

Task Force on Student Academic Performance

Hudson City School District – Board of Education

Meeting 4 **MINUTES** September 2, 2009 Hudson High School
Library

1. Open: 6:40PM.
2. Introductions / Sign in. Present were Wayne Kinney, Bill Ebel, Anne Connor, Martha Lane, Theresa Moran, Mark Brenneman, Nicole Genito, D. Stewart, Jack Howe, Elizabeth Fout, Annabel Lee, Peter Meyer.
3. Minutes from last meeting: Okay.
4. Changes to this agenda? None
5. Readings. We had a brief discussion about some of the material distributed over the last couple of weeks: a study in the “Review of Economics and Statistics” showing “a clear direct link for men between athletic participation and both additional formal education and wages”; a report on the ACT tests, saying that 25 percent of those who took the test are not “college-ready”; a critical book review (“Homework Hooey”) of Alfie Kohn’s book “The Case Against Homework”; a memo from Commissioner Richard Mills about new federal policies about English Language Learners (ELL); the “Baldwin Report.”

- There was some question about the status of the Baldwin Report, which Peter explained was still, as far as he knew, still “operative,” despite the board’s ambivalent relationship to it over the last several years. He pointed out that the official title of the report (dated February 2006) was “Looking Forward: Findings and Recommendations for Improved Student Achievement in the Hudson City School District,” which was what this Task Force was about.
- There was some concern that the new federal ELL policy – requiring that all ELLs in the country for more than one year had to take the state’s English Language Arts tests – was unfair. But someone pointed out that we had to live with it. Someone asked about whether Special Ed (SPED) students had to take the same tests and Mr. Brenneman said yes. He said that nationally, only about 2% of SPED students took “alternate” tests, but he didn’t know what the numbers were for HCSD students.
- It was explained that the ACT test was a cousin to the SAT test and used by many colleges to make entry selections. The “college-ready” numbers were for those who had taken the test, but no one knew how many of our students took the test. It was agreed that we should try to find out how many of our students took SAT and ACT tests and how they did. Mr. Howe said that those numbers should be gettable.

6. Future meeting schedule, “Action Plan” and “TFSAP Session Coordinators.” There was some problem with meetings on 9/16 and 9/23 as it conflicted with Open Houses at the Intermediate and Junior High schools. Peter would send out an email query to everyone to get the best meeting dates.

Because of possible schedule conflicts for people interested in the Communication topic, we changed the session order, so that Session 2 would be School Culture and Session 3 would be Districtwide Communication. Several people signed up for session

coordinator slots – Elizabeth Fout for Communication, Nicky Genito for School Culture and Martha Lane for Teaching – and folks were going to contact Peter later with their interests.

See attached “TFSAP Action Plan” and “TSAP Session Coordinators”

7. **Session 1 Topic:**

--**Where are we now?** There was a great deal of information and data presented here – and much more that was requested. Based on that conversation, Peter and Theresa M. will gather up the following information, in written form, to present at a future meeting:

- ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies test results for several years, to make some comparisons possible;
- Regents test results for several years;
- Enrollment numbers for several years;
- Dropout rates;
- Graduation rates;
- GED students and GED diplomas;
- Noncompleters: what are they and where did they go?
- AP courses offered and number of kids who take them;
- Students who take SAT and ACT tests and their scores;
- In-house grades and pass rates;
- Number of kids held back;
- College acceptances (2-year and 4-year schools);
- Where our students go to college.

8. Adjourn. (8:10pm)

FYI: Task Force Report due: February 11, 2010

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