Denver Public Schools
District Accountability Committee Meeting
November 17, 2020

Members Present: List of attendees

Time	Topic	Facilitator	Action Step	Notes
5:30-5:35	Welcome	Lisa McDonald	Review meeting norms	Notes for all sections below
5:35-5:40	Review Minutes	Molly O'Connor	Approve	
5:40-5:50	Framing	Scott Esserman	Discuss	
5:50-6:15	Committee Updates	Chair of Each Committee	Q&A	**1. FACE Subcommittee:** ● AGENDA ● issues document ● Doodle poll: https://www.doodle.com/poll/hnni5ffi86ermnps?utm_source=poll&utm_medium=link
6:15-6:45	Equity During Remote Learning	Assigned per group	Discuss in breakout groups	
6:45-6:55	Draft 3-5 Recommendation to BOE	Scott Esserman	Review group charts to identify commonalities and identify 3-5 to move	

Meeting Minutes for 11/17/20

Minutes taken by Molly O'Connor and Nancy Hernandez

Framing
- Elephant in the room is that DPS is going to be looking for a new superintendent, and there is added uncertainty in an already difficult time
- We will hopefully be receiving more information from the board regarding process, timeline, etc
- There are currently many, mostly, unknowns, and we'd like the DAC to be a space to bring people together rather than sow divisions
- What was the role the DAC played previously?
  - During last search, DAC recommended that the board not move forward without multiple candidates in a final round
  - Kristin, as DAC Chair, facilitated several community forums during the selection process

Request from DAC
Group who will be doing meeting minutes would like a meeting (Nancy Molly, Anna) before the next DAC meeting to discuss norms and guidelines for the meeting minutes (Scott and Nelvis) will help facilitate.

Meeting minutes from prior meeting approved unanimously.

Committee Updates
- FACE

- ○ In the agenda for this meeting there is a hyperlink to an ISSUES document compiled from 4 FACE meetings. There are short and long term goals within the document. In consideration of the Superintendent's departure, should consider prioritizing family engagement. DAC could get behind changing how the district engages with families. Should be radically different from the past. Those interested should review the document.
- Budget
  - ○ Committee has not met yet and Alise is not in attendance tonight so there is no update
- Great Schools
  - ○ Renewal process has been moved to the Board of Education March meeting, we should have that information before that meeting
  - ○ We will begin our role in the renewal process in January
  - ○ There are no schools applying to open, so there are no new applications to approve
- Performance
  - ○ Last year the DAC suggested a more active role in the UIP (Uniform Improvement Plan) process, we are moving forward with playing a more active role in the process

Equity During Remote Learning
- Scott notes equity will continue to be an issue and DAC has provided a Crisis Priorities document within this meeting's agenda to help drive a conversation around equity.
- Consider the Wellbeing and Engagement survey the district sent out. Major question is to understand the equity issues during COVID but also beyond COVID. Goal is to create 2-3 Recommendations from this.
- DAC used breakout rooms to examine needs and create recommendations for Central Office.
- Pertinent themes: In-person teaching, access to internet, amount of learning. Governor spoke about prioritizing in person school for children as a safe place for them to be. Based on data, we will be addressing COVID for next 2 years. In person teaching is a risk and important context to include.
- CDE policy states there are no seat time requirements. Is DPS system entrenched? The state has been trying to get districts to prepare students to be competitive in a global society. Vision is flexible time and space, competency based- goal is to

meet # of hours and district has discretion on how. In terms of time and curriculum and testing, there is more flexibility than perhaps this district acknowledges. Students may not be prepared for college under current system.

- There are no meeting minutes from each breakout room.
- Breakout Room #4 Issues and Recommendations List
  - **Breakout Group 4 Identified Needs & Recommendations**
  - There is a need for special education services. Services are not being met. Some resources are available but not adequate.
  - Predictability during COVID period. District was not as clear as other districts about what the goals are. Better communication and predictability. Give families an idea of how they are going to bridge gaps. Be better with communication and goals.
  - If we are going fully remote, then have a robust program and the tools needed to implement it. Give schools time to do this.
  - Food and Security. District has to continue to provide meals to students and families. Deepening partnerships with food systems around neighborhood schools.
  - Internet. If we know we are doing remote learning, and we have guidance on COVID, then figure out how to serve all students. Be aware of Dead Zones so we don't lose students in Denver Metro. Look for partnerships with Xfinity and other broadband providers. Internet for students, families and educators. Access to technology is crucial.
  - Communication undergirds a lot of issues. Many issues could have been avoided with consistency and clear communication.
  - Lack of strategic planning and visioning. People were talking about second COVID wave in summer and there appeared to be a disconnect with district leadership. Earlier in the year, everyone got grace but there was a period of time when we could have been planning better. If there's communication in silos, that is a problem too.
  - Post COVID issues will be just as severe. Should we look at summer and wrap around programs when school is out. We should consider instituting programs now. Address the crises that were there before COVID too. Food insecurity, IT were a crisis before and still are.

○ In other districts, there have been home visits to see what the issues are. DPS is not doing this. Can we have a paid or volunteer team? Go check on those who are not chronically online.

○ Find those who are doing this better than we are and copy them. We should be able to learn from other people. Pick a lane and do it very well. Look at neighboring districts (Cherry Creek Schools) and copy them. Schools had to find their own best practices for online teaching. No direction from district. No best practices for online learning.

○ Trauma and Mental Health/Wellness Post COVID-

○ Support for English Language Learners

○ Challenges will continue after COVID

○ Don't speak for all parents and all students. If you have privilege, you don't get to speak for everyone else.

○ Concerns about financial outcome of COVID and families leaving district.

Recommendations to BOE

● Meeting ended at 7:30 pm and 4 recommendations were selected to be further developed.
  Amanda Knezovich and Scott: Technical Centers to assist parents and students
  Karen Mortimer: Communications with parents
  Heidi Doterrer and Lisa McDonald: Teacher support serving diverse students, and accommodations for IEP in the virtual classroom.
  Melissa Megliola: Social emotional support