

## **INTERNAL MONITORING REPORT**

June 18, 2014

**POLICY: 2.10 Effective Family, School and Community Partnering**

**POLICY CATEGORY: Operating Limitations**

**PERIOD MONITORED: 2013 – 2014 School Year**

This is my monitoring report on the Board of Education's Operating Limitations Policy Effective Family, School and Community Partnering. I certify that the information contained in this report is true and complete, and it is presented in accordance with the routine monitoring report schedule. This report begins by presenting the policy language in its entirety, and then continues with a narrative describing District performance.

Christopher E. Gdowski, Superintendent

June 12, 2014

## **Operating Limitations Policy 2.10**

### **Effective Family, School, and Community Partnering**

The Superintendent shall not fail to create and sustain family, school, and community partnering at the classroom, school, and district levels.

Additionally, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, the superintendent shall not fail to:

1. Ensure effective systemic family and community partnering is infused within all district practices, infrastructures, policies and procedures.
2. Ensure that partnering practices are culturally responsive at all levels.
3. Utilize national PTA standards for family-school partnerships in creating and sustaining partnering practices including:
  - a. Standard 1: welcoming all families into the school community - families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class
  - b. Standard 2: communicating effectively - families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.
  - c. Standard 3: supporting student success - families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.
  - d. Standard 4: speaking up for every child - families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.
  - e. Standard 5: sharing power - families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.
  - f. Standard 6: collaborating with community - families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.
4. Ensure that the district school improvement team and all school improvement teams are, at a minimum, comprised of the membership and fulfill the responsibilities in the manner intended in law.
5. Obtain community input as board policy 1.4 schooling - aspirations are considered and report the community feedback to the board of education.
6. Use data to examine the effectiveness and quality of partnering at all levels on a regular basis and make adjustments in a timely manner.

## **Interpretation, Data Reported, and Compliance Statement:**

This is the first comprehensive monitoring report for Board Policy 2.10 that I have submitted since June 2012.

The June 2012 report totaled 18 pages. The data presented were gathered through a February 2012 parent survey administered by the National Center for School Leadership in Adams 12 and in select school districts throughout the country. Approximately 2,800 responses were received from Adams 12 parents in this survey, though there were fewer than 30 responses at 23 of the 54 sites surveyed. The June 2012 report also relied, in many places, upon surveys administered to several District advisory groups, including the District School Improvement Team (DSIT), the Hispanic Advisory Council (HAC), the American Indian Parent Advisory Committee (AIPAC), the Teacher of Color and Allies (TOCA) group, school PTA/PTO leaders, as well as several community organizations including the Adams County Education Consortium (ACEC), the Adams County Economic Development (ACED) organization, North Metro Chamber of Commerce, and similar groups/organizations.

I concluded that the methods we used to monitor performance for some portions of the 2012 report were not likely to provide reliable information to the Board and to District administration regarding District performance during the 2013-14 school year on the Policy 2.10 standards. One of the advisory groups surveyed in the 2012 report -- the Teachers of Color and Allies group -- disbanded for the 2013-14 school year. Most of the other internal groups, including DSIT and HAC, have five or fewer members who participate in those committee meetings and activities on a consistent basis. Low levels of consistent board participation also characterize the community organizations we reached out to in 2012, including ACED, ACEC, and the North Metro Chamber. Evaluating District performance based upon survey responses from these organizations does not result in reliable data regarding District performance given the small numbers of participants in these groups. Given other pressing priorities in the District, I have not invested time this year in developing alternative proposals for monitoring performance on these items.

The June 2012 report indicated that District respondents on the National Center for School Leadership Survey rated the District's performance in a manner within five percentage points, plus or minus, of the national survey averages. The item that fell short of that standard of performance included parent responses regarding their involvement in decisions affecting their children's education; 69 percent of District parents agreed with that statement, compared to 75 percent of national respondents. The largest discrepancies between Adams 12 and national data on this item occurred at the middle and high school levels. In addition, two questions posed only to Adams 12 parents resulted in disappointing responses: a) only 48 percent of respondents indicated that the school recruits parent representatives for School Improvement Teams (SITs), and b) only 46 percent of respondents indicated that the school and/or parents groups plan regular family learning events.

The District did not engage in the National Center for School Leadership parent survey during the 2013-14 school year because of other pressing District priorities. Given the feedback we have received in a variety of venues during the course of the school year, however, I believe that current District performance on the topic of parent involvement in educational decision involving their children has declined from the 2012 level. District leadership failed to effectively engage parents in discussion regarding the transition to standards-based and standards-referenced grading prior to implementation of those systems for the 2013-14 school year, and this deficiency has resulted in parent frustration regarding their lack of involvement in educational decisions. On the positive side, the feedback I have received from many stakeholders indicates that the revisions made in Spring 2014 to Superintendent

Policy regarding selection of instructional materials provides greater opportunities for parent participation in the selection of textbooks and novels used in District classrooms than the prior policy permitted.

District administration has required that unified improvement plans (UIPs) submitted from each school include a certification from a parent co-chair of the School Improvement Team (SIT) involved in development of the UIP. The objective was to improve parent recruitment and parent participation on school SITs to remedy the deficiency in this area identified in the June 2012 report. Unfortunately, a survey conducted by DSIT this school year reported that parents on many SITs do not believe they have a meaningful role in UIP development. At the beginning of the 2014-15 school year, a Colorado Department of Education expert on parent participation on SITs will present information to District parents and leadership regarding active engagement and parent participation in UIP development. In addition, executive directors of schools will closely monitor parent participation on SITs as part of principal evaluations conducted during the 2014-15 school year; instances of poor parent SIT participation will be noted as a negative performance indicator on principal evaluations. We believe these two additional action steps will improve District performance on this engagement standard.

Finally, District leadership has communicated to school leaders the importance of providing regular family learning events in our schools. The Board and Superintendent have received evidence, during school presentations at Board meetings, that schools are providing such learning events for families, and I have observed such events often in my visits to schools this past year. We also receive periodic reports from the District's Parent Engagement Coordinator, who focuses her work in the District's schools with high poverty and second language learner levels, regarding family learning events ongoing in these buildings. We have not conducted a formal District-wide survey, however, to determine whether parents perceive these activities to be frequent enough or most useful to them in supporting their child's learning.

### **Options for Future Monitoring**

The Board has had preliminary and brief conversations this school year about the topic of "parent engagement" and about the need to clarify its expectations about parent engagement and measures of satisfactory performance in this domain. It will be helpful for the Board to engage in a deeper conversation on this topic as we commence the 2014-15 school year so that District administration has greater clarity regarding the Board's most important performance priorities in this area.

**The Board acknowledged receipt of a monitoring report as of June 18, 2014, for the period June 5, 2012 through June 18, 2014, of the Superintendent concerning Operating Limitations Policy 2.10, Family School Partnerships and Community Engagement and found the superintendent's interpretations were reasonable and supported by data that was relevant, justified and complete.**