
DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE (DAC)

to: Susana Cordova and the Denver Board of Education

from: DAC Performance Subcommittee
Samuel J. Schneider, Performance Subcommittee Chair

subject: Unified Improvement Plan Feedback

date: March 14, 2019

SUMMARY

Below, please find drafted feedback regarding the unified improvement plan (UIP) as well as a drafted resolution regarding the District Accountability Committee's (DAC) involvement in the strategic planning and improvement process. Overall, the feedback is forward thinking in terms of the major improvement strategies and a greater collaborative work cycle is proposed regarding the DAC's involvement in strategic improvements to the district vis-à-vis the UIP and strategic planning process.

UIP FEEDBACK AND RESOLUTION

The feedback regarding the UIP is presented below according to each Major Improvement Strategy (MIS). We recognize that the UIP is more or less a backwards-facing document, but nonetheless make the following recommendations regarding each of the major improvement strategies based on the provided description, actions steps, and more. Please note that for the below feedback, this is representative of the members present at our most recent subcommittee meeting and has not been voted on by the DAC as a whole. The same is true for the drafted resolution below regarding the work of the DAC with relation to the UIP. This feedback and the drafted resolution will be voted on at the upcoming full DAC meeting on March 19, 2019. The final results of the feedback and resolution will be re-sent immediately following this meeting.

[Draft, not yet voted on] UIP Feedback

Whole Child

- Equitably increase number of whole child personnel per building (social workers, nurses, etc.)

Early Literacy

- Increase community outreach around early literacy programs and improve access to early literacy across all neighborhoods (including summer programming options)

Coaching and Leadership of best first instruction

- Move from a focus in "best first instruction" to high quality data driven instruction
- Include work here related to teacher retention strategies across the district, as an overall human capital strategy is not robustly presented

Culturally responsive education

- Offer description of the structure for new regional specialist role (related to culturally responsive education)
- Hire culturally responsive specialists that are representative of the population they will be serving
- Description of strategies related to recruitment and hiring of teachers of color
- Moving forward: decrease tracking practices in schools in order to more equitably drive at rigorous course taking
- Moving forward: Increase social studies coursework in high school aligned to non-dominant culture groups (women's studies, AA studies, Latinx studies, LGBT+ studies, Power/Privilege/Difference)

College and Career readiness

- No Current Feedback

Enhanced Planning

- No current feedback, interested to hear and update post-restructuring

[Draft, not yet voted on] DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE RESOLUTION REGARDING THE DISTRICT UIP (MARCH 2019)

whereas, The District Accountability Committee has the obligation to provide community perspective regarding the District Unified Improvement Plan;

whereas, The District Accountability Committee has traditionally had an ex post facto role in the development of the District Unified Improvement Plan;

Resolved:

- The DAC recommends that future involvement in strategic planning occurs earlier in the process to bring key community perspectives in at an earlier stage
- The DAC requests a reimagining and updating of the Denver 2020 plan, in line with the priorities of the district, its needs, and attainment or attainment of the Denver 2020 plan's specific goals
- The DAC recommends the development of a new process for articulating a new strategic plan that is driven by community groups
- The DAC recommends that the Board of Education adopt a policy regarding the nature of strategic planning at the district level; specifically it's ideal time frame, method of construction, stakeholder involvement, and role of leadership transitions in changes to strategic planning.