

APPROVED

Northside Educational Improvement Council

Members Present: Mary Adams, Diane Aguilar, Susan Allain, Anne Best, Robbie Bland, Sue Casey, Christi Evans, Isabel Fears, Dave Gannon, Lisa Holmes, Robert LeBlanc, Janis Lappeus, Belinda Lerma, Beverly McCarthy, Jill Palmer, Rosemary Perez, Tesilia Soliz

Staff Present: Dr. Linda Mora, Dr. Sara McAndrew, Linda Zarakas

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

Jill Palmer, President, opened the April 7, 2009 meeting at 6:01 p.m.

Dr. Mora conveyed Dr. Folks' apologies for not being able to attend because of another commitment.

II. Approval of Minutes from February 3, 2009

Diane Aguilar motioned to accept the minutes and Susan Allain seconded the motion.

III. Update on D.A.T.E.

Lisa Moczgamba Armstrong, a former math teacher from Jordan Middle School is now the Incentive Grant Specialist for the District Awards for Teacher Excellence or D.A.T.E. Grant and Texas Educator Grant. She reported that she gave an update to principals last month about the D.A.T.E. grant and then proceeded to present the update to NEIC.

Currently, the amount of the D.A.T.E. Grant is \$5.5 million with \$76,000 in supplemental funds provided from TEA. There is no expectation of additional funds being supplied for the grant. At present, there are 22 D.A.T.E. campuses identified: 15 elementary; 4 middle; 3 high schools. The spending is divided into two parts: 60% of part I incentive pay is distributed to TAKS subject teachers in the amounts of \$1,000-\$3,000. 40% of part II provides incentive pay to TAKS support teachers. The grant also allows for expending funds for contracted services to assist with the grant. There are three positions allocated in the grant: Incentive Grant Specialist, Incentive Grant Technician, and Incentive Grant Evaluator. A portion of the 40% is used for contracted services such as Battelle for Kids, a non-profit organization that specializes in helping educational organizations build and implement value-added growth models to help improve teaching practices and enhance student learning.

Ms.Moczgamba Armstrong revealed that there is a written a communication plan to increase awareness across the district and to improve communication with D.A.T.E. campuses. A teacher award eligibility report and a spring D.A.T.E. campus update will be prepared. Reviews for performance measures, eligibility, and potential award amounts will be scheduled. Teacher award notification will take place prior to payout to verify everyone has been identified.

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We are now awaiting the continuation application for year two. Dr. Mora reminded the committee the criterion for school selection. A question was posed regarding a school that doesn't meet criteria. Those funds can be redistributed to others within the grant. Any unused funds in the part II portion of the fund will be realigned into staff development.

The grant staff is now looking at how to make things better for next year and how to include more teachers in the D.A.T.E. Grant.

IV. Discussion of TAKS Scores

Dr. Mora discussed the district's success on the recent administration of the TAKS tests. In NISD, 3rd grade had a 93% passing rate on the 1st administration (last year 91%). In 5th grade the passing rate was 90% on the 1st administration. In 8th grade, 96% was the passing rate in reading. The district is thrilled with the results.

V. Discussion of Differentiated Instruction

Dr. Mora gave the update on the Differentiated Instruction (DI) initiative started by the district four years ago. She mentioned that almost 74% of Northside's population is a minority with 46% of the students are economically disadvantaged. In addition, the district has a high mobility rate. Even faced with all these challenges, the district believes it still must meet the needs of all our students.

Currently, the state legislators requested information regarding the advantage of an early childhood education. Northside tracked these children and has found that 95% of these children who have had Pre-k have passed TAKS in 3rd grade.

Budgetary constraints are always a concern. In this time of economic strain, NISD is looking at each position very carefully before filling vacancies. Teachers will always be filled since there are children who must be taught.

Also, there is a bill to change accountability. It is yet to be seen what these changes will hold. There certainly will be more on these impending changes.

With all of these factors, a systemic movement was created to assist with differentiated instruction. These steps consider all accountability factors and how to manage them. There is also a plan for leadership and support. The steps for Northside are as follows:

- Hold book studies and discussions
- Host staff development sessions, i.e., effective use of curriculum; use videotapes
- Summer '06 DI Academy, Academic Vocabulary, Concept-Based Curriculum
- Consider accountability
- Have conversations, hold conferences, seminars
- Use Title II, HEB funding sources
- Evaluate sessions
- Build capacity

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It is the premise of the DI to put research into practice by building an understanding and support among administrators and teachers by building capacity at campus level.

DI in a nutshell is teachers using differentiated instruction by content, process, product & plan for DI lessons according to students' readiness, interest and learning styles.

VI. Other Issues

Dr. Mora discussed the stimulus money. A letter from superintendents was written to Education Secretary Duncan and President Obama explaining that Texas state leadership is not using funds as intended. She went on to explain that some Title I money, about \$11 million is scheduled to be received and should be spent in two years. The district is being very careful about allocating funds into recurring expenditures since the funding may not be sustained. We have to look at student achievement. NISD is considering adding seven schools as Title I schools funded with stimulus funding. There will be consideration of hiring a reading and a math person for these seven campuses that is a two year position. The schools being considered are Jay, Holmes, Rudder, Jordan, Ward, Northwest Crossing and Rhodes.

Rosemary Perez shared that some initiatives focus on branching out where middle & high schools are not touched. We have to adhere to all the guidelines of Title money by focusing on adequate yearly progress, school improvement, dropout rates, staff development, and meeting state standards. In addition, NISD needs to be mindful of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) requirements. Teacher quality is another situation since incentive issues are being considered.

VII. Adjourn

Jill Palmer asked for a motion to adjourn. Janis Lappeus motioned and Robbie Bland seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:25. The next NEIC meeting is Tuesday, May 5.

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 1st 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 Jill Palmer, NEIC President, at Helotes Elementary School, (397-3800) 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.

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NEIC MEMBERS:

STAFF REPRESENTATIVES:

Primary: Mary Adams, Carson Elem.; Belinda Lerma, Krueger Elem. Intermediate: Jill Palmer, Helotes Elem.; Sue Casey, Scarborough Elem. Elementary Specialist: Diana Aguilar, Ed Cody Elementary. Middle School (Academic Core): Lisa Holmes, Jordan M.S., Anne Best, Jefferson M.S. (Other): Monica Pohovich, Jordan M.S. High School (Academic Core): Beverly McCarthy, Health Careers; Dori Peterson, Stevens H.S. (Business): Miranda Snider, Brandeis H.S. High School (Other): Vacancy. Special Campuses: Abby Kested, N.S. Vocational. Counselors: Kathryn Nicholson, Comm. Arts. Librarian: Janis Lappeus, Stinson M.S. Nurse: Nancy Fox, Leon Valley Elementary. Elementary Administration: Sunday Nelson, Ward Elem. Secondary Administration: Susan M. Allain, Connally M.S. District-Level Prof. Staff : Rosemary Perez, Dir., Compensatory. Paraprofessionals: Robbie Bland, Holmgreen Center.

PARENT REPRESENTATIVES: Debbie Byrnes, Robert J. LeBlanc, Lis Krimbill, Ché White

PTA COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES: Tesilia Soliz

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES: Christi Evans, Dave Gannon, Isabel Fears, Nancy Medrano

BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES: Matt Foxha11

President – Jill Palmer; Vice President – Beverly McCarthy; Secretary – Sue Casey