

Meeting Summary SCPC

School Community Partnership Council – District Council General Meeting

Date: February 10, 2014

Location: Tucson High Magnet School Cafeteria, 400 N. 2nd Ave.

Call to Order: James Fish at 6:04 PM

Pledge of Allegiance: Mr. James Fish

Attendance: Michelle Simon (Moderator), James Fish (District Liaison and Director of Student Equity & Intervention), Dr. H.T. Sanchez (TUSD Superintendent), Steven Holmes (Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction), Joan Dawson-Werner (Secretary), Leo Masursky (School Board Liaison), Adelita Grijalva (TUSD Governing Board President), Kristel Ann Foster (TUSD Governing Board Member), Cam Juarez (TUSD Governing Board Member), Dr. Mark Stegeman (TUSD Governing Board Member) Designated SCPC representatives (see attendance record).

Michelle Simon (SCPC Moderator) thanked group members who submitted questions ahead of time and explained that Dr. Sanchez would talk for an hour and then take questions which would be submitted on index cards provided.

1. State of the District Presentation: Dr. H.T. Sanchez- Superintendent of Tucson Unified School District

- February 25, 2014 is the Strategic-planning meeting downtown in the TEP building. It will bring together business people, parents, students, and TUSD staff in order to devise a comprehensive plan for the direction that TUSD needs to take in the next 5 years.
- Dr. Sanchez has been to many community events to reach diverse populations. The people's questions reflect what parents want for their children and identify what they feel is important to them.
- Decrease of class sizes will begin with High School, staffing 27:1. This was done after looking at finances and creating a new scheduling process. This process is based on the number of registered students. It takes the number of students who want to take a course then divide that number by 27 (students per class) then by 5 (teaching periods in a day) and that will give the number of teachers needed to teach the course. Updating technology allows the use of an automated scheduler that gives us output. Starting in high school allows the process to be cleaned up and get the bugs worked out.
- State of Arizona is again going to cut the Education budget by 262 million dollars for regular student allotments for next year.
- If new money becomes available is it for the classroom, testing, or pay for performance funding.
- Title 1 funds can be used for class size reduction. However there is a 4% cut in Title 1 funding at the federal level due to sequester.
- There has been 2.5-3.5 million used for loss of planning and/or 6/5 teachers used to cover classes that did not have teachers.
- Jobs for next school year (2014-2015) have already been posted. Math, Science and Special Education positions are hard to fill due to lack of qualified candidates.
- Teacher salary compression: Working with TEA (Teachers Education Association) came up with a 3-year plan. The first year has started and it affects 640 teachers.
- Increasing students within TUSD will increase the amount of funding we receive.
- Dr. Sanchez going to the board to get their support for the next 2 years of the salary compression plan.

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- Curriculum and Efficiency audits have been completed. TUSD should have the reports in 3-4 months.
- TUSD teachers are adhering to the core curriculum. The district needs to produce a pacing document/academic calendar that outlines what needs to be taught. This alignment is important so that students in all TUSD schools are getting the same information/education.
- Dr. Sanchez says “building with people rather than doing things to people” is vital to the process. The curriculum will be created with teachers and principals as part of this philosophy.
- It is important to use the talent and expertise in our own district.
- The audit will require reorganization of administration.
- TUSD Has expanded Grad Link Program, AGAVE. These programs target drop-outs, students who failed AIMS, teen parents who cannot attend TAP and those students who are 1-2 credits short of graduation.
- Culturally relevant courses rolled out on three campuses but will be offered on all campuses.
- University High School will be evaluated by an impartial third party. After information is gathered then a decision will be made based on empirical data.
- Technology within the district was found to be inadequate by auditors. RFP to migrate to a data center (Cloud). Currently using a 2003 server. This is used to handle student sensitive data.
- 2.2 million dollar grant from ADE to update computers. 4.2 million dollars has been spent thus far on updating 30% of the computers within the district.
- Strategic Planning meeting set for February 25, 2014. TUSD has never had a long-term plan and hasn't included community input into planning. This planning meeting will include small, medium and large business owners, chamber of Commerce, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, African American Chamber of Commerce, Students, Teachers, parents, TUSD Governing Board members, and elected officials. After presentations each of the 40 groups will discuss what they want to see in the five-year plan.
- February is Black history month, but lessons on black history cannot be done in class because it is against state law.
- Update on USP: Desegregation must be for the entire district no a specific department. Increase quality education for all students in all schools.
- TUSD is a minority majority school district.
- TUSD must focus on quality of education and teach all students.
- Legal Counsel for the district has been changed to better keep things regarding USP out in the open.
- Dr. Vega and Steven Holmes are responsible for the facilitation and coordination of the USP.
- TUSD is the community's school district. The community needs to see changes to rebuild trust in the district.

2. Q & A Session

Notes: Michelle Simon (moderator) read the questions and Dr. Sanchez responded to all questions posed.

- **Is the strategic planning meeting open to the public?** Yes it is. It will also be recorded and can be seen on TUSD TV.
- **All throughout the speech not once was support staff mentioned. How are you going to make support staff feel valued?** Stretching the dollar for teaching and learning in the classroom as the student/teacher ratio drops the idea is to get back students who have gone outside TUSD will return and as that happens we will get increased funding and as that happens we can look at support staff funding. We need more funding from the state.

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- **What is being discussed for elementary and middle school in regards to class sizes?** We are working on middle school now and implementing the 1:27 ratio. We hope to have the budget out by next Friday.
- **What good will smaller class sizes be if we don't have textbooks for all students?** We need to do the alignment of standards/core curriculum before we do any mass purchase of textbooks. We also need to look at the use of technology because there are districts that have their books online.
- **Does the new method for teacher scheduling apply only to high schools?** We picked the smallest section (10 high schools) so that we can get it right before it is rolled out across the district.
- **What is the future of open enrollment for TUSD?** It's here to stay. It is allowable because it is state law. We will enhance and improve integration of students.
- **What can be done about students who are falling behind because they are chronically absent?** We do the phone calls, notes, give awards for attendance but the parents need to bring them, and we can't do that. We also need help from the courts when needed.
- **In elementary school, PE is important and so is good nutrition. What is being done in this area?** We are looking at contracting with people who can come into schools once a week and do things such as dance or folklorico. We are working with Pima County on gardens we have 26 of them throughout the district that can be used during science time to teach environmental stewardship and nutrition.
- **Will teachers and schools receive the technology they need?** There are 2 options at his time 1) Bond money to upgrade technology however we need to rebuild trust with the community before a possible bond is requested. 2) Have a deficit line in the budget for principal and interest on financing the new technology.
- **What is the timing of how classes are requested such as culturally relevant ones?** It has already started the course catalogs are already out.
- **The TUSD dual language program tends to emphasize English language acquisition. Does TUSD have a plan to implement a dual language or language immersion program for native English speakers in order to be competitive for 21st century with other states?** There is a whole methodology to doing this. It's a matter of bringing in co-teachers who can teach this and then they need to co plan.
- **In elementary school how are we going to be able to balance the needs of cultural diversity, elective learning, and a higher integration of science when the balance seems to swing toward just reading and math?** We need to balance available time spent on core curriculum. Curricula need to be integrated. So how do we create a robust integrated curriculum? We are working with University of Arizona partners moving towards a more contemporary way of teaching.
- **Now that the Deseg office has been disbanded, where does the responsibility of oversight and monitoring lie?** With me (Dr. Sanchez). I have my deputies, but ultimately I am responsible.
- **Are you planning on closing any more schools next year?** No. We are looking at ways to populate sites so we don't have empty buildings. One new use of closed sites next year is an Early Education Center for TUSD employees (day care services for their children). There will be one on the east side (Schumaker) and one on the west side (Brichta). The district is doing this as a benefit and it is not intended to make money just break even.
- **Is the Special Education Department going to receive more funding?** The efficiency audit found our special education is well funded, better than most states. Special education teachers are hard to fill positions not just in Arizona but in other states also.
- **Has there ever been an outside source come in to do the finance office audit? Can it be done?** It is done every year and is required by state law. The efficiency audit did review finances.

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Our next meeting is on March 31, 2014

Meeting Adjourned: 8:20 PM (Michelle Simon)

Summary prepared by: Joan Dawson-Werner 2/25/14

Summary Approved: Michelle Simon, 2/27/2014