

***Northside Educational Improvement Council***

**I. 6:00 p.m. General Meeting Called to Order**

The August 14, 2007 NEIC meeting was called to order by president, Kristi Bolstad, at 6:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Mary Adams, Diane Aguilar, Susan Allain, M. LaNeil Belko, Robbie Bland, Kristi Bolstad, Christi Evans, Angela Fry, Dave Gannon, Lisa Holmes, Laura Lara, Maureen Lopez, Elizabeth Moffett, Carolyn Mullins, Karen Nance, Jill Palmer, Rosemary Perez, Dori Peterson, Melynn Young

**Staff Present:** Dr. John Folks, Dr. Linda Mora, Sharon Sanchez, Sara McAndrew, Brian Woods

**II. Approval of Minutes from May 1, 2007**

Robbie Bland moved to approve the minutes, Laura Lara seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

Dr. Folks shared some opening comments, welcoming the group back to school, thanking us for our service on NEIC, and discussing some district highlights. Dr. Folks then turned over the meeting to Dr. Linda Mora.

**III. Texas Educator Excellence Grant Awards**

An update will be provided on the status of the Cycle I which will be distributed during the first weeks of school. Cycle II grants, due to the Agency on September 6, 2007, will be presented for review and possible approval. These are stipends for low SES schools that score well on the TAKS. The first year, only Anson Jones qualified, last year 10 schools were eligible. This cycle is for 8 additional schools who have met all summer because the TEA timelines were due by Sept. 6<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Mora shared a handout explaining how campuses were chosen and their developed incentive plans. Sharon Sanchez, Director of Grants & Recognitions, gave a run down of what these campuses have planned to date. Each campus created a campus planning committee with representatives of grade level teams, community members, and paraprofessional representation. The grant is a supplemental incentive grant designed to improve what is already happening at the campus. Law requires this info to be posted for 10 days after submittal on specific campus websites. Each campus will have a copy available for checkout or review in their campus library.

TEA assigns the amount of funding for each campus, based on the number of students. All of the campuses look at where they are on TAKS. Grades Pre K-2nd look at reading inventories and CDB data to show improvement over time. NEIC is required to review the proposals. Mrs. Sanchez volunteered to return to share more detail in specific campus plans.

Mr. Gannon motioned to approve the grants as presented. Dori Peterson seconded the motion.

#### **IV. End-of-Year Report on One-to-One Laptop Initiative at Business Careers High School**

2006-07 was the first year of the laptop initiative instituted at BCHS. This item will provide a comprehensive look at all aspects of the initiative, including those pieces that can be replicated and those that may need improvement. Kelly Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Technology Services, and Geri Berger (former Business Careers Principal for 2 years, and new principal at Brandeis HS) shared information. Mrs. Smith shared the Executive Summary. This initiative was about students, student achievement and success, not technology. This report examined survey data and included financial data, enrollment, TAKS scores, attendance, and discipline information. This grant provided a laptop for every student and teacher, as well as wireless networking, projectors, etc. It was so much more than laptops.

Students were presented a list of 11 different things and asked how they were most able to use the technology. 94% of teachers felt they were able to better manage and improve their instruction. The percentage for the students was extremely high as well. 100% of teachers said they would do it again.

Some changes were suggested. For example, students chose a satchel-type bag and after a short time, 91% of students wanted to have a different, more comfortable style. Now students can purchase a \$12 neoprene sleeve and put their laptops into their regular backpack. The laptop initiative also changed the home technology. The survey responses showed that both parents and students' siblings improved in their technological abilities. The laptops incur an annual cost of \$60 to families for insurance. 90% thought this was a reasonable fee.

Business Careers had a campus goal of re-vamping who they are, including new innovative courses. Student recruitment in the middle schools and student enrollment increased 38% in the first year and 22% the next. Enrollment is almost where it was previously. The new principal for 07-08 is Dottie Hall and enrollment is about 670 students.

There was a detailed budget with professional development for teachers, technical support, etc. The budget was \$281,000, approved by the Board for 4 years at which time funding will be required for sustainability. The cost for laptops was a little less than estimated. Professional development was provided by district staff, which helped reduce cost as well. 100% of the goals were accomplished in our initiative. Phase II is now beginning and staff is working on U.S. History, English III, Biology, and Chemistry courses. Discipline incidents decreased, but cameras were installed during the same time, so we don't know about the direct correlation. Overall, the first year was very successful, although, there's always room for improvement.

NEIC members asked questions regarding inappropriate sites and use of software applications.

Kelly shared that we've been using a filter called "Websense" in NISD for a number of years, but we will be changing our internet filtering software this fall towards something more tailored for K-12. One member shared that her son has had a laptop at the science

academy for two years without a filter, and he will have to learn how to be responsible and monitor what he has to do on his own. That's a part of him growing up to become a responsible employee.

#### **V. Highly Qualified Teacher Survey**

Districts in Texas are required to conduct a survey that specifies by campus the number of teachers that meet the highly qualified criteria. By rule this information must be posted on the NISD website. Mr. Don Schmidt shared the results of the survey with the council. The concept of "highly qualified" came from NCLB, but needs to be reported to TEA. This past year the survey went from one page to three pages per campus. NISD has 100 campuses. Prior to this year we've always had a very good situation; last year we had only one teacher that wasn't highly qualified. Now teachers have to be certified in the functional level of the kids if they are in special education. For example, we have students functioning at the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade level in high school. TEA went into negotiations with the U.S. Department of Education over this, and they changed their rules that high school teachers in special education had to be certified in a high school subject area as well as in special education. Most of our high school special education teachers do have dual certification. In the most recent years, a large number of teachers come through alternative certification routes and are getting only special education certificates.

Through NCLB, there was an option to do what is called "HOUSE." This stands for High Objective Uniform Standard of Evaluation. Mr. Schmidt mentioned various ways teachers were able to become HOUSE certified. These included years of teaching experience, staff development hours, college courses. Once teachers received this "HOUSE" certification they were able to keep it, however, that option is no longer available.

Don Schmidt met with many of the principals about teachers' schedule. The reporting process changes with the first report to the state occurring on Oct 15<sup>th</sup>. As a district, there is no financial penalty for not meeting the highly qualified requirement.

#### **VI. Timeline for the Development of the 2008-13 Strategic Plan**

During the 2007-08 school year, we are in year five of the current District Strategic Improvement Plan. This year will also be the year in which the next five year cycle, 2008-2013, District Strategic Plan is developed with input from many stakeholders. Dr. Mora introduced Marissa Pena, school improvement specialist working with Linda Zarakas. They shared the 2008-2013 timeline for the development of the new strategic plan. There will be a committee appointed to develop the next Strategic Plan. Some NEIC members shared past experiences working on the district's first strategic plan.

#### **VII. High School Allotment Data Indicators**

This item provided a status report on the use of the high school allotment funds, how those funds have been spent, and the progress made on meeting the five goals of the grant.

Dr. Mora shared that last year at this time that the legislature allotted money for improving high school graduation rate, increasing student enrollment in advanced courses, increasing the number of distinguished diplomas, etc. Brian Woods, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Administration, and Dr. Sara McAndrew, Executive Director of Secondary Instruction, shared an updated report.

HB 1 designated \$275 per high school ADA to each district. Dr. Folks wanted to supplement and add new programs, and NISD gave \$200 per student to each high school to spend on resources. \$75 was kept in a district central account for district focused initiatives. The funding plan began in November of 2006 and many plans will carry over aspects from 06-07 to 07-08. We will be coming to you every year with this plan.

The objectives for the high school allotment are:

1. Increase the percentage of students graduating from high school.
2. Increase the number of students enrolled in advanced courses.
3. Increase the number of students graduating under the recommended or distinguished diploma plans.
4. Increase the number of students scoring college ready in both English and Mathematics.

NISD offers 28 credits during a four year high school program now, and so many are specifically required that students who want to participate in electives cannot afford to fail a course.

Data from 06-07 was examined; however, the data for completion rate is from 05-06 so there is no impact at this time. Students that return for a 5<sup>th</sup> year are counted in the completion rate.

A change in the definition by the state in completion rate resulted in lower completion rates because GED recipients can no longer be counted.

The college readiness indicator is a straight scale score. Students can walk right into any of the Alamo Community College campuses and not need to take the placement test or have to take remedial classes. The Accuplacer exam for community college is difficult and is a barrier for students. Through the use of the high school allotment, some real improvements have been noted. A lot has been learned during the data examination at the high schools in the last years.

### **VIII. Other Issues**

The election process for the September NEIC elections was reviewed.

Ten of the vacancies are board appointments. Nominations are due to Dr. Mora by Friday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, and elections are on September 12<sup>th</sup>. Most of us are able to run again.

Dr. Mora proposed that we will have our next meeting in October, and we will have our new members here.

### **IX. Adjourn**

The motion was made by Robbie Bland and seconded by Melynn Young.

The Northside Educational Improvement Council (NEIC) is the district decision-making committee established in accordance with Texas Education Code Sec. 11.251, and 11.252. NEIC has 39 members, including staff, parents, business, and community members. The purpose of NEIC is to involve professional staff, parents, and community members in establishing and reviewing the district's and campuses' educational plans, goals, performance objectives, and major classroom instructional programs. Staff are elected for a two-year term by their staff peers; parents, business, and community members are appointed by the Board for a two-year term. NEIC meets at 6:00 p.m. on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month, in the Northside Board Room at 5900 Evers Road, unless otherwise posted. Meetings are open to the public. Items to be considered for the agenda may be submitted to either Kristi Bolstad, NEIC President, at Connally Middle School, (397-1000) or Linda Mora, Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, at Central Office, 5900 Evers Road, 78238 (397-8635). Agendas of all meetings are posted at Central Office and at each school; minutes of all meetings are posted at each school.

**NEIC MEMBERS:**

**STAFF REPRESENTATIVES:**

Primary: Mary Adams, Carson Elem.; Jill Palmer, Helotes. Intermediate: Wendi Costas, Blattman; Angela Fry, Knowlton. Elementary Specialist: Diana Aguilar, Ed Cody Elementary. Middle School (Academic Core): Lisa Holmes, Jordan M.S.; Kristi Bolstad, Connally M.S.; (Other):Cindy Plunkett, Pease M.S. High School (Academic Core): Romy Vela, Jay H.S.; Dori Peterson, Stevens H.S.. (Business): Carolyn Mullins, Business Careers High School (Other): Brad Hebert, Health Careers High School. Special Campuses: Vicki Sills, N.S. Children's Center: Counselors: Melynn Young, Connally M.S.. Librarians: Laura Lara, Ward Elementary. Nurses: Maureen Lopez, Galm Elementary. Elementary Administration: M. LaNeil Belko, Wanke Elem. Secondary Administration: Susan M. Allain, Connally M.S., District-Level Prof. Staff: Rosemary Perez, Dir., Compensatory; Paraprofessionals: Robbie Bland, Mead Elementary

**PARENT REPRESENTATIVES:** Kim Neal, David Gannon, Dr. Bette Austin, Elizabeth Moffett

**PTA COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES:** Meri Ann Christopher

**COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES:** Karen Nance, Christi Evans, Mathilde Scully, David Maze, Jeannette Honermann

**BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES:** Matt Foxhaff, Candice Muster

**President – Kristi Bolstad; Vice President – Matt Foxhall; Secretary – Jill Palmer**