be placed throughout schools in the district and remain at those sites.
 - Some jobs have been filled and some have yet to be posted.
 - New staff have been deployed in alignment with the aims of the grant: schools that are identified at risk and Title 1 schools.
 - Funding for these positions will have a direct impact on students and counselors.
 - Some FTE has been added to support counselors with compliance on 504s.
 - A team of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) counselors built a 504-compliance guidebook that will be rolled out soon. Trainings are scheduled.
 - Two Mental Health Specialists will be hired to support the Newcomer program.
 - These staff members will move from site to site and will be combined with the Student Services and Language, Culture, and Equity (LCE) departments.
- Currently waiting on a \$250,000 Larimer County Behavioral Health grant that will go toward funding expulsion work.
- The community partnership collaboration strategy will help support more student's overtime.

- The district built up the structures to expand the grant team. This work wouldn't have been possible without them.

Committee discussion included:

- Would like to see the social emotional piece taught in elementary and middle schools.
 - Will some of these support staff positions work directly with students, not just counselors, that are on 504 plans? Student voices need to be heard.
- Building relationships with students in schools is important.
- What is the plan for sustainability?
 - Counseling positions are typically state funded. The district has been funding these positions like this for years.
 - Some grants are different in that they work on system efficiencies in a collaborative way, investing in the system and future workforce.
 - These resources are not enough to fill the needs and the process never stops.
- Parents are grateful for all the hard work that has been put into the system.
- Will causes of mental health be addressed?
 - The grant is built to increase fluency in these areas, remove barriers, educate students in this space, and to continue learning as we move forward.

Discussion & Vote on UIP recommendation to BOE – Dwayne Schmitz

The DAC voted to recommend the 2023-24 UIP to the Board of Education.

Committee discussion included:

- In section 2C of the UIP, Community Partnership and Family Engagement, please note the importance of being completely transparent with parents on these topics.

Calendar Survey Input – Lauren Hooten

Lauren spoke about the upcoming calendar survey that will be sent out to parents, staff, middle school, and high school students in the fall. She is here to build awareness about the survey and get feedback on an additional question that will be added to the survey this year. The calendar survey is sent out every two years by the calendar committee. The calendar committee is comprised of staff and community members. The survey is used to inform the development of the school year calendar. She asked that this committee promote, ask people to respond to the survey, and inform people about the importance of this data.

Lauren would like the DAC committee's feedback on the inclusion of a question specific to finding ways to create ways for more professional learning and collaboration time for staff within the calendar. Please note that no decisions have been made on this topic.

There are three ideas being discussed:

1. Adding a one-hour weekly late start to the elementary and middle school levels on Wednesdays. This would mean that students would be dropped off one hour later that day with no childcare available. There is already a weekly late start at the high school level.
2. Adding a one-hour weekly early release to the elementary and middle school levels. High school late start would continue.

3. Using some student contact days and converting them to non-student contact days to the elementary and middle school levels. Administrators, teachers, and classified staff would be onsite, schools would not be in session.

All options come with many implications. There are various things to think about. Here are a few examples:

- Ability to serve breakfast on late start mornings (USDA rules)
- Ability to offer ½ day kindergarten (make sure the hours requirements are being met)
- Childcare needs

Lauren will take this feedback to the calendar committee to help develop the question.

Committee discussion included (all models discussed below):

- The early and late start release models would be the whole year.
- The school year would not be extended in the non-contact day model. Calendars are set up so that middle schools have six more days in session and elementary schools have nine more days in session than needed. These days would be converted to non-contact days.
 - This information would be good to explain to people.
 - This change could affect snow/heat days. There are three snow days built into the calendar.
- Looking at this from a place of privilege, there could be childcare issues for families with children at different school levels.
 - The early release options might allow students to be in after-school care.
- The response rate from the last survey was just under 9,000 responses. Lauren will look at the data from the last survey to answer the socio-economic question of do some schools have a higher response rate?
 - How much accountability do we have for the productivity of additional professional development days? How much time are we currently devoting to professional development? What is the benefit of more PD? How are we presenting the need?
 - Consider what the community is thinking and how to best communicate the need for professional development to them.
- It would be helpful to communicate and explain what is being collaborated and taught on professional development days.
 - Include a link communication (document or video) of what the professional learning days will include.
- Communicate the importance of collaboration time at the sites. Collaboration and training among adults in buildings is imperative to the outcomes of the students. It makes for healthy relationships among adults in buildings which trickles down to healthy relationships with students.
 - Consider sharing the Harvard study on healthy relationships about how important healthy relationships are for general health.
- Learning the new literacy curriculum is a buy in and important for all staff, not just teachers, but classified staff as well. Everyone in the building is involved in implementing the literacy curriculum.

- On complaint heard from parents is having to take vacation when everyone takes a vacation. Consider having non-contact days on Mondays or Fridays to give families an option to take a vacation.
- Elementary staff would welcome this conversation. The reality is that schools need the time to collaborate and have professional development days. It would help staff with workload issues and feeling prepared to be their best. Putting subs in front of kids during professional development days is hard. It's hard on the students and it's hard on the system. I'm glad that these options are being discussed.
- Specials Teachers would feel the hit if non-contact days were always on a Mondays or Fridays.
- Parents need time to plan, especially parents of elementary – 6th grade students. The challenge of late start would be for parents that start work at 8 a.m. and must take off that hour or so on a weekly basis. The full day might give parents more flexibility. Parents could also collaborate and help each other out. Think about changing up the day of the week occasionally if non-contact days are chosen.
- What would be the difference in productivity of all the options, an hour a week versus a full day here and there?
 - All options serve a different purpose. From an elementary standpoint having an early release would be more productive. There is a lot of collaboration that goes on in the school. Staff are data driven when trying to make informed decisions. There are Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) that tackle everything that happens during the school year. Having that time built in on a regular basis would provide targeted instruction to kids and supports.
- In the late start option, people will drop their kids off early.
- The committee will need to really sell the "why" of the options and why it's so important and not just more "time-off" for teachers. What are some of the unintended consequences that aren't being thought about?
 - Make a video (with captioning) about the "why".
- Historically there is a dip in high school attendance when elementary and middle school's have non-contact days because the high school students become daycare for younger siblings.

Next Steps for DAC

Closing

- Next DAC meeting: September 20, 2023, JSSC Boardroom, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Adjourned

2023-24 Meeting Dates

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| • August 16, 2023 | • January 17, 2024 |
| • September 20, 2023 | • February 21, 2024 |
| • October 18, 2023 | • April 17, 2024 |
| • November 15, 2023 | • May 15, 2024 |

Parking Lot Items: