Parker Local Stakeholder Group Reconvene

Monday, March 24, 2014

Parker Elementary School

5:00pm-7:00pm

LSG Members Present:

Marcia Guy

Deb Letendre

Chris Cotter

Kerri DePina

Michael Irving

Martha Kay

Dr. Pia Durkin

Information from Commissioner’s office re: parameters of LSG meeting:

1. Recommendations for modifications must come from LSG as a whole
2. 30 day timeline (any recommended modifications must be submitted by Mon. Apr. 7th at 5pm)
3. Recommendations made public when submitted to Commissioner
4. Deb serving as point person to collect, forward recommended modifications to Commissioner’s office

**Review of Priority Area 1:**

Concern re: Lively Letters (LL):

* Kindergarten staff hesitant re: use of LL because they are already using Reading Street
* Dr. Durkin: LL a supplement, not a substitute; it is another tool for teachers to use; research based support for developing phonemic awareness

Concern re: Empowering Writers (EW):

* Staff hesitant re: use of EW because Reading Street has embedded writing program and is “more effective”
* According to staff, “EW assumes students have certain skills” whereas Reading Street does not and the two programs are “not aligned” to each other
* Dr. Durkin: We know we need better PD/training/support for using EW effectively; again, it is another tool for teachers to support students; our students need high quality writing instruction.

Concern re: New Math Program:

* Teachers want to be involved in choosing new math program.
* They will be.

Concern re: Science:

* Don’t have existing curriculum, only a map—limited tools
* Need PD for using kits and science room (initially recommended by LSG)
* Plan should include more specifics re: science program—how staff will be supported to implement it
* Should include complete curriculum and PD
* Suggest: review and revamp of science curriculum to ensure sufficient materials/supports, etc. and PD for teachers to implement effectively

Concern re: PD determined by Chief Academic Officer

* Teachers want to be involved in selecting topics
* Dr. Durkin: L5 school. We need results and accountability. PD must be focused on needs and include follow up. Will be a combination of input from district and school.

Concern re: literacy coach and teacher leader roles

* Currently: TLS, Reading Specialist, other (?); concern that new positions in plan will not be sufficient
* Not enough specifics re: teacher leaders—how will they fulfill that role and have a classroom of their own?
* Suggest: 2 Literacy Coaches—one K-2 and one for 3-5

Concern re: K-5 vs. PK-5:

* Suggest review of plan to replace K-5 with PK-5 to be more inclusive of whole Parker program

***Votes:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Recommended Modification* | *Votes* |
| Review and revamp of science curriculum to ensure sufficient materials/supports, etc. and PD for teachers to implement effectively | unanimous |
| Review of plan to replace K-5 with PK-5 to be more inclusive of whole Parker program | unanimous |
| Addition of second literacy coach for total of 2 Literacy Coaches—one K-2 and one for 3-5 | 5 yes; 2 no |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Review of Priority Area 2:**

Concern re: line stating Parker teachers will “devote whatever time is required…”

* Should have a clear teaching schedule, with parameters
* Who dictates what time to devote? Who sets the standard?
* Should eliminate sentence or provide reference to schedule (e.g. see schedule on page…)
* Dr. Durkin: Turnaround Plan is “big picture” vs. a bargaining contract
* Suggest eliminate sentence containing “devote whatever time is required…”

Concern re: SPED programs

* Little mention of SPED in plan
* LSG had recommended investigating a co-teaching model, eliminating pull out
* Suggest: implement co-teaching model, eliminate sub separate/pull out

Addendum to SPED discussion:

* Additional suggestion: Recommend inclusion of review of SPED programs and services for all special needs students at Parker to ensure students’ needs are met in most appropriate program/service delivery model

***Votes***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Recommended Modification* | *Votes* |
| eliminate sentence containing “devote whatever time is required…” | 4 yes; 3 no |
| implement co-teach model, eliminate sub separate/pull out | 4 yes; 3 no |
| Recommend inclusion of review of SPED programs and services for all special needs students at Parker to ensure students’ needs are met in most appropriate program/service delivery model | Unanimous\* |
|  |  |
|  |  |

\*Dr. Durkin’s vote with caveat that there is not an attempt to adopt a single model as there is no one SPED model that meets the needs of all students—must be tailored to their specific needs

**Review of Priority Area 3:**

Concern re: staff input on training

* Resolved during Priority Area 1 discussion

**Review of Priority Area 4:**

Concern re: behavior management system/protocol

* LSG made recommendation re: identifying formal system/protocol for managing behavior—plan does not name one
* Suggest: Include “Parker will identify a consistent, evidence-based behavior management system and protocol for handling student behavioral issues”

Concern re: communicating behavioral expectations with parents

* Plan discusses communicating academic expectations, not behavior
* Suggest: Include an additional sub-bullet under 4.4 first bullet “Communicate key priorities in the turnaround plan…in a clear, family-friendly way” to state, “Educate families on school-wide behavioral expectations”

Concern re: technology absent from plan

* Recognize may not fit under Priority Area 4 (but whole plan)—still want to make mention of it
* Parker needs significant tech. upgrades
  + Ex: Windows XP will no longer be supported in April/May—all computers currently run on XP
* Suggest: Include an overarching recommendation that there is a “Comprehensive review of existing technology in the building to determine needs and that technology upgrades are made to ensure technology is a reliable and viable teaching and learning tool”

Concern: Why hasn’t plan been more broadly shared with parents?

* Draft only and available online
* However, parents not notified and not all have access to internet
* Dr. Durkin will discuss communication strategies with Commissioner, may include:
  + Blurb/notice sent home with info. re: how to access draft online or copies available in school
  + Dr. Durkin address on radio show
  + Deb use monthly newsletter
  + “Robo” call to Parker families: draft available in hard copy at school or online at [website]

***Votes:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Recommended Modification* | *Votes* |
| Include “Parker will identify a consistent, evidence-based behavior management system and protocol for handling student behavioral issues” | unanimous |
| Include an additional sub-bullet under 4.4 first bullet “Communicate key priorities in the turnaround plan…in a clear, family-friendly way” to state, “Educate families on school-wide behavioral expectations” | unanimous |
| Include an overarching recommendation that there is a “Comprehensive review of existing technology in the building to determine needs and that technology upgrades are made to ensure technology is a reliable and viable teaching and learning tool” | unanimous |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Working Conditions:**

Teacher/Union rep expressed concerns re: Working Conditions

* Dr. Durkin: discussion of working conditions: beyond scope of LSG, bargaining to occur between NBEA and Commissioner; members can voice concerns, but Dr. Durkin will respectfully abstain from all discussions
* Debra Letendre also will respectfully abstain from all discussions
* Martha Kay: also will respectfully abstain from discussion due to bargaining protocol
* Dr. Durkin: can forward Union documented concerns attached to LSG recommendations (voted: unanimous)
* Several concerns voiced including:
  + Increase in hours/days
  + New career ladder
  + Believe working conditions unfair, will drive many teachers away