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Accountability Minutes 06/24/2008

Minutes for Tuesday, June 24, 2008 Meeting
of the
District Accountability Subcommittee
of the
Arlington School Committee

School Committee Room, Arlington, Massachusetts

(Approved September 8, 2008)

Present: Subcommittee Members --

Joseph A. Curro, Jr. (Chair)
Joseph E. Curran
Leba Heigham (Joined Meeting in Progress)

Nate Levenson, Superintendent of Schools

The Subcommittee Chair called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion of Mr. Curran and seconded by Mr. Curro, the minutes of the May 20, 2008 meeting were unanimously approved 2-0 (Ms. Heigham absent).

Review of Current Year Goals

The Superintendent introduced the discussion by stressing that the color-coded version of district goals and progress that was previously discussed at the School Committee/Superintendent retreat was intended for discussion only and that the officially approved accountability grid should be used for the purpose of making recommendations of points awards.

The Superintendent then proceeded to introduce one-page worksheets for a subset of goals, each of which worksheet included an explanation of progress against the goal and a recommended number of points to be awarded. He also presented back-up data where applicable.

Goals discussed included:

1. c) (Teacher Assistance Teams – 3 potential points): Mr. Curro moved to recommend the awarding of 3 points. After Mr. Curran expressed concern about the need to look closer at the presented information, Mr. Curro withdrew his motion. At this point, Ms. Heigham joined the meeting. After further discussion, the committee members reached an informal consensus to hold off on a vote during initial review of any goal if any member expressed a need for further information.

1. g) (Special Education Roles – 2 potential points): Ms. Heigham moved to recommend the awarding of 2 points. This motion was seconded by Mr. Curran and unanimously approved.

1. i) (Middle School Self-Reflection and Special Education Audit – 2 potential points): Following a discussion regarding

further breaking out the components of a measure for the purpose of potentially awarding partial points, Mr. Curro entertained a motion. Ms. Heigham moved to recommend an award of 2 points, but – failing to garner a second -- she withdrew this motion.

2. a) (K-8 Math Common Assessments per Schedule – 3 potential points): The Superintendent explained that there is some significant variability in the turnaround for data entry by teachers and that this data is used in the grading process. The committee discussed briefly the difficulty of working with inherited goals. Ms. Heigham moved to recommend the award of 3 points. Mr. Curran seconded this, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. b) (Usefulness of Math Common Assessment Data Format – 2 potential points): The Superintendent showed survey results indicating high variability between schools in teachers' assessment of usefulness of formats. He indicated that this will be a topic to be studied by the leadership team. Ms. Heigham moved to recommend the award of 0 points. Mr. Curran seconded this motion, which was passed unanimously.

2. c) (K-10 Writing Assessments per Schedule – 3 potential points): Ms. Heigham moved to recommend the award of 3 points. Mr. Curran seconded this, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. d) (Parent-friendly Curriculum Overviews of K-8 Writing Standards – 1 potential point): The Superintendent indicated that this was not completed. Ms. Heigham moved to recommend the award of 0 points. Mr. Curran seconded this, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. e) (K-5 Reading Common Assessments per Schedule – 3 potential points): Ms. Heigham moved to recommend the award of 3 points. Mr. Curran seconded this, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. h) (Implement K-2 Foundations phonics): Ms. Heigham moved to recommend the award of 2 points. Mr. Curran seconded this, and the motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

On motion of Mr. Curran, seconded by Ms. Heigham, the Subcommittee voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph A. Curro, Jr., Chair
District Accountability Subcommittee