



San Francisco Board of Education Parent Advisory Council

PAC UPDATE AND ACTION NOTES

MAY 21, 2010

(These are not official meeting minutes!)

This is an update on issues and action steps discussed at the PAC's meeting on May 18th. The official Minutes from the May 18th meeting will be reviewed at the PAC's next meeting on Wednesday, June 2nd.

- ➔ **The PAC's last meeting of the year will be on Wednesday, June 2, from 6:00-8:30pm.** It looks like we will have a quorum for this meeting - so let me know if you cannot attend, because that will impact whether there's enough people for a quorum!

- ➔ **The suggested dates for the PAC's first meetings of the new school year are Tuesday, August 31st, and Tuesday, September 21st.** We will confirm these dates in June.

- ➔ **PAC Report on Teacher & Administrator Standards, Support & Accountability**

Nancy and Georgia will present the PAC's report at the Board of Education meeting on May 25th, focusing on research and recommendations related to teacher and administrator accountability. The "Teacher and Administrator Quality" team has been working in response to what we have been hearing for years in community conversations: parents want all schools to be quality schools, and don't know what to do if they have concerns about their children's teachers or principals. The team has done a lot of research, including meeting with district staff to better understand the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program, and the teachers' and administrators' contracts.

Through this research, the TAQ team found some major issues to highlight:

- Many parents don't know what their children should be learning, what should be happening in the classroom, what their rights are, or what process they should follow when they feel something isn't going well.
- Even parents who do know what the standards are often don't know what they should do if they have a concern - or find that no one in the school or district will take responsibility to resolve the problem.
- Many principals either don't seem to know or don't effectively evaluate what classroom teachers are doing to help their students reach grade-level standards. Some principals seem reluctant to give teachers a negative evaluation or refer them to the PAR program -- which means that problems aren't addressed, and children continue to fall behind.

- There do not seem to be systems in the district to ensure that curriculum is aligned across different schools, which means not all students are being prepared to meet the new A-G graduation requirements - and contributes to the achievement gap.

What needs to happen in the district:

- *Communication and transparency:* The district needs to make sure parents understand grade-level standards, know what their rights are, and what the process is for parents to follow when their children aren't getting what they need.
- *Standards:* Standards need to be consistent across classrooms and schools. The district needs to make sure that standards are taught consistently everywhere, and that there are baseline assessments for students.
- *Support:* Teachers and principals need to be supported to understand and meet the district's standards - especially in schools with large populations of under-served students. The PAR program needs sufficient staff to providing coaching to teachers referred to the program.
- *Accountability:* Teachers and administrators need to be held accountable. Parent evaluations should be included in the teacher and principal evaluation process. Principals need to be held accountable for making sure that teachers are able to teach to standards, and if they are not, that they're referred to the PAR program.

Next steps, for the fall:

- Ensure that specific "action plans" are developed to implement the district-wide Parent Engagement Plan, at school sites and through district offices
- Recommend that as part of this Plan, the district develop and communicate to parents a "flow chart" for what to do & where to go if you have concerns about your child's school
- Continue doing research on how the district's standards and curriculum are being aligned
- Meet with individual Board members and district staff to help move things forward (including members of the Board's Personnel Committee).

➡ **Recommendations for New PAC Members**

Nine current members of the PAC are going to continue on next year, which means we have up to nine open seats (including three seats for alternates). Between them, Michelle, Ruth B. and Ruth G. met with six parents/guardians who applied to the PAC. Ruth G. presented information about each applicant, and the interview team commented on each person's strengths and what they might contribute to the PAC's work. Five of the six candidates have children in schools that qualify for the federal "School Improvement Grant" education reform program, which will provide important perspectives for the PAC as the district takes on these reforms.

We noted that we didn't receive any applications from parents representing the Asian or Pacific Islander communities, which is a major weakness in the PAC's ability to reflect the district's student population - which is about 40% Asian/Pacific Islander.

The PAC voted unanimously to recommend six candidates for appointment to the PAC: Alberto Del Rio, Maria Garcia, Marco Santiago, Chablis Scott, Deon Stancil, and Buthienah Taha.

The PAC also agreed to hold at least two seats open for Asian/Pacific Islander communities, and to continue to do outreach and recruit parents to fill those seats in the fall.

➡ **PAC Officer Elections**

The PAC unanimously elected Nancy Gapasin Gnass to be the Chair for the 2010-2011 term, and Natasha LaVine to be the Vice Chair. Nancy and Natasha would like to be "co-chairs" in practice, and PAC members agreed that they could divide the different responsibilities for these positions.

The Parliamentarian and Secretary will be elected in the fall, when the new members are on board, and also able to fill those offices.

➡ **PAC Budget and Staffing**

The PAC also approved a draft budget for the 2010-2011 fiscal year (which begins July 1). The final budget will be approved in the fall, after we have ended the current fiscal year and have actual figures for expenditures and carry-over funds.

The budget includes a two-week unpaid leave for PAC coordinator Ruth Grabowski, which frees up some funds to hire temporary administrative support for August and early September, until Ruth returns. Erica Grisey is available and interested in doing this, so Ruth and Michelle will follow up with her.