

Meeting Summary SCPC

School Community Partnership Council – District Council General Meeting

Date: 11/18/2013

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

Call to Order: James Fish, 6:03pm

Pledge of Allegiance: Steven Gall

Attendance: Michelle Simon (Moderator), James Fish (District Liaison and Director of Student Equity & Intervention), Joan Dawson-Werner (Secretary), Leo Masursky (School Board Liaison), Steve Gall (P.E. Doctorate Candidate), Pam Palmo (Chief Human Resource Officer, Interim Executive Director, Designated SCPC representatives (see attendance record).

1. District Report: James Fish, District Liaison and Director of Student Equity & Intervention

Notes: Mr. Fish welcomed the group and gave an overview on current district activities.

- The district held the first combined ILT and BLT meeting in which they discussed the need to become interdependent and how to meet the needs of the district and community. They are developing a plan to be presented to the TUSD School Board in December, which will become part of the district's Strategic plan.
- Principals declined the showcase of schools for this year because of the short notice. However, if the group is interested, they would like to do it next year.

2. Guest Presentation: Steve Gall, P.E. Doctorate

Notes: Mr. Gall presented the group with information on legislation for required daily exercise in school. He stated that testing has become a priority in schools and PE has been slowly decreased and taken out of the school day. He also talked about how exercise does not have any additional cost associated with it, as the teachers can do daily exercise with the students. To highlight the importance of daily exercise he cited research that says students do better in class after physical activity. He was asked if he had gone to the School Board and he said he did. He circulated a hard copy of the petition for those that wanted to sign. Below is the link to the online petition and the TUSD Physical Activity and Wellness Policy.

Link to TUSD Physical Activity and Wellness policy:

<http://www.tusd1.org/contents/govboard/Sect1/IHAM.pdf>

Link to petition: <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/elementary-school-daily-physical-activity.html>

3. Pam Palmo, Chief Human Resources Officer, Interim Executive Director

Notes: Ms. Palmo was sent a list of questions regarding teacher vacancies and discussion topics regarding hiring practices by the group moderator, Michelle Simon. These questions guided the presentation and questions.

- Current teacher vacancies within TUSD as follows:
 - 60 General Education (49 classrooms)
 - 11 Non-classroom teachers
 - 26 Exceptional Education Teachers
 - 43 Schools have no vacancies
- TUSD utilizes/needs 2800-3000 teachers each year.

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- 250-300 Substitute teachers are needed district wide daily.
- 967 Substitute teachers are “on the books” with TUSD
 - 266 Substitutes have some type of teaching certificate with a range of endorsements.
 - 701 Substitutes have only a substitute certificate meaning they meet the minimum requirement that is set by the State of Arizona.
- 41 substitutes currently hold long-term positions. 4 are highly certified in the subject area in which they are substituting. 37 hold only a substitute certificate.
- 150 teachers (on average) retire each year. This means that HR plans to hire 150 teachers a year.
- TUSD has started implementing programs to hire teachers who have just graduated college. Last spring they started the “Stand by Teacher program.” This program is for student teachers who are graduating and have received endorsements from the principal and teacher at the school in which they were student teaching. 8 student teachers were assigned. The district is in the process of hiring teachers from the group that graduates in December 2013. They have had 7 referrals (4 in exceptional education, 3 in general education).
- TUSD is also having hiring fairs that focus on positions in schools that are “hard to fit.” They are recruiting through college fairs, the military, and local advertising. They are looking at pay and hard to fit positions and possible stipends in math, science, and exceptional education.
- With the consolidation and closure of schools last year, it pushed recruiting back about 2 months. HR had to move 200 teachers. Some teachers transferred to other districts, some were internal transfers, and some just left. They had 150-190 requests to fill positions a month from Feb through August.
- HR now going out to the market earlier.
- TUSD changing how they approach budget and staffing.
- HR looking at the possibility of offering contracts in stages.
- Starting salary in approximately \$33,000 + 301 money, which is considered middle of the road.
- TUSD has allotted 1 million dollars to fix compensation compression. The salary schedule was changed so teachers coming into the district no longer make more than those who have stayed within the district. This will bring pay up for those that have been in the district with yearly raises.
- Question was asked, “Does TUSD have more vacancies then others in the state?” Ms. Palmo said TUSD is close to other districts but she will get actual numbers.
- What makes a position “hard to fit?” Travel, population and school label.
- TUSD is looking at creating “District teachers” who do not have a classroom or school but they could be assigned a school and cover absences within the school.
- Dr. Clash, Principal of Tucson High Magnet School spoke about the positive work that HR has done in helping to fill the needs at Tucson High.
- How many teachers leave TUSD for reason other than retirement? Approximately 200
- What is TUSD ranked on salary and compensation? Ms. Palmo stated she will get that information, but TUSD does not beat the bigger school districts in the state.
- SCPC representative stated that she has heard that Insurance for families is too high for some teachers to accept a position. What is the family rate for insurance and can it be less based on a sliding scale? Ms. Palmo said she would get that information.

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- Compensation resolution plan restructured.
There will be set point based on hire date and number of years experience on hire. Compensation will move annually.
- This restructuring is currently only for teachers, but all positions will be looked at in the future.
- The plan is to start on January 20, 2014 with it being retroactive to the beginning of the school year. This date might be pushed back if problems arise in calculating the individual set points.
- The compensation resolution plan addresses teacher vacancies by keeping teachers from leaving and then coming back to make more money.
- How will this be affected by the USP? It will only affect vacancies with stipends.
- How many graduate from the U of A as teachers? 30 are interested in talking to TUSD. However it's not just U of A graduates, but also NAU and Grand Canyon graduates that are recruited.
- Young teachers say the yearly increase doesn't compensate for increases in cost of benefits. Ms. Palmo will get information regarding cost increases for benefits.
- Does TUSD have incentives for teachers to move to the Tucson area? There are no incentives to move into the TUSD area. They do try and engage people to move to Tucson.
- TUSD does participate in Teach America however it costs TUSD \$10,000 per teacher hired.
- Recruitment isn't just for new teachers, but for experienced teachers.
- TUSD does exit interviews with teachers leaving the district. The top reasons given for leaving are:
 - They want a stable employer (they don't want have to worry if they will have job in the future)
 - They receive signing bonuses with other districts.
 - They have taught within TUSD but they can make more money in another district.
 - They move out of the Tucson area.
- TUSD has looked at retaining teachers based on the reasons given during the exit interview.
 - TUSD does not currently have the money to give bonuses
 - TUSD is working towards creating a more stable work environment for teachers
- New hire retention data is not available yet. Ms. Palmo discussed the changes coming with gathering and analyzing this type of data.

4. Discussion of Priority Topics: Michelle Simon, Moderator

Notes: Planning meeting was held November 13, 2013. The next topic of group importance is retention of students, identifying why we are losing students, and why they are going to other districts. Ms. Simon asked the group for possible solutions to the problems that have been identified. Some possible solutions voiced by the group are as follows:

- Good PR, send out positive things going on in the district.
- Address class size and composition.

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- Have a point of entry for parents. Someone who has the answers and good customer service skills.
- Create an environment of trust by giving consistent answers rather than inconsistent answers.
- Create quality control over departments that are responsible for giving out information and make sure they know what is really happening.
- Possibly create academic contracts for students and parents similar to charter schools.
- Create a safe environment for students with helping parents, teachers and administrators understand the new students rights/responsibilities and new discipline policy. Mr. Fish offered for him and his team to come to PD at the schools and listen to the problems they are encountering with the new policies and to clarify procedures if needed.
- Amongst teachers and students uncertainty seems to be the theme, so we need to find ways to remove the uncertainty.
- The school board had a meeting where the reasons students are leaving the district was discussed. Mr. Fish will get that information for the SCPC group.
- Dr. Clash, Principal Tucson High Magnet School, was asked to talk about how she makes Tucson High inviting to students, how she gets them into the school community. She has worked with her staff to be very present during the school day. She advises new and incoming freshman to get involved in extra curricular activities, sports, clubs, etc. She also discussed “creating ownership” within the school population.
- A SCPC member asked if we could have the results of the districts demographic study when it is complete.
- Question was asked: “When we close schools do we not have a net negative affect in student retention?” Mr. Fish indicated that he would get this information.
- Principals create the culture the students want to be part of.

Dr. Roman Soltero, Principal of Tully Elementary Magnet School, spoke about the positive environment at his school. He spoke of the importance of customer service, making time to recognize the positive and creating a positive culture for the students. Dr. Soltero came to recognize Mr. Leo Masursky with a certificate of appreciation for his commitment to Tully Elementary School. Mr. Masursky had left so Mr. Fish agreed to make sure he received it.

Next meeting will have speakers on tax credit monies and a follow up to the group’s research on what other districts and charter schools are doing to attract and keep students.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:40pm (Michelle Simon)

Summary prepared by: Joan Dawson-Werner 11/22/13

Summary Approved: Michelle Simon, 12/2/2013