

EPAC Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 19, 2013
DSC Conference Rooms C&D
4:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 4:32 p.m.

Members Present:

Angelica Soto	Kimberly Holt	Kathy Painter	Mohammad Shirazi
Kimberly Padilla	Adriana Murillo	Lorena Martinez	Rudy Rodriguez
Oscar Gonzalez	Herlinda Johnston	Melissa Piña	Dr. Magdalena Aguilar
Efren Navarro	Olga Terrazas	Maria Belinda Arnold	Angelica Herrera
Dulce Aleman-Seanez	Lori Alt	Josefina Mendoza	Melissa Smith
Irene Rojas	Annette Gonzalez	Angelica Zubia	Darren Cole
Mayte Marquez	Ernesto Espinoza	Yvonne Romero	Paul Harrington
Jessica Ferando	Armando Morales	Brandon Rios	Torita Hansby
Conception Gonzalez	Cynthia Herrera	Emily Thompson	Neysa Hardin
Antonio Rosales	Sonia Schulte	Isela Peña	
Gerardo Morales	Liz Herrera	Dianna Rios	
Denise Triolo	Julietta Arredondo	Elizabeth Ponce Lugo	
Patricia Ochoa	Anna Muñoz	Monique Garza	

Cabinet/Staff: Dr. José Espinoza, *Superintendent of Schools*; Troy Byrne, *Interim Assistant Superintendent - Secondary Education*; Brenda Chacon, *Interim Assistant Superintendent - Elementary Education*; Ron Durkes, *Interim Assistant Superintendent - Administrative Services*; Tony Reza, *Chief Financial Officer - Financial Services*; Tom Eyeington, *Chief Operations Officer - District Operations*; Dr. Maria G. Arias, *Director - State and Federal Programs*; Shelley D. Chenausky, *Director - Child Nutrition Services*; Jennifer Davila, *Director - Bilingual / ESL Education*; Hector Reyna, *Director - Technology Services*; George Thomas, *Director - Career and Technical Education*; Luis Vega, *Chief of Police - Police Services*; Fernie Vasquez, *Assistant Director - State and Federal Programs*; Albert Aragon, *Officer - Police Services*; José A. San Miguel, *Internal Auditor - Superintendent's Office*; Ivonne Muñoz, *Team Leader - Technology Services*; Miguel Moreno, *Coordinator - Instructional Technology*; Oscar Leza, *Title I Specialist*

I. Welcome - Mr. Paul Harrington

Mr. Harrington opened the meeting and thanked members for attending. He also thanked members for the outpouring of community support for Socorro families that were hit hard by the recent rain and resulting floods that have caused so much hardship over the previous weeks. He then pointed out the notes page for members to use to report EPAC meeting information to their respective SIT committees.

II. Approval of EPAC Minutes & Superintendent Address - Mr. Paul Harrington & Dr. José Espinoza

Mr. Harrington asked members to approve the minutes taken for the EPAC meeting held on August 15, 2013. Members took no issue with the minutes and voted unanimously to approve them. Mr. Harrington then turned the meeting over to Dr. Espinoza, who welcomed members and stated that he would be leaving soon due to a dedication ceremony for Butler Elementary School. He stated to members that they should continue bringing any issues posed by campus SIT committees, emphasizing that their viewpoints are of utmost importance. He shared that the recent rains have posed problems across the District but that schools had done well in dealing with them. He spoke to members about the level of excitement surrounding the groundbreaking of the District's newest



school, which will be opening in the Sparks area next year. Branching into safety, Dr. Espinoza spoke about a recent incident of violence at Spring ISD, where a student was stabbed and killed. He stated that he had shared an internet link regarding the incident with administrators as a reminder of the importance of the safety of all students and how parents count on SISD to safeguard their children. Dr. Espinoza then spoke about the District's self-audit and about how Mr. José San Miguel, the District's Internal Auditor, is working to ensure ethical behavior. He added that another internal auditor would be hired. He urged members about the importance of reporting issues such as fraud or misuse of funds via the Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline. He stressed the notion of supporting teachers at campuses. Before finishing, Dr. Espinoza was asked whether the first District benchmarks would be available in Spanish. He called upon Ms. Brenda Chacon, who replied that they would be available in Spanish and that teachers should ask their campus State Compensatory Education Intervention (SCEI) Coaches about the benchmarks. SCEI coaches were emailed all the versions of the benchmarks.

III. Safety Update – Dr. Magdalena Aguilar, Mr. Luis Vega, and Mr. Albert Aragon

Dr. Aguilar introduced SISD Police Chief Luis Vega, who spoke about Senate Bill 1114. This bill states that Class C citations cannot be issued to students for disorderly conduct, disruption of class, or disruption of transportation. In effect, teachers and administrators will have to follow the protocol of their discipline plans and will have to file reports themselves whenever an incident of said nature has occurred. School Resource Officers will assist campuses to fill out the packets necessary for filing reports of these cases. Part of the intended result is to ensure that campuses manage these situations as best as possible at the campus level before escalating to the involvement of SISD Police Services. The presentation was then handed back over to Dr. Aguilar, who stressed the importance of trying to remedy problem behaviors at campuses first as part of a formal protocol. She stated that the District would hold a safety committee meeting on September 25, 2013 and went over a brochure titled "Safety Is First." Using a PowerPoint presentation, she went over the main points of the brochure. Officer Albert Aragon interjected information regarding the District's security initiative, which includes the installation of more security cameras at campuses, the upgrading of the Dispatch center, and Hall Pass procedures. Loma Verde Elementary was highlighted for having excellent safety measures.

IV. Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline – Mr. José San Miguel

Mr. San Miguel presented about the Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline, which is a new endeavor that is crucial to the reporting of concerns that people might have. He stated that if anyone knew of anything questionable happening in the District or at its campuses, he/she could call (915) 937-0199, even anonymously, to report it. Mr. San Miguel spoke about the information provided on a flyer and also provided his own contact information. A member asked for an example of things that could be reported and Mr. San Miguel responded that any waste of funds, campus clubs handling money incorrectly, or improperly handled activity accounts are examples of items that could be reported. He stated that SISD's recent self-audit pointed out that people didn't know who to contact in such cases, which is why the hotline is in place in addition to his own activities as Internal Auditor. Mr. Tony Reza added that even curriculum related issues such as improper grade maintenance could be reported. He stated that a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) is being implemented to help remedy shortcomings reported by the audit and that a copy of the CAP would be emailed to all EPAC members. He also stated how outreach efforts have been undertaken to address students who have been affected by some of the issues listed in the audit. Member Angelica Soto asked if more support to affected students identified as English Language Learners (ELL) would occur at high schools, to which Mr. Reza responded that efforts are primarily at the secondary level but other areas are being looked at as well.



V. **SIT Concerns** – *Mr. Paul Harrington*

Mr. Harrington asked members to voice any concerns proposed at SIT committee meetings.

A member asked about the time for posting grades for report cards, and Mr. Miguel Moreno responded that more time will be available to post grades on the system. He stated that the Ad Hoc committee would meet to decide on dates and more information would be made available soon. He also stated that support to teachers regarding the system would be provided via a PowerPoint presentation that would be shared with campuses.

A member asked about unit assessments, stating that there is an issue with principals asking for unit assessments to be finalized by certain dates in spite of the fact that more time may be needed for students to properly master concepts. The member stated that teachers are told that DSC personnel may pull up assessment data at any time, hence the urgency for assessment data to be entered by the deadline. Teachers are willing to comply as best as possible with the directive, but it should be understood that there may be an imbalance between the mastery of a skill and an assessment which may prove premature for some students. Dr. Aguilar responded that unit assessments are really for principals to review in order to develop a plan of support for both teachers and students, and that unit assessment deadlines are not overseen by the Curriculum and Instruction Department. She stated that, while benchmarks are a district initiative that must be carried out within the assigned window in order to know how to support campuses, unit assessments are at the discretion of the principal. They may be regarded as part of the data piece for principal evaluations carried out by assistant superintendents, but they are not pulled, looked at, or analyzed by DSC personnel. She stated that feasible unit assessment dates can be discussed by administrative teams and teachers at the campuses.

A member shared that outdated technology tools are a concern at her campus. She stated that physical remodeling occurred at her school and the school's administrative team would like to upgrade technology there. Mr. Moreno responded that the campus improvement plan is key to analyzing the school's needs and to allocate funding. He added that the Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) is an option that the school can use to avoid purchasing full-priced computer hardware, but it is important to contact Technology Services for help in evaluating the situation. Dr. Arias stressed that the needs expressed in the school's Comprehensive Needs Assessment are of utmost importance if technology upgrades are to be considered.

VI. **Breakfast in the Classroom** – *Ms. Shelley Chenausky*

Ms. Chenausky presented about Nutrition Services guidelines for "Breakfast in the Classroom." She spoke about teaching students about reasonable portions and that this is why students cannot consume leftover items in coolers. She spoke about Federal initiatives towards reducing obesity amongst American children and about issues such as food stocking and funding management. She stated that, under current guidelines, a la carte food items must be paid for by students, but that this is not a feasible action for teachers to undertake in their classrooms. She stressed that, while students cannot be forced to eat, they should be encouraged to eat by the teacher not only because it promotes elevated academic performance, but also because it promotes overall good health. When asked about how to deal with negative teacher attitudes towards *Breakfast*, she stated that convenience foods are offered to minimize mess. Prepacked items that are not consumed are restocked for later use.

VII. **Staff Development** – *Dr. Magdalena Aguilar*

Dr. Aguilar presented to members about offering Special Education teachers a reimbursement for obtaining a Bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) certification. The reimbursement program is meant to bolster campus' ability to address ESL support issues for students, constituting an



excellent professional development opportunity for teachers who opt to participate. She also spoke about a survey form to gather feedback regarding what staff development is needed at campuses. Members are to prompt SIT members to discuss this and fill out the form in order to implement more effective professional development.

VIII. Closing – *Dr. Maria G. Arias*

Dr. Arias reminded members about discussing the major points of EPAC meetings with their SIT committees and shared that SISD Trustee Hector Gonzalez was pleased with what he had encountered during his visit to campuses regarding committee meetings. She thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 6:04 p.m.

