

## DTEA AR Meeting with the Board of Education

Date: Monday, January 14, 2019

Board Member- Brian Batz

### **1) Funding Priorities: With passage of 5C which of the spending priorities are you most excited about and how will it affect the students you work with?**

Most excited about:

- adding counselors and social workers at all levels - including elementary.
- CTE and how we can now send more kids to tech ed.
- Mental health support for kids that are being impacted at a younger age.
- Academic interventionists coming back. It is difficult to be successful as a classroom teacher on your own.
- Mr. Batz: it seems we are always trying to catch up and implementation is important.
- Counselors mentioned by three different people as being an important addition.
- Interventionists were mentioned by two.
- Workload & IBS process were mentioned.
- Hopefully mental health support can be done by social workers instead of teachers.
- Mr. Batz feels that the professionals should do the work and is concerned about implementation.
- Another positive was money to attract teachers and pay salaries.
- The credit for ten years and valuing veteran teachers were also mentioned.
- Mr. Batz mentioned veteran teachers being able to mentor people that are brought in.

### **2) Support Needs: All educators are being asked to take on additional roles to support the students they work with. How have those roles changed over time? What additional supports can the district provide your school/site in order to better serve the community you work with?**

- Additional roles
  - spoke about SHMS and extra prep & liability related to social emotional curriculum.
  - Mr. Batz spoke about implementation and how it needs to be done (is important to do).
- Elementary & PALs - so requiring re-entry of data into PALs and IC. Causing frustration. Frequent feedback being asked for by parents too. More and more mandates and more stress.
- Disconnect between schools and district receiving awards and how staff is treated.
- Mr. Batz would like to look into/work on evaluation.
- Lack of discipline support, therefore the job is becoming more difficult to do.
- Teaching is becoming less authentic - have to produce "results".

**3) Barriers for Learning: What is the biggest barrier that you see affecting your ability to create the best learning environment for the students you work with?**

- Biggest challenge
  - cannot get a hold of ELD department at ESC, not hearing anything.
  - We cannot do the job. Too many kids to work with and too many needs, we are having to decide where to focus our energies. This is coming at the expense of other things.
  - What should be sacrificed at the expense of meeting evaluation goals?
  - RANDA is being used differently in different schools.
  - Evaluation is time consuming.
  - HS kids - Joe is seeing growth, but there is a real lack of community and no tie-in to school by kids and parents.
  - Mr. Batz has heard this from kids, at Pathways and other kids too.
  - Elementary said they were not trained on IC which also leads to requiring more communication time with parents.
- Too much to do and too little time seemed to be the theme.

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Date: Monday, January 14, 2019

Board Member- Norm Jennings

1. **Funding Priorities: With the passage of 5C which of the Spending Priorities are you most excited about and how will it affect the students you work with?**
  - a. Excited about the new hires which should decrease class size and improve the student to teacher ratio. This will allow teachers to know all their students and decrease the number of students who fall through the cracks.
  - b. Excited about increasing mental health support throughout the district which should decrease the number of suicide attempts. More mental health support would decrease the number of suicide assessments per mental health personnel.
  - c. Norm brought up that the district has been talking about increased teacher training on suicide awareness and prevent. He pointed out that students might feel more comfortable talking with someone they know, like their teacher, rather than an unknown adult, such as a mental health provider. He wondered what the groups' thoughts were.
    - i. Mental Health providers and teachers felt that the need was for mental health providers.
    - ii. Teachers had enough on their plates.
    - iii. Training would not be enough but would help teachers more easily identify and place better referrals to mental health providers.
    - iv. There was discussion that smaller class sizes with more support would allow for improved identification, students' need for support, and allow the teacher to walk students to the mental health provider to build the relationship.
    - v. The change in demographics also required more mental health providers/support.
    - vi. More mental health providers will limit or decrease the times a provider has to go from one building to another building when a crisis arises.
  - d. Excited about the trauma-informed trainings. Administrators and Mental Health providers have all received trauma-informed training this year. Teachers are to get this training next year.
    - i. Change in demographics show an increased number of students who have had trauma in the past. Students that have had trauma, are throughout the district and teachers are frequently unaware of the trauma.
    - ii. Norm acknowledged that he has a friend who has adopted 2 sets of twins within days of their birth. He noted that the trauma of having a mother who took drugs during pregnancy is a significant and life-long problem.
    - iii. Staff felt that this training was important but discussed the number of training days district-wide, requiring subs when there is a sub shortage.
  - e. Excited about increasing counselors at the high school level. With the new graduation requirements for students, counselors need to meet with each sophomore student to ensure that they are aware of the requirements and to facilitate a plan to achieve the new requirements.

- f. Excited about the increased salary for early career teachers. Teachers work hard. They have a lot of hats to wear. They deserve compensation. With the increased salary, hopefully early career teachers will stay in education.
- g. There was a discussion about checking for different salary schedule Social Workers, like the ones for Audiologists, OT's, PT's, and Psychologists.
  - i. There was a discussion that the different salary schedule had to do with hard to fill positions.
  - ii. The different salary schedule was comparable or competitive with the private sector.

**2. Supports Need: All educators are being asked to take on additional roles to support the students they work with. How have those roles changed over time? What additional support can the district provide your school/site in order to better serve the community you work with?**

- a. Increase the number of assessments and resources for Special Education.
  - i. Assessments and academic tests are shared across the district. Staff has to leave schools and take time away from students to pick up tests.
  - ii. Special educators do not get a budget for curriculum. They get curriculum with money from a school's PTO or with their own money.
  - iii. Norm asked how many assessments were in the district. No one knew the answer. Solution was to share assessments between 2 buildings.
- b. Update textbooks. Some but not all textbooks have been updated. Spanish textbooks at Thornton High are 20 years old. They talk about videocassettes.
- c. The gift of time. Counselors need time to decompress and to re-group to ensure that they are completely present with each and every student that they work with. It is difficult to think about a sophomore's graduation requirements right after a counselor has completed a suicide assessment and worrying about having whether the student and family understood everything and are okay.
- d. Mental health days or hours that are available to staff to take without using their PTO. Thornton High has had an increase number of suicides. Teachers should be able to take time off for their health without using PTO.
- e. Increase support personnel, janitors and paras were specifically mentioned.
  - i. General education teachers talked about not having the para support that they used to have in the classroom. They described working with 4-6 students on IEP's and not being able to get to all the students to answer their questions to allow students to complete assignments.
  - ii. Special education staff report that they used to have one para for three specialists. That para could help with crisis situations, which prevent the specialists from getting pulled from seeing students on their caseloads. Specialists are getting pulled to manage students having behavior crises. There are only 4 paras throughout the district who are able to assist with these crises.
  - iii. To include students into the general education classroom, teachers need support for behavior and safety of all.
  - iv. Support for the "tweener" students, students who do not meet the requirements of specialized programming but need additional support to make significant gains.

- v. Norm discussed that para positions are hard to fill and have required a separate salary.
- f. Diminish inequities across the district. Rocky Top has Smart Boards and one to one Chrome Books to students where older schools are far behind in this technology. Insure safety at all schools and for students and staff. The school for students who have been expelled has no security. It is not safe for teachers or students.
- g. The second Bohman Technical School is great.

**3. Barriers for Learning: What is the biggest barrier that you see affecting your ability to create the best learning environment for the students you work with?**

- a. Inequity between the schools in the North vs. the South parts of our district. All students are equally and important and deserve the same resources.
- b. Inequity between old building and new buildings.
  - i. Norm pointed out that new building funding is from bonds. Old building funding is from Capital Construction budget.
  - ii. Individual school's PTO also plays an important role in what buildings have and update.
- c. No identifiable plan for Demographics and Diversity of district's staff. Years ago the district was trying to recruit a more diverse teacher population from other states. Staff would like to see the delivering and implementing of a new program for teacher leadership to include diversity.
- d. Disruptive behaviors interrupting instructional time.
- e. Disruptive behaviors impeding specialists from fulfilling students' minutes on IEP's.
- f. "Tweener" students monopolizing specialists' time and building resources.
- g. Trainings during the student contact days, especially the district-wide where subs are required and with a sub shortage.
- h. Lack of extra support from paras.
- i. Class sizes are too big
- j. Norm discussed the challenges that Florida had when it mandated class-size limits for Kindergarten through second grade. They had trouble finding enough teachers. There was a quality vs. quantity issue. Some buildings did not have enough classrooms and therefore there were increased construction costs.
- k. Not having enough time to teacher. General education teachers report that they do not have enough time to teach all the requirements coming from all the different departments in Learning Services.
- l. Too big of a workload sends away early career teachers from education.
- m. Norm asked about longer contact days. Centennial does have a longer day.
- n. Difficulty educating the whole student which is something that the district is always talking about.
  - i. Departments in Learning Services refuse to work together.
  - ii. Frequent changes in curriculum.
  - iii. Disservice to students who are constantly pulled for services.

4. Other comments.

- a. Great things – Imagine what our students can achieve with smaller class sizes, better resources, and more support.
- b. We do what we can with what we got.
- c. All our students deserve and need our best.
- d. Norm reports that there is always a trade-off with funding, the money has to come from somewhere else in the budget.
- e. What happened to the district's Grants department? This department was a great way for teachers to get grants for the funding that they need. There was a department. Now, there is just one person and that person has a different job description.

## DTEA AR Meeting with the Board of Education

Date: Monday, January 14, 2019

Board Member - Laura Mitchell

### **1) Funding Priorities: With passage of 5C which of the spending priorities are you most excited about and how will it affect the students you work with?**

- Adding counselors and social workers- ES, piggy back- will help to impact our students but also
- Academic interventionist
- Trauma/assault - teachers being affected but not being able to get help. 4 teachers at Stukey sent to the hospital, 2 at Malley.
- Compounded - latchkey keys
- Secondary trauma of other students/teachers
- Reduced class sizes - HS but concern with still in the 30's
- Learning materials - updated- HS
- tech school- HS- program specific at both schools

### **2) Support Needs: All educators are being asked to take on additional roles to support the students they work with. How have those roles changed over time? What additional supports can the district provide your school/site in order to better serve the community you work with?**

- teachers are being asked to do more and more with academic supports/interventions without the training or support- needs to be appropriate for the needs
- custodians - teachers are being asked to vacuum/take out trash- reality vs. what is actually available
  - substitutes- shortage
- intervention- being asked to differentiate but not given resources or time to do the work
- "write a grant"- being asked to do more to give kids more
- Seal of Biliteracy - electives "district credit" could be a district wide program

### **3) Barriers for Learning: What is the biggest barrier that you see affecting your ability to create the best learning environment for the students you work with?**

- HS
  - implementation of the units of the study- not aligned 9th-12th
  - taken away the autonomy of teachers
  - planning time taken away to plan differentiation/modification
- Grand ideas of what 9th graders can do-
- ERD time away from buildings not popular
- Social Studies
  - concern about government and Econ in 9th grader

- concern- don't have the real world knowledge to handle that - would make more sense to teach to seniors
  - not meeting state standards anymore because we have to scale back so much
  - new state standards are being rolled out next year- most districts need geography.
- Workload outside teacher planning-
- ELD- DOJ impact
- Middle school
  - no MS teachers in group
  - SBG carryover to HS- struggle
- Reality for students of how much work they need to do doesn't strike for them until the class has to be made-up
- Technology - not equitable in schools

## DTEA AR Meeting with the Board of Education

Date: Monday, January 14, 2019

Board Member- Kathy Plomer

### **1) Funding Priorities: With passage of 5C which of the spending priorities are you most excited about and how will it affect the students you work with?**

- Nice to get stipend with the passage of 5C
- Excited about reduction of class size
- Class size makes a big difference. You get to know kids better and meet needs better.
- Concern about the posted class size vs. reality. Are we really reducing class size across the board.
- Middle school feels like they are the last to get support with reducing class size
- Elective teachers continue to have huge class size- electives are not part of FTE increased allocation
- Excited about the social/ emotional emphasis.
- Like the addition about counselors
- Curious about teacher leadership program
- Excited about the addition of reading interventionist

### **2) Support Needs: All educators are being asked to take on additional roles to support the students they work with. How have those roles changed over time? What additional supports can the district provide your school/site in order to better serve the community you work with?**

- Would like to have reading interventionist at middle school- all schools not just Title 1
- Hard to get the kids the help they need in a timely matter. Worried some kids are slipping through the cracks.
- Need academic paras.
- Subbing issue- in other states districts has a permanent sub that is assigned to each building every day. This helps with filling sub jobs.
- Grading is overwhelming. Not enough time during the day so hours are spent at home doing school work, Hard to maintain home/work balance.
- Outrageous behaviors make it hard to meet the needs of all students. Learning environment is continually interrupted.
- Disruptive behavior with no supports to help student or teacher. Half of lesson is spent redirecting.
- Teachers are being asked to handle mental health issues in kids but we do not have the training for that. More mental health services for students are needed.
- Teacher at high school spends hours cleaning his own classroom because of lack of custodial staff.

**3) Barriers for Learning: What is the biggest barrier that you see affecting your ability to create the best learning environment for the students you work with?**

- Class size
- Support staff
- Mental health support
- Jobs are not getting filled
- Make para positions full time so they get benefits.
- Safety for paras
- Budgets are huge concern- special teachers have had budgets cut in half. Need more funds to run our programs.
- Some schools' operational budgets saw a decrease because we had to pay for ½ our AP out of our operational budget. This significantly impacts the amount of funds we have to run the school.
- Can we make more tools available for parents? Can these tools/ classes be mandatory for high flyers or in certain circumstances? Reverse suspension? This is where parents have to come to school with child.
- How do we help the kids and parents?
- Concern about all the money spent on preschool when there are so many other needs.

# DTEA AR Meeting with the Board of Education

Date: Monday, January 14, 2019

Superintendent Chris Gdowski

## **1) Funding Priorities: With passage of 5C which of the spending priorities are you most excited about and how will it affect the students you work with?**

- adding the 10 year experience back to attract teachers
- updating resources and textbooks for everyone, having 5c pass so we aren't fighting for the pennies and both sides of bargaining will win,
- LIKE TO SEE
  - bring back Reading Interventionist in elementary (next year we will have a half time interventionist),
  - the second FTE added to HS,
  - the win for the counselors and the social and emotional,
  - reducing the level of the student fees to help the students,
- Chris- what we can do accumulating across the district, we want something to be done Statewide.
- Frustrating that people are not understanding what education needs to get fixed.

## **2) Support Needs: All educators are being asked to take on additional roles to support the students they work with. How have those roles changed over time?**

How have these roles changed over time?/work load

- Taking on other roles and classes
- kids are coming in with more and more medical needs and it is getting harder
- writing 55 ALPS and the mid-year check ins
- Writing Randa, SLO's, PGP's,
- amount and help and lack of being able to go to the meetings
- suggestion-have committees/district people to write IEP's and ALP's
- planning is a beast
- pacing, planning, quality, quantity,
- developmentally appropriate (curriculum is not always appropriate)
  - social/emotionally,
  - ELL training and trainings,

## **2) What additional support can the district provide your school/site in order to better serve the community we work with?**

- Sped,GT, ELL kids integrated into the gen ed classroom at the HS level and no support
- time, grading, planning,
- using the school psych to meet with all kids and make the impact on the whole school and being stuck with one kiddo who is taken out.
- lack of teachers to fill positions, not enough subs to take and cover classes
- Hulstrom had a position unfilled for the whole school

### **3) Barriers for Learning: What is the biggest barrier that you see affecting your ability to create the best learning environment for the students you work with?**

- Bell to bell
- things get added to our plates
- speed of curriculum
- how can we look at the schedule to be smart so teachers are not tired, kids do not have the summer slide, and so that curriculum can get taught
- some of the dually identified students do not get to get electives
- kids need to have a time during the day where they feel successful
- Rubric grading 4,3,2,1 is impacting kiddos that go to other schools for sports and etc... Hulstrom kids see themselves not improvement and cannot see how they are improving since there is no percentage score, they see a 3 is a 3 and need to see a range
- How do we hold them accountable?
- CG suggested-grading needs to be changed and we need to update District policies as they are outdated, this will have to wait til next year... They have all had a lot with ELL and DOJ, Kim Walsh, etc...
- Canned comments for report cards

### **Synopsis**

- Student behaviors,
- Class sizes-meeting the needs
- Developmentally appropriate skills and curriculum
- Grading scales
- Planning, grading etc...
- Mental health support