

Ben Franklin Academy School Accountability Committee Meeting Notes October, 2011

UIP

SAC committee chair Ann Citrin reported the SAC is responsible for adopting the school UIP (Uniform Improvement Plan) and outlined the specific Colorado Open Meeting Laws that pertain to the SAC.

Open Meeting Regulations

The SAC meetings are open to the community by law, therefore all communications must be open to the public – i.e. face-to-face. Email communication may occur between two SAC voting members, but not to three or more voting members.

Potential BFA Parent SAC Position

Within the development of the BFA SAC bylaws, a voting committee position is being considered for a perspective BFA family. The discussion for this position involved, how to structure the position, and the length of time the member would serve. The following criteria were considered:

- Whether the individual should be an incoming parent that is on the wait list and has received a lottery position, but whose children are not yet old enough to be at the school.
- Whether the potential candidate(s) could include parents of preschoolers or members of the community whose children are old enough to attend BFA.

The motion was then raised for a perspective BFA family position as a voting member on the BFA SAC board with a one-year term commencing for January 2012.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Potential BFA Student SAC Member

Another proposal to the BFA SAC board was the potential addition of a student member. The following criteria were considered:

- That the student should be chosen from the oldest grade existing at the school.
- That the student should be appointed by the principal.
- Whether the student should have voting privileges.
- How many meetings the student should attend during the year of the service.
- The length of time the student should sit on the board.

A motion was then raised that the bylaws of the BFA SAC should include for the provision of a student selected by the principal from the highest grade level to be a non-voting member of the BFA SAC for a one year term.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Survey Research/Questionnaire

Committee member Amy Taylor reported on the development of a school satisfaction questionnaire, that is being developed to survey BFA families, and the research conducted to develop the survey including looking over other school's surveys. The discussion about the survey included:

-In what format should the survey be sent out?

Suggestions included:

- having parents fill the survey out at teacher conferences
- having the survey emailed out to families
- what format or program the survey should be sent out in (such as utilizing the Survey Monkey software or possibly creating it in Google Docs)

-How should the survey questions be phrased?

- should parents that have more than one child at BFA answer one survey, or one for each child
- that the survey should have one part that is general to the whole school and one portion devoted specifically to the child's class

-How should the survey fit in with the schools UIP?

The discussion included:

- academic achievement
- academic growth
- academic gaps

-How the survey will be utilized by BFA once the data is accumulated

- the survey is presented to the principal and the BFA Board of Directors
- the survey is used to determine if the school is meeting its mission and vision
- the information is used for making financial decisions about the school
- the information is used for making decisions about the academic focus

The survey is currently under development and will be ready by the end of February for distribution at the end of the 2nd trimester.

SAC committee member Chris Eubanks offered to research what is the best way to format and deliver the survey to BFA families.

SAC Goals

Committee member Robin Mendelson reported on the research that she and committee member Kent Barwind had conducted. In determining goals for the BFA SAC, they researched several schools districts within the United States and reported on the following findings:

Successful schools:

- Have very high standards for academic achievement.
- Put a premium on teacher development, both in salary and in providing training, and have a strong focus on teacher accountability and improvement.
- Have high parental involvement.
- Are fiscally sound.

The research also included looking at what methods successful high schools have implemented to potentially funnel those ideas into an elementary environment. The top high schools with over 2000 students from several Midwestern states (Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Indiana, Ohio, and Kansas) were researched and the following was reported:

- The top schools weren't just the best in academics; they were often the best in extra-curricular activities as well (Band, Sports, Arts, School Newspaper).
- The districts took a comprehensive approach to education, from kindergarten through high school, and they consistently modified their program to obtain high goals.
- They incorporated a 21st century model that included technology and its implementation throughout the curriculum.

Based on these findings, potential goals include:

- Very high academic standards for the students and supported by well trained and well paid teachers.
- Developing a comprehensive curriculum that includes athletics, clubs and the arts, that is delivered through an academic program including 21st century technologies, academic support and connections between grade levels.

Policy Review

It was discussed that the BOD was charging the SAC with the task of assisting them with the annual review of school policies. The SAC members shall review policies within 30 days of their anniversary of approval or revision, whichever is later, and provide the BOD with a recommendation for the policy.