

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

DAC Accreditation Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 25, 2021 (5:00pm-6:30pm)

Recording of meeting commenced at 4:56pm

Meeting Attendees:

Alexis Knox Miller, Ama Dei, Clara Hoellerbauer, David Khaliqi, James Nason, Jane Tucker, Jan Rennie, Jared Welch, Jenny Courtier, Julie Ott, Ken Miller, Lyman Kaiser, Parth Melpakam, Sean DePaula, Stacy Brisben, Velvet Stepanek

Agenda discussion:

I. Middle School Interventions for Mitchell High School (DePaula, Miller, Nason, Welch)

James Nason- We test students in reading when they come in to determine whether students will be in reading intervention or not. We look at student abilities based on data from their common formative assessments. We work with math teachers that are the elementary team as well trying to get some introductory data for our students. We test our kids with Trans math which is a placement. These tests are also used by the Special Education department and again, our teachers are differentiating their instruction on a daily basis based on formative assessments. We work with students both on the social emotional and academic side. We work closely with the other middle schools as well.

Ken Miller- We use multiple intervention contact points including the Read 180, System 44 and Trans math. We partner with Swigert and have invested in having purposeful conversations through the multi-tiered systems of support processes. We identify students through the abc's of attendance, behavior and course performance and having deliberate conversations. We are continually looking into teacher tutoring. How parents can support students from home while we help alleviate some of the stress on parents with our support. Show students how to access their grades so they know where they are with regard to their grades. We have invested in organizational skills with students and work with them to make sure they get to school each day. We have assessment assemblies to show students weighted assessments and have conversations about the importance of doing well on weighted assessments as those assessments will transition with them into high school.

Sean DePaula- We look at Power BI data to figure out what our students need. It gives us data on attendance and behavior so we can determine where our students need the most support. We have a Discovery period where students can check their grades and goal setting each week. Counselors are working with targeted groups of kids in each grade level primarily regarding academics and helping them be successful with their course grades. We have co-taught language arts and math classes for 8th graders for an easier transition into Mitchell. We are giving kids incentives for good grades, good attendance and no missing assignments. Advisory teachers are reaching out and making positive calls to families monthly to engage in student success. We have set up home visits to increase attendance.

We have added drama and medical detective classes which feed into Mitchell's Performing Arts and Biomedical programs. We are also looking at growth data.

Jared Welch- We look at how we can improve instruction and how to continually develop students in mastery of the standards. The main focus due to the pandemic is on attendance and engagement. We want to make learning engaging and focus on how can we engage students. We are working on the best practices around engagement. We are giving teachers more professional development time to work with our block schedules and data driven instruction and assessments. We continue to work on improving instruction and aligning to standards-based instruction. We are working with Universal Screener data to improve how we teach concepts and skills. Incentivizing students to attend class and engaging in class.

Jane Tucker- One area where we see stark differences are among kids who qualify for free or reduced lunch versus kids who don't. That was consistent across the schools. What kind of interventions are in place to help kids who are poor?

James Nason- Our FRL kids are in the high 80s-low 90s so almost all of our kids fall into that category. We provide voluntary after school tutoring and summer programs (pre-COVID). We focus on math and language arts and try to fill in the gaps in learning and comprehension. We use the EWI process once a week where we're identifying kids that are struggling in their academic and behavior grades. We are constantly looking at the data and how we can improve instruction and measuring how effective the instruction is. We look at our kids in advanced math the same way we look at kids that are 2-3 grades behind.

Ken Miller- We work closely with Swigert just because the schools marry each other quite a bit. Going back to AVID and those organizational tools for every student in the building. We have a high turnover mobility rate, we make contact with quite a few students throughout the year. As soon as the student arrives at Galileo, they receive a 3-ring binder, dividers pencil pouches, paper, and other materials to become successful. We eliminated barriers for students that did not have the materials they needed by providing them for each student. Part of that is that neuroplasticity of students walking into the building, knowing that they're here to be scholars, knowing they're here to learn. Students put their individual materials away, their backpacks, cell phones, all those things going in their lockers and then transition to being that student while they're at Galileo. And that's a mindset that we really nurture at the school, by removing that barrier. It just allows us to take those excuses and remove them. "I don't have anything to write with" was a major issue. As you walk around Galileo, you just see students being scholars. Every student has the same materials which bridge the equity between one family and another.

Jared Welch- We are working on 5E data from last year including teacher and student relationships. How we address and work with all students. We are working to build relationships and still provide tutoring every week, but the student teacher relationship is the most important.

James Nason- With additional Title funding we were able to hire a 4th counselor which freed up counselors time to counsel students, rather than just schedule them. The funding also supports materials and supplies for students and teachers.

Sean DePaula- At Mann, we are finding that our reduced lunch students are out-performing our regular priced and free lunch students. We do have a Counselor Core Grant as well. So that supports an extra counselor so that our counselors can intervene with more kids. It is

really about being data driven and figuring out which kids need support and what those supports need to be. We also have a community liaison who works closely with our free lunch and homeless families. She is able to help secure hotspots for kids, pay rent, utilities and things like that. She has school supplies and clothes. So, we have those things in place to help some of our students that are struggling financially so that they can focus on school and be more successful.

Jane Tucker- How are some students being advanced? Are you talking with families about retaining kids who are nowhere near grade level?

Alexis- Retention is one of the worst practices we can employ to ensure equity. Research shows that retention is not helpful in preparing students for the next grade level. When kids are retained, the drop out levels increase.

James Nason- We look at ways to intervene during the year and identify what we can and have pathways in place for kids who are struggling, reaching out to parents and encouraging parent involvement. We need to use data to drive our instruction and use data to contribute to decision making. It needs to be done systemically.

David Khaliqi- We have the ability to drill down with teachers and their students of risk factors with data. Teachers are able to see within their own class students that are in need of some targeted things.

James Nason- This is our process with EWI. We have a list of interventions including social/emotional behavior. There are multiple interventions available. If necessary, we come back with a different intervention, but that's done in a team setting and we've been doing that for 3 years now. It's still nowhere near perfect but it is becoming more effective, but it is a work in progress. Data driven instruction is key. That is going to allow us to make the best decisions for kids regarding instruction.

II. D/F rates

Jane Tucker- When you're flagging kids, are you really just looking at the grades and individual classes? Are you kind of pulling out who has at least one F or are you creating some kind of severity analysis? How many does he/she have or are they failing in English and math and kind of prioritizing different subjects. How are you talking about this in school buildings?

Stacy Brisben- Our school picks the kids that have multiple Ds and Fs, and we work with them first, and then the ones that have one, we put them with the teacher piece, but usually there's a systemic piece when kids are getting Ds and Fs. Usually there is another cause happening, a root cause happening, and you probably need more support with that. So that's how we pull them. We'll pull our multiples out and then our ones we keep as a tier one type of intervention piece.

Ama Dei- Our primary red flags are students who have multiple Ds and Fs. And then we have a student that has one or two. We do different things with tutors in our building. We have a certified teacher that has been pulling students that need the support. Some grade levels have kids come in on Monday for a couple of hours who really need help and make sure they actually are able to access material and getting them where they need to be. We look at grades and figure out what kids need and email parents. We have noticed that several of our middle of the road B and C students are suddenly having Ds and Fs. We are taking a

close look at that and finding root causes. We have students who have gone from being hands on in the classroom to suddenly having to be autonomous and figure it out. That is extremely difficult for a 12 or 13 year old, but even more difficult for a kid coming from 5th grade where you had, maybe 20 students in the class, and now it is “here is your Chromebook, you're on remote”. This is not an excuse, but an observation. It's a total formulation and switching of habits and a mindset for our students, and that's been tricky. We've been having to be patient and guide them through that and know that it's not on them. It is an adjustment and there was no preparation for it.

Lyman Kaiser- there seems to be a wide variation in how the District and schools are attacking these problems

James Nason- It has been tricky and we've been having to be patient and guide them through that and know that it's not on them. That's what we tried to drive down. Why is it happening? What does that F represent? Is it a compliance issue? Is it an access issue? Can the student get to the work? Is it a support issue? Is there no one at home to support you with the work? Or is it truly that you just don't understand? Being in this Virtual environment, and hybrid environment, is very challenging. These kids are struggling, and they don't have that support that we were able to provide them before in class, by whether we pull them out of a PE class, pull out of an elective, have them in a support or co-taught class. For whatever issue whether it is equity, and they do not have access to the tools that they need to be successful in their own setting, without being in school on a regular basis. It has a huge impact on how well they are doing.

David Khaliqi- Not to mention the social emotional piece, the motivation, the emotional motivation to do it. I think all of us, even on our best days, are hardly functioning.

Ama Dei- On the positive side, to their credit, some of our kids have learned the 21st century technical side. We are hoping that we can take the technology knowledge into next year and use it in the classroom. People who are excited about this fight this year being so chaotic. There are things that we can really do next year to help our kids.

James Nason- The difficulty is in making sure that the students are focused and understand what and why they need to do this. There are some positives. We will hopefully transfer this back into the classroom when we get 100% in person.

III. Graduation rates

Jane Tucker- how are things looking for on track to graduate this year? Are we expecting kids to graduate at a similar rate to last year, or not?

David Khaliqi- We are in the process of desegregating those data, because we move that data presentation to the 3rd quarter. State rates went up a little bit, District 11 dropped a little bit. The Hoonuit resource allows us to look at the probability of graduation over time including attendance, behavior and academic factors (state assessments). Providing progress and risk factors. Some of these attendance factors, or behavior factors, one student might have multiple factors. Another student might just have one that increases their individual probability of graduation. The next phase of this would be to share the information with families, being able to look at their student's outcome, this would be one driving factor that would be on their dashboard. We are working toward that goal.

IV. CDE process for State Board hearings

Time did not allow for discussion

Next Accreditation meeting will take place Monday, February 22nd, 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 6:40pm