

DATE: October 3, 2011 PRESENT: Billy Peaden, Chair
Jill Camnitz
Worth Forbes
Benjie Forrest
Sean Kenny
TIME: 6:00 P.M. Jennifer Little
Ralph Love, Sr.
Barbara Owens
Matthew Ward
Christine Waters
Marc Whichard
PLACE: County Commissions' Auditorium Mary Williams

ABSENT:

Chair Billy Peaden called the Board of Education to order in Special Session at 6:00 P. M.

Chair Peaden then asked Superintendent Beverly Reep to lead the Board in a discussion of revising the Pitt County Schools District Goals for school year 2011-12. Dr. Reep informed the Board that Goals one through four had been in place the last three years and goals five through seven were added two years ago. She stated that after speaking with administration in our district, it is felt the goals should be more measurable. The Systemwide District Goals in place for school year 2010-11 are listed below:

1. 100% of our schools will meet EXPECTED GROWTH and 50% will make HIGH GROWTH.
2. The number of NCLB subgroups demonstrating improved proficiency will increase by 10% in our schools.
3. In grades K-8, we will decrease the number of students accumulating 10 or more unexcused absences from school by 5%. In grades 9-12, we will decrease the number of students accumulating 8 or more unexcused absences from school by 5%.
4. We will reduce the dropout rate by 50% in 4 years.
5. Our schools will realize greater parent involvement and support for student learning.
6. Area businesses will continue to share resources for targeted programs.
7. Improve communication with all systemwide stakeholders.

In sharing Goal 1, Dr. Reep stated this past year, 91% of our schools made growth. She questioned if the goal for 50% of our schools to make high growth is too low.

Goal 2 has become a struggle in finding correct wording to measure if a subgroup is making progress. Dr. Reep stated that growth needs to be measured for different subgroups, but how to accomplish this is a major issue. She stated if we enter the subgroups involved on each student's spread sheet, we can extract the subgroup data and attain growth updates.

In Goal 3, Superintendent Reep stated some progress has been made with attendance in grades K-8, but grades 9-12 actually showed a decline in attendance this past year. She explained that the data presented are for students who have ten or more days of unexcused absences, not just absences as a whole.

In defining Goal 4, Dr. Reep stated there is one more year left in the four-year goal as stated above to measure our dropout rate.

In discussing Goals 5 and 6, Dr. Reep commented that the Board added these goals two years ago and possible revisions of these are stated below. Measurement of these goals is difficult.

For Goal 7, Superintendent Reep stated that we need assessment for community input which is helped by hits to our website and ALERT NOW messages. She mentioned areas of the community who are not heard and asked how can we monitor and track all districts. Dr. Reep feels, as well as Board members and staff, that communication between all entities is most important and asked for input from the Board.

Dr. Reep informed the Board that staff members feel the graduation rate goal needs to be raised to 80%, and also that a goal needs to be added related to Unitary Status.

After reviewing the current Systemwide District Goals, Dr. Reep shared a draft of proposed changes in the Goals with the Board as follows:

Goals 1, 3, 4 and 7 remain on draft for suggested goals. Please consider the following for discussion:

- a. Goal 2- We need a goal that addresses and measures the achievement gap between various subgroups. The challenge has been to measure how these subgroups improve versus just using a proficiency score...which does not measure growth. We need to find a way to track this progress even if the state moves away from AYP measures.
- b. Goals 5 and 6 were added at Board request but it is extremely difficult to measure them.
- c. Suggest a new goal 5 which states: We will improve our Graduation rate by 10 points in the next three years (from 70 to 80).
- d. Suggest new goal 6 which states: By January 2012, we will have developed a comprehensive written plan with data, implementation strategies and accountability measures to submit to the court for Unitary Status.
- e. Goal 7 has been hard to measure but is critical to our continued progress as a system. We use a variety of communication mechanisms that can be tracked but it would be helpful if we could conduct a pre- and post- assessment of our stakeholders for how we can improve communication.

NOTE: Goals 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of current system-wide goals are used as the goals for our District Improvement Plan.

Mr. Marc Whichard suggested for Goal 5 regarding parent involvement, that we formulate a written plan as mentioned in section “d” of the draft to include open house, multi-target meetings–i.e. band program/PTO meeting/academic program, have the School Improvement Teams address ways to have more parent involvement in the schools and other measures to invite parents into the school and get their input. He feels moving away from Goal 5 and getting parents involved would be a detriment for our system, that we actually need to be more aggressive in involving parents in their child/children’s school and creating more parent interest in their child/children’s life while attending school.

Mr. Sean Kenny agrees with Mr. Whichard’s statements and feels we need specific goals with tangible measurements. He added that goals may need to be stated differently for elementary/middle/high school levels. Mr. Kenny also commented that wording in several goals may need to change in that parent involvement is not always true for a student as some children may live with a family member, have a multi-family background, live in a group home or other circumstances may be involved.

Mr. Worth Forbes stated there should be a list of activities for each school and the target audience given. He added that rosters, to include race, would help to know who in the community is involved. Mr. Forbes feels there are not many activities targeting African-American and Hispanic parents/guardians.

Ms. Mary Williams asked what are PTAs/PTOs doing in our schools and are their activities monitored. She questioned if they are targeting parents in all races, i.e. sending literature into Hispanic communities written in Spanish. Ms. Williams added that if Minutes of their meetings were written and posted, the school community could read them and know what is happening in the school. She would like to see more accountability in these programs throughout the district.

Mr. Whichard stated that if rosters were maintained as Mr. Forbes suggested, the information could be taken to principal meetings and shared to help principals learn from each other.

Superintendent Reep stated that she is hearing that the Board wishes to continue Goal 5 with revisions to include keeping rosters with race data at activities, knowing the target audience and sharing information with the Board and each other. Mr. Forbes feels the race needs to be obtained so that we will know that a specific group is not being left out. Dr. Reep informed the Board that she will have to check with our legal folks to be sure obtaining this information is permitted.

Ms. Camnitz asked did we meet our high growth goal last year with Dr. Reep stating we have met it for the last three years. Ms. Camnitz then stated she feels that percentage should be revised upward. Superintendent Reep stated if we don’t raise the percentage, she feels we’re saying 50% of the schools making high growth is okay and we don’t need to try for more. Mr. Forbes commented that he feels 75% of our schools making high growth is attainable. Mr. Whichard stated he feels that a school

not meeting expected growth is concerning and means there are fundamental issues in a school that need addressing. Ms. Camnitz asked could we change the percentage to a higher goal, but also make it clear that this goal may not be met in the first year. Dr. Reep said this concept would be made clear. She feels a school may now set up a pivot table to collect data for subgroups, but stated it is not in the purest sense of AYP as there is so much overlap in the subgroups. Ms. Camnitz asked about subgroup data being unrelated to AYP or No Child Left Behind measurement with Dr. Reep responding that this is what the staff is searching for. Mr. Whichard commented on the need to track subgroups and feels we need to address the achievement gap between subgroups. In doing this, Mr. Forbes stated we will still need data by subgroup with Dr. Reep stating yes, and she's hearing we need something to address measurement of growth of that subgroup.

Mr. Whichard also stated in regards to a new Goal 6, this issue could be resolved using section "d" of the draft, which is most important in our striving to attain Unitary Status and perhaps issue this a new Goal number such as Goal 8. But, he feels we need to continue Goal 6 - to reach areas businesses in continuing to share resources for targeted program with each school seeking out a business partnership/s. Mr. Whichard also believes that improving communication with all systemwide stakeholders - Goal 7 should not be deleted. He feels strongly that business partnerships for education are needed in each attendance area, whether it be a true business or even religious partnership - all involve partnership with the community. Dr. Reep commented that we could be more proactive in building a partnership with a business and/or church in each school's community, which could also tie back into the principal's evaluation instrument. She added that a goal of 100% involvement of our schools in a partnership/s for education could be reworded into these goals. Mr. Whichard stated all partnerships are not about money, but could be volunteers coming into the school to help proctor during testing or sitting down to read with a child.

Mr. Forbes feels that a goal in the evaluation of a principal and the School Improvement Plan should tie into the Systemwide District Goals.

Mr. Sean Kenny stated in regards to Goal 1, if it was felt that a high growth of 75% of our schools could not be met in a year, would it be better to set smaller goals and raise the goal each year, i.e. 58% this year, 66% in 2012-13 and 75% in 2013-15. Mr. Camnitz feels this is a problem with NCLB, one year a school makes the target and the next year, the school fails.

Superintendent Reep stated in preparing the new Systemwide Goals for 2011-12, she's hearing we will add a goal related to Unitary Status and a goal setting a higher graduation rate percentage. She added that we will keep the goals we have; but reword, revise and change measures and targets for them as suggested.

Ms. Barbara Owens feels Goal 3 is a moving target with Ms. Christine Waters asking was this goal set for one year. Dr. Reep responded yes, it is an annual goal adding that it is chronic - many of the same children have missed days year after year and lose increasing instructional time. Mr. Whichard asked if the district is actively prosecuting parents who have children that consistently miss school with Dr. Reep answering yes. She stated that many staff members are working with the courts,

social services and other avenues for assistance to keep these children in school. Ms. Jennifer Little asked was each school tracking their student absences to know if they are making progress from one year to the next, and what incentives are in place to help make progress with attendance issues. Dr. Reep informed her that data managers are able to track attendance for students. Ms. Little suggested that this could be studied each month, every three months, or whatever the school selected rather than once a year. Superintendent Reep stated that we need to look at the audience involved adding that we had heard Mr. Coleman speak of making home visits regarding school absences and communicating more with the parents/guardians. She feels communication is a major factor for keeping students in school. Ms. Camnitz feels maybe we need to have a goal this year where we tie measurable attendance percentages with strong communication to our parents.

With no further discussion, Mr. Marc Whichard moved, second by Mr. Worth Forbes, that the Board adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. Time 6:35 P. M.

Respectively Submitted,

Mr. Billy Peaden, Chair

Dr. Beverly B. Reep, Superintendent