

PARENT ENGAGEMENT FORUM MINUTES

February 22, 2008

In Attendance

Joy Kendal, Beverly Waters, Erin Cranor, Sherri Leary, Skip Rapoport, Jo Boyd, Beverly Patton, Verda Hines, Georgeann Ray, Mary Jo Malloy, Eva Melendrez, Holli Kalaleh, Mike Englert, Lauren Kohut-Rost

Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO)

This discussion is a follow up from the previous month's discussion.

- Dr. Norberta Anderson, English Language Learner Program Director, provided a handout and PowerPoint presentation on English language learners in the Clark County School District.
- The AMAO measures proficiency of ELL (English Language Learner) students in the district.
- The CCSD now has 105 different languages represented in the ELL population with 147 countries of origin. Spanish speakers represent 87% of all ELL students with Tagalog (Philippines) the second largest non-English speaking population.
- Of the ELL learners in the district, 73% come from the United States.
- The total minority enrollment in the district is 63.87% of all students.
- AMAO is an NCLB (No Child Left Behind) requirement. The AMAO measures five levels of English language proficiency.
- There are two key components to language acquisition – social language and academic language. The goal is to achieve academic language proficiency to allow students a greater opportunity for educational success.
- Upon entering the district, students are evaluated and, as appropriate, assigned a code indicating their level of English language mastery. This initial coding is utilized in tracking progress through subsequent evaluations so that progress can be measured. According to research, it requires 5-7 years for a student to become proficient in a second language.
- Absenteeism has contributed to our students historically not meeting AMAO standards. The two key components to students achieving proficient language acquisition are quality of instruction and parental involvement.
- The CCSD also monitors students exiting the program for two years to ensure that the language acquisition is maintained after leaving the program.
- Under NCLB, students that exit the program are tested and considered a part of the ELL subgroup for a period of two years.
- An Action Plan was put in place for every CCSD student who did not achieve AMAO criteria. This includes the implementation of High Quality Sheltered Instruction (HQSI) which is a research based, best practices instructional program for ELL students.
- In some rare instances, due to the existence of other ELL supports and programs, HQSI may not be applicable. All schools with English language specialists do utilize HQSI. Training of teachers is ongoing and is available on a school by school basis through Professional Development as well as at CSN and Sierra Nevada College.
- Intensive HQSI instruction is provided for new teachers.

Guidance & Counseling – PSAT Results, AP Information and General Guidance & Counseling Information

Kim Boyle and Brian Myli provided a presentation on the impact of universal 10th grade PSAT testing on student achievement.

- The 10th grade PSAT initiative began in the fall of 2004. This test provides practice, under standardized testing conditions, for upcoming tests including the SAT, ACT, and AP exams. The district has also embraced the “open access” approach to encouraging all students to challenge themselves by taking AP courses.
- A significant statistical difference is indicated for those participating in the 10th grade administration of the PSAT. In 2006, the average score for those taking the PSAT once was 1367. For those taking the exam twice (as a result of taking the exam in 10th grade) the average score was 1637 – a difference of 270 points. In 2007, those taking the PSAT averaged a score of 1348 while those taking the PSAT for a second time achieved a score of 1591 – a difference of 243 points.
- A handout was provided illustrating improvements in Advanced Placement (AP) course enrollment and testing.
- We continue to see increased numbers of students enrolling in AP courses and taking AP exams.
- Currently, 48-49% of students taking the AP exams receive a grade of 3, 4, or 5 (required for college credit in most institutions that accept high school AP coursework). There has also been an increase in the ethnic diversity of students taking AP courses and tests.
- Additional benefits of taking the 10th grade PSAT were also noted. These include access to My College Quick Start, which is a College Board customized test preparation tool provided at no cost to the student or their family. Access to this program is predicated on taking the PSAT.
- My Road, a college career planning tool, is also included as a sub-component to the My College Quick Start Program.
- The College Board Plan of Action has been provided to administrators, counselors, and teachers to provide tools for student support.
- The Summary of Answers Skills (SOAS) provides a specific content analysis for tests.
- AP Potential is a software program that correlates a student’s PSAT scores to likely success on AP exams. The purpose of this program is to identify students who should be successful in AP courses and on the exams.
- A PSAT test interpretation training for parents is scheduled for March 4 at Del Sol HS at 8:30 a.m. or 6:30 p.m. and at Cimarron-Memorial HS on March 6 at 8:30 a.m. or 6:30 p.m.
- A question was raised about the utilization of the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) test in the CCSD. It was pointed out that this exam is not commonly used in secondary schools but is more of a college level assessment. AP exams serve a similar purpose by allowing students to “test out” of courses at those higher education institutions who accept the AP exams (scores of 3, 4, or 5).
- In order to more effectively inform parents of upcoming standardized testing opportunities for their students, ParentLink, school websites, and monthly newsletters will be utilized.
- As per AB 212, all students in high school will be given a four-year academic plan. This plan provides another opportunity for parental involvement. A comparable middle school academic plan is being created so that students at the younger grade levels can benefit from the same long-term planning goals.
- Parents are encouraged to more fully utilize school counselors in explaining educational and career options to students, especially those available through the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE).

- Kim Boyle provided a handout highlighting statistics regarding remediation in the NSHE. This information, as well as the testing data discussed, is in keeping with Dr. Rulffes' "Keep Your Eye on the Cap" initiative. Specifically, the goal is to reduce the drop-out rate, increase the graduation rate, and improve the quality of the graduates.
- The presentation by Guidance and Counseling concluded with the distribution of a flyer identifying free ACT/SAT preparation tutoring available to students in each region.

Budget Cut Status Update

- The Superintendent's goal is to attempt to keep the budget cut discussion out of the classroom. This includes the status of "one-shot" monies and allowance for reversion to the general fund.. This is money that would impact career and technical education, state funded full-day kindergarten, state funded empowerment, some GATE money, etc.
- The Governor's Office has requested school districts to provide details of proposed cuts by April. Questions continue to be asked regarding legality of "one-shot" funds reverting back to the general fund.
- Already it has been determined that some elements of the Enterprise Resource Program (ERP) will be placed in hibernation until more funding is available.
- A survey made available to the public is being evaluated to determine where citizens would like to see cuts. The Nevadans for Quality Education website, which can be accessed at <http://www.nevadansforqualityeducation.org>, provides regular updates on potential budget cuts.

Miscellaneous

- Eva Melendrez requests that parents provide feedback on the parent glossary at next month's meeting.
- A cyber-bullying training is being offered on March 3 at Clark HS at 9:30 a.m. The Nevada PTA will be hosting their Convention/Expo (available to the public) on April 24-26 at Sam's Town Convention Center, Third Floor Ponderosa Room. State legislators and other lawmakers will be invited to the Thursday night dinner on April 24th

Next Meeting: March 14 at 9:30 a.m. in Conference Room 466 of the Sahara Administrative Building.