

TASK FORCE ON STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Hudson City School District

Action Plan

As of: 26 January 2010

Members of the Task Force on Student Achievement will examine, research, and evaluate the topics that we believe are directly responsible for student achievement.

We will examine each of the seven topics as a large group, one topic each meeting, focusing on:

- Discussing the current policies and practices of the Hudson City School District
- Researching the "Best" practices for each factor through multiple resources
- Writing a report of the "findings" for each topic – including, the practices we believe are "working" in our district and any suggestions we have for improvement – which will be incorporated into a "final" report at the end of the Task Force's term.

Meeting Topics Schedule & meeting dates:

Sessions 1—4 (June—August 2009)

-Organizational meetings

Session 5 (September 2, 2009)

- Where Are We Now: Demographics, Graduation/Dropout Rates, Test Scores (District "Report Card"), AP Courses Offered, other measures of academic performance

Session 6 (September 30, 2009)

- Curriculum part 1*
 - o What is a curriculum? Do we have one? Do we have many?
 - o How is curriculum related to assessments and tests?
 - o What role do textbooks play in the curriculum?
 - o What is "scope and sequence" and "alignment"?

Session 7 (October 28, 2009)

- School Culture
 - o Expectations
 - o Student motivation
 - o Parent involvement
 - o Dropout & Graduation Rates
 - o Achievement Gap (black/white, rich/poor)
 - o Social Promotion? Are students ready to move to the next grade?
 - o Student Absences and tardiness

Session 8 (November 4, 2009)

- Administrative Practices

- Leadership – How does it affect academic achievement?
- What is the role of the Board of Education?
- Silos – How important is it for buildings to talk to one another?
- Is there too much duplication of effort? Are there too many committees?
- Is there enough focus on academics?
- Is there enough follow-through, consistency, and accountability? Are BOE policies enforced?
- How does scheduling affect academic performance?
- Poor attendance/high absenteeism

Session 9 (November 18, 2009)

- Teaching**
- - Homework
 - Teacher mentoring and evaluation
 - Code of Conduct (is it enforceable?)
 - Curriculum (How do we get buy in?)
 - Teacher turnover (How do we get good teachers and keep them?)
 - Hiring practices

Session 10 (December 2, 2009)

- Curriculum, part 2***

Session 11 (December 9, 2009)

- District Wide Communication
 - Good news vs. Bad news
 - If it is only about “perception” why do people leave the district schools?
 - Internal Communication
 - External Communication

Session 12 (January 20, 2010)

- Work session: Where are we? Tying up loose ends. Strategy for writing the Report.

Session 13 (January 27, 2010)

- Other
 - Online classes
 - Budget crisis?
 - Dropping enrollment
 - Charter schools / ALP
 - “Houses” within buildings
 - Baldwin Report
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Session 14 (February 3, 2010)

- Report Writing Meeting 1: Where are We, Curriculum, School Culture, Administrative Practices

Session 15 (February 10, 2010)

- Report Writing meeting 2: Teaching, Districtwide Communication, Other

Session 16 (February 17, 2010)

- Report Writing meeting 3: Review Final Report

February 22: REPORT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Special Guest (9/30): Robert Pondiscio, Core Knowledge Foundation

**Special Guest (11/18): Dr. Patricia Price, a professor in the Thelma P. Lally School of Education at the College of St. Rose has confirmed that she will address the TFSAP on Wednesday, November 18, 2009 at 6:30 PM in the Hudson High School Library.

***Special Guests (12/2): Erik Sweet, ELA Curriculum Associate, and Will Jaacks, Science Curriculum Associate, both from the State Education Department. They will discuss learning standards, curriculum, and instruction in their two subjects