

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

Ad Hoc Committee on Accountability

Ellen Camhi, Chair
Estela López
Allan B. Taylor

Minutes of Meeting
September 21, 2011

Call to Order

Ellen Camhi called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. The meeting was held in room G-38 of the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut. Present were Ms. López and Mr. Taylor. Also present were Associate Commissioner Dr. Marion H. Martinez, Bureau Chief Lol Fearon, Assistant to the Commissioner and State Board of Education Pam Charland, Attorney for Legal and Governmental Affairs Laura Anastasio.

Bob Pitocco, Norma Sproul and Sal Randazzo from the Bureau of Accountability and Improvement also attended.

Introductions

Everyone introduced themselves. Ellen Camhi asked for definition of Leader in Residence. The Bureau of Accountability and Improvement has four Leaders in Residence. They are retired administrators and serve as part of our Technical Assistance (TA) teams and help with the monitoring of the districts. They, also, bring with them a perspective of school leadership and best practices. The bureau, also, has three external consultants. They are the liaison between our bureau and the superintendents.

Approval of Minutes of the November 1, 2010 Committee Meeting

Motion to approve minutes by Allan Taylor and seconded by Ellen Camhi.

Approval of Minutes of the April 20, 2011 Committee Meeting

Motion to approve minutes by Estela López and seconded by Allan Taylor.

District Improvement Plan (DIP)

Lol Fearon gave an overview of the DIP process. Eleven out of the twelve districts are coming back to update their DIP. These revised DIPs will be presented to the State Board of Education in the fall. There are three new districts that will be presenting their DIPs for the first time. Hartford is in their second year of their DIP and will not be presenting this year. They use the three tier accountability process. 1) use of data for determining need; 2) special action leading to student achievement; and 3) improvement plan, which is a three year plan.

The DIP is monitored by the District Data Team (DDT), which consists of the district's central office administrators, teachers, parents, union representatives and our TA team. Initially, our TA team runs the meetings. When the district becomes versed in the DDT meetings, they then run the DDT meetings. Our TA team is still part of the DDT. The DDT meetings are held once a

month. There are subcommittees under the DDT. These subcommittees represent the areas of district needs and meet several times between the DDT meetings.

The focus of the district depends on their benchmark data, graduation rate and the high school dropout rate. Districts now need a school climate strategy, which will be added to their DIP. The DDT, on a monthly basis, look at: benchmark assessments, formative assessments and adult actions. The school does walkthroughs to see if there is evidence of changes in instructional practices. The TA teams are very involved in the DDT. Standards for Data Teams are used to assess the effectiveness of the district and school data teams. Our bureau has begun to increase its involvement in the School Data Team (SDT).

Ellen Camhi wanted to know if parent involvement was part of this. The answer was yes. There are strategies for parent involvement. It depends on the needs of the school.

The DIP should have specific, focused goals and objectives. The goals should be limited, specific and data based.

There is a schoolwide data team and every school has to have an Instructional Data Teams (IDT). The School Improvement Plan (SIP) drives the IDT. The IDT has more focus on the classroom.

The original and revised DIP has to go before the State Board for approval but before it goes to the State Board of Education it has to get approved by the Ad Hoc Committee on Accountability. The recommendations, if any, from the Ad Hoc Committee are incorporated into the DIP. The DIP, also, has to be approved by the town's board of education.

Estela López wants more than the plan. Allan Taylor agreed. They would like the district Strategic School Profile attached from now on.

The DIP is a collaborative effort between the bureau and the district. There are key ingredients that should be in the DIP. There should be focus and research based strategies that impact both student outcomes and adult actions.

Windsor has been involved with CALI prior to being named a Partner District. Professional development (PD) activities are not listed in the Executive Summary but are included in the DIP.

DIP: Windsor

Interim Superintendent Dr. Ernest Perlini and Assistant Superintendent Robin Sorenson were present for the presentation. Jim Mitchell, an external consultant, from the Bureau of Accountability and Improvement was present. Lol Fearon made introductions. Dr. Perlini opened with the comment that the district has a good partnership with the state. Dr. Perlini told the committee that Assistant Superintendent Robin Sorenson spearheaded everything including the DIP and mission statement. In their DIP there were three areas of concern. They were: curriculum, assessment and instruction; data teams; and school culture. Individual schools and department plans make up the DIP.

The Windsor Board of Education voted on September 20 to accept the DIP by a 4-2 majority.

Estela López wanted to know what the best practices were and how the district was working to sustain them. The district responded that the best practices are: discuss and focus your work; fidelity to implementation and using actual student work. The most important item is maintaining and sustaining this focus. Assistant Superintendent Sorensen did acknowledge that more teachers each year are accepting this process with some resisters. Windsor also acknowledged that they need longer days and the union has agreed to this.

A motion to approve the Windsor DIP was made by Allan Taylor and seconded by Estela López. Motion passed unanimously. This DIP will be presented to the State Board of Education at its meeting on October 5, 2011.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nadine Dube