

Colorado Springs School District 11
DAC (District Accountability Committee) Accreditation Subcommittee
<https://www.d11.org/Page/6992>

DAC Accreditation Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 22, 2021 (5:00pm-6:30pm)

Recording of meeting commenced at 4:53pm

Meeting Attendees:

Alexis Knox Miller, Brenda Miller, Clara Hoellerbauer, David Khaliqi, Jane Tucker, Jan Rennie, Lyman Kaiser, Parth Melpakam, Stacy Brisben, Steve Lambert, Trish Nixon, Velvet Stepanek

Agenda discussion:

I. Master Plan Community Engagement survey responses – Dr. Khaliqi

Jane Tucker- “excellent” response rate with less than 10% responding is overstated. That doesn’t feel like a lot of people when making decisions regarding five school closures. We’re actually talking about 4% of the district overall voted in favor of this certain plan and we’re putting a lot of weight into this survey. As if the community has spoken and this is what they want. I would never say that an 8% response rate was good or a representative. My guess it that this is very biased and the overall number is just a very low response rate. You can’t base any statistical significance on a survey that has a response rate of 8%. That is very low.

David Khaliqi- This was a qualitative survey. Feedback was given primarily from community groups. The primary mission of this was to have a tool for those feedback sessions. This is more of a focus group type of data. For the purposes of how the data were used there was a lot of helpful information about how people processed the layout of the presentation of the information, and what they thought and felt about it. Educational data is very difficult to randomize and receive response rates upwards of 60%. Everything is depressed compared to medical research and psychological studies. This was helpful data to guide the conversation and give priorities for the community as a gauge. Cooperative Strategies used a lot of the data well. They really did a lot of work around the qualitative responses. What they used was solid, but definitely not statistical or rigorous. Approximately 3233 survey responses were received

Jane Tucker- I just hope that the District will listen to what we talked about in getting more feedback through SACs and other avenues to speak to people at schools and not rely entirely on this survey to make decisions.

Clara Hoellerbauer- In terms of the survey, it was a data source that helped us understand some opinions, but we spent hours and hours understanding a multitude of data, everything from permits to projected enrollments to facility conditions. We had a significantly better understanding of the multitude of data, which helped us make the recommendations. I did not think that the survey was a representation of what the entire community wanted or thought. In referring to the whole community, it is not just about the survey, but it's also the fact that the committee was pretty representative of a multitude of different groups of people and bodies within our community including City Officials, students, staff members and parents.

Velvet Stepanek- I reached out to all the School Accountability Chairs and Principals at the schools that they are planning to repurpose asking them to reach out to Josh Chism and his team and the District, to have them address the questions that those specific communities have. I'm going to send something to the Board saying that I did that as well because I just really feel like those communities need a voice in it. A school like Edison that is doing a great job for their kids, and then now their school is going to be repurposed in several years. It is hard for that community that's worked there.

Alexis Knox Miller- I'm more disheartened hearing that we didn't have translators at some of these things. We haven't aggressively targeted our more marginalized communities and those communities that are more vulnerable. The folks who we probably need to hear from are not showing up to some of our meetings. If we are going to open this can of worms, we're going to have to aggressively target communities.

Velvet Stepanek- I want all the parents at those schools to know that there are going to be these meetings. They have the opportunity to come and ask their questions.

Jane Tucker- There needs to be a lot of communication beyond sending out a plan or asking for information on a survey. Is there any plan from the district side to really reach out to communities who are less engaged and less willing to come to meetings like that?

Alexis Know Miller- Dr Thomas, and I met with a few different activists in our community and community organizations, and they know about our Facilities Master Plan meetings. We are having those conversations from an equity lens. Do you want this happening in your community? We are having those discussions.

Steven Lambert- We are going to have to convince people that this is a good thing and get to a point where we can answer questions about that. This is why we're moving kids from this school to this school and that these are the new awesome materials that you'll have access to. We need to humanize it.

Lyman Kaiser- The biggest concerns I have heard are centered around closing the two middle schools in the center of the District. Boundary changes for North and West to support those students is a concern. We need to figure this out before we go for a bond. Changing boundaries is a way to get the community upset with you.

Jane Tucker- Regarding the Academic Master Plan, we heard a lot about magnet programs but not how we will improve academics overall. What is the overall Academic Improvement Plan? Having a magnet program is great but if our reputation is not having good neighborhood schools, then we're not going to improve as a district, and we're not going to attract students overall. Relatively few students are going to go to these magnet programs. The vast majority of our students will continue to go to their neighborhood schools.

Lyman Kaiser- David Engstrom and his team and the Board understand that quality schools for all is needed and they are going to reframe the next time around and address the issue of how do we provide quality education in every school. It is on their radar.

II. **Universal Screener (MOY) – Dr. Khaliqi**

Comprehensive assessment that tests standards to all students, but students do not need to feel like they have to answer every item. This gives us actual, real data. Questions are based on state standards. This takes into account the standards and the timeframe and that gets factored into the scale score calculation. We expanded the window, so the scale score

calculation becomes more specific and more accurate the smaller the window of testing is, because you don't have that variability of where they should be, but we wanted to expand the testing window so that adds a slight variability. There is some growth, but students are not where they should be (in a non-COVID scenario). We have improved growth performance in math as well but still under performing by grade level. This is just one metric that is being used to measure student performance and gaps. If state testing occurs, there will most likely be no school performance framework tied to testing, and participation rates will most likely be very low.

Jane Tucker- We have long standing problems with achievement in the District. We are now looking at it more closely. Hopefully the District will continue to do so beyond COVID.

David Khaliqi- As Alexis mentioned, these problems are now being revealed, because it's affecting particular populations that we are not used to seeing it in. This has to be systematized across ALL schools because when things get really crazy, as they have, we see that this isn't just a challenge at ACT or Empower schools. This is a challenge for all schools and need to have those same tools and the same language to do that for all schools.

Lyman Kaiser- We are burying the impact of poverty and what we've seen is the different segments that poverty is going to show up as a much bigger factor than some of the other things that we might be looking at. The poverty issue may be a bigger factor than race.

Alexis Knox Miller- That is not the case. Research shows us that race is a bigger factor. All of our research around equity is showing that race is usually the problem and mostly because of expectation gaps and biases within our teachers.

Lyman Kaiser- The poverty factor, and all the things that go with the family issues and everything else becomes a much bigger issue than race.

Alexis Knox Miller- Research supports that poverty is a factor, but it is not the number one factor.

Jane Tucker- I think we have this in our own District. Who is least likely to graduate from high school in our district? We look at this data. Black males.

Brenda Miller- When I'm teaching my kids, I don't look at their color so I don't look at them as black or white. As a teacher I find that offensive.

Alexis Knox Miller- I think that it's going to be one of the conversations that we continue to have to have in our District. Coming into it with our best selves we don't enter a space apolitically, we don't enter a space without thinking about any of our experiences. Research that supports that colorblind ideology and "I don't look at my students as any color. I'm just teaching all of them", is not supported by any research. There are biases that impact the way in which we teach our students and in which they learn. That is what we have to tackle and it's hard and it's uncomfortable and it feels offensive. But, it's the truth. There are biases associated with how we come into the classroom and it's showing up in our outcomes. If we had no gaps I would say, yes, all of our teachers are coming to this very colorblind, but that's not what's happening. We have lots of gaps that support the research and it's happening nationally. If a black student and white student are performing side by side, and they have a white teacher, that white student is four times more likely to be referred to gifted and talented. If you replace the white teacher with a black teacher the gap goes away. There is something happening within our system that we must address. When children come into Kindergarten, there are no gaps. These are manmade gaps. When we

measure kindergarteners who come into a situation, completely the same, and the only difference is race, there are no gaps. But if we follow those kids all the way through school, there becomes all these different kind of academic gaps and they are not natural. They are man made. And by that, I mean, that they are usually founded in some racism that we have. That's really the push and pull for us in this district as we're talking about equity, and those are the conversations that are going to get tough and kind of hard. But the gaps are not natural. You do not see them until our kids matriculate through school.

Stacy Brisben- We have to agree that if we don't start looking at our biases, we all have biases without that awareness and without that self reflection piece of it, it's really difficult to step back and stop it. Once you've got those biases and you figure out where you are, it's easier to help others and our colleagues and say, I heard you say this, it kind of made me feel like this. So that people are understanding that their language can come across differently than their intent. Their intent can come across stronger than they expected it to be. Our curriculum is so biased so that if you're not able to look at what the biases are, you're not able to bring up other examples of where that curriculum is showing up in different parts of history, different cultures, different music, different everything. It's that awareness piece that if we don't step out and start looking at ourselves, we can't help the kids in the classroom until we take care of what we've got to take care of. We need to look passed the curriculum piece.

Alexis Knox Miller- When our students feel like, their very deep sense of culture being attacked, beyond holidays, the deep sense of who they are, this collected idea that a lot of our kids of color have, they can no longer learn, their brain actually shuts down. It is flooded with cortisol for 15 minutes, and they are no longer learning. So the daily microaggressions that happen to some of our students, little black girls come into the classroom and teachers want to touch their hair or talk about their hair, or "you sound very smart for a black kid". Those are the things that happen daily in our schools and when those things happen, you've lost your kid for 15 minutes. They cannot learn anymore. All of these things are happening where kids are unable sometimes, to even access the curriculum because of things that are happening within the classroom.

III. DIBELS (Acadience) data review – Dr. Khaliqi

Time did not allow for this discussion

IV. Access for ELLs

Time did not allow for this discussion

V. CDE process for State Board hearings

Time did not allow for discussion

Next Accreditation meeting will take place Monday, March 8th, 2021 from 5:00pm-6:30pm

DAC Accreditation meeting minutes can be found in the DAC Drop box:

<https://www.dropbox.com/login?cont=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dropbox.com%2Fh>

Meeting adjourned at 6:38pm