

DAC Meeting Minutes

PSD Boardroom

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Present

Meghan Archuleta	Ashley Barrett	Stephanie Cotton-Maceta	Erica Daniell
Dr. Traci Gile	Tena Green	Lindsey Mozer	Jodi Quass
Marybeth Rigali-Oiler	Ian Rutherford	Scott Schoenbauer	Michael Werner

Welcome and Introductions

Dwayne welcomed the committee members.

Preview Meeting Design– Ashley Barrett

Ashley went over the meeting design. No additions needed at this time.

Approval of Minutes

The committee approved and seconded May 16 & 27, 2025, meeting minutes with minor revisions.

DAC Responsibilities – Dwayne Schmitz

Dwayne reviewed the responsibilities of the DAC as outlined in a handout from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), dated February 2019. The discussion covered several key areas where the committee wants to be more involved and effective.

- **Reviewing Charter Applications:** The DAC members expressed a strong desire to be involved in the review process for future charter applications. Dr. Traci Gile will investigate if any new applications are expected this year.
- **Recommendations to the Local Board:** The committee discussed the need to identify specific topics for in-depth study and feedback to the school board. Members suggested inviting a board member to a future meeting to discuss areas where the DAC's input would be most helpful.
- **Aligning with Federal Activities:** The committee confirmed that the responsibility to align with federal activities is still relevant because the district continues to receive ESSA funds. The committee noted that while they should be consulting with all required stakeholders on these federally funded activities, this has not been a consistent focus in the past. It was agreed that this would be a timely topic to add to a future meeting agenda. Stakeholders for these activities would include groups such as English Language Development and Integrated Services programs.
- **Increasing Family Engagement:** The committee wants to improve family engagement beyond a "checkbox" approach. It was suggested that family engagement should be a core component of all discussions. Lindsey Mozer was identified as a valuable resource who could provide insight, especially concerning Title 1 schools.

Procedural and Communication Improvements

The committee also discussed ways to improve its internal processes and communication. Members advocated for:

- A shift toward more dialogue and targeted feedback in meetings, with fewer presentations.
- Distributing information to the DAC in advance of meetings using a universal design format.
- Exploring a "sub-committee" model where a few members with relevant expertise could meet to discuss a topic and then report back to the larger group. Examples of topics for this model include READ Plans and Career Plans.

2024/25 Monitoring Data preview + UIP Implementation – Dwayne Schmitz

The DAC received a handout containing state assessment data, including CMAS and P/SAT scores for grades 3 through 11. The data covers both achievement (percent of students meeting or exceeding grade level expectations) and growth (Median Growth Percentile, MGP) for multiple years (2021-2025). The committee was tasked with analyzing this data and discussing what they "notice," "wonder," and what the implications are for the district.

Key Discussion Points and Findings:

- **Consistent Drop in Growth:** A significant and consistent trend was identified: a noticeable drop in MGP for both ELA and Math between the 5th and 6th grades. This pattern is also visible in achievement data and seems to be a cohort-specific issue, as some groups showed strong growth in earlier grades before the drop.
- **Comparison to State Data:** The committee noted that the state's data shows a similar pattern of decline, which suggests that the decline is not unique to the district. This indicates the trend may be influenced by factors beyond the district's specific practices, possibly related to the assessment itself or the middle school transition.
- **Potential Causes for the Decline:** The DAC brainstormed several factors that could be contributing to the drop in 6th-grade scores:
 - **Instructional Changes:** The shift from elementary school to middle school involves changes in the math curriculum, where students are often grouped into different levels (e.g., pre-algebra), which is a significant change from the K-5 model.
 - **Social-Emotional Transition:** The move to middle school is a major social and emotional change for students. They must navigate a new building, different teachers for each subject, and new social dynamics. The committee suggested this transition takes a toll on students' energy and focus, which could affect their academic performance.
 - **Student Participation Rates:** A committee member wondered if a higher rate of parents opting their children out of the CMAS test in middle school could be affecting the data. This is because middle school students and parents may not see the direct value of the test, leading to lower participation.
- **Suggestions for Further Investigation:** The committee proposed several ways to dig deeper into the data at future meetings:

- Examine data from a school like Polaris, which does not have a traditional 5th-to-6th-grade transition, to see if the same drop occurs. This could help validate the hypothesis that the transition is a major factor.
- Disaggregate the data by specific course levels to see how students in different math tracks are performing.
- Explore how teachers' formative assessment data correlates with the state assessment data.
- Engage with families to understand their perspective on the 5th-to-6th-grade transition.

The discussion concluded with the commitment to further investigate these findings at the next meeting.

UIP 3A Conversation – Dwayne Schmitz

The DAC dedicated a portion of the meeting to understanding committee concerns regarding positive school climate and culture. This topic was first raised at a previous meeting, and members agreed to revisit it to better understand the issues and determine who should be invited to the conversation.

One member expressed that they feel "in the dark" about the practical meaning of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) within the district. The main concern they articulated is a perceived conflict between the district's policies on gender-diverse students and its stated values of creating a safe and inclusive environment for all. It was noted that a policy intended to provide safety for some students may make others feel unsafe by potentially conflicting with family values. The discussion highlighted the challenge of balancing student rights to safety and privacy with parental rights to be informed about what is happening at school.

The committee identified the need to clarify key terms to move the conversation forward, including:

- **Defining SEL:** Members want to understand what SEL means in the curriculum and if it is a standalone subject or an integrated part of the school day. They also want to understand the distinction between SEL and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).
- **Defining Inclusivity and Safety:** The discussion raised questions about what it means for everyone to feel safe and included, acknowledging that what makes one student feel safe may make another feel unsafe.
- **Student and Parent Resources:** The committee wants to understand what resources are available for students and parents who feel that their needs for safety and inclusion are not being met.

To gain a clearer understanding of these issues, the committee agreed that it would be beneficial to invite representatives from Student Services to provide information and help define these terms. Additionally, a member noted that while charter schools use the same state reporting platform, they are not required to follow the district's specific priorities. The discussion concluded with an agreement to continue this conversation at a future meeting.

Recommend new members/recruitment – Dwayne Schmitz

The committee briefly discussed the need to recruit new members to fill three open seats: a **parent of an English language learner**, a **PSD teacher**, and a **PSD classified employee**. Members were encouraged to recommend anyone who qualifies for these positions. Interested individuals can apply through the district's website. The committee plans to review applications at the next meeting, with the goal of having the board approve new members at the meeting that follows.

Closing Reflections and Next Steps – Ashley Barrett

Ashley asked the group if there was any information she should report back to the District Advisory Board (DAB) from this meeting. This item will be added to the monthly agenda.

Closing

The next DAC meeting will be on September 17, 2025, JSSC Boardroom, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Adjourned**Parking Lot Items:**