DENVER – The Reimagine SPF Committee convened at North High School for its sixth monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 15. This month, Committee members from the school leaders, teacher, and parent/family and community member cohorts were joined by DPS Students. As at previous convenings, School Board members Dr. Carrie Olson, Tay Anderson, Scott Baldermann, and Reverend Bradley Laurvick, DPS staff, community observers, and external meeting facilitators Marlon Marshall and Lynda Tran were also present.

The meeting began with a recap of the activities that have taken place over the past several weeks -- including remote presentations from external experts -- and a review of key areas of alignment from the previous Committee convenings. The facilitators also reiterated the group’s intent to manage two major decision points this month around the academic baseline and initial recommendations for additional measures DPS should capture in its framework. The DPS team introduced a new tech tool, Slido, designed to encourage a more inclusive Committee discussion and capture additional voices in the room ranging from points of clarification to suggestions or ideas.

The Committee then promptly moved into its first breakout discussion around whether to use the State framework as an academic baseline for evaluating DPS schools. Committee members were grouped according to cohorts for the small group discussions -- either teachers and students, school and district administrators, and family and community members. The groups then talked through the pros and cons of either using or not using the State framework as an academic baseline.

The full Committee came back together for a debrief discussion that covered both positives and concerns about moving to the State framework with the majority of comments centered on perceived pros. Examples of comments include:

Group: Teachers and students
- Pro that post-secondary measurements are captured but generally con feel like they need to add more specific measures.
- Pro that it doesn’t have benchmarks (mixed conversation)
- Emphasis on elementary and middle school growth

Group: Parents and community
- Want to use the state because it is consistent with others in the state “it IS a baseline”
- Can’t get around the fact it is used to close schools and that was a reason to use it as a baseline
- Opportunity to gain political leverage at the state level

Group: Parents and community
- Con of state framework is lack of overweighting growth – “we said we would judge performance of a school regardless of where they come in”
- Excited about opportunity to be a part of this process

Group: Administrators, teachers, and students
- Pros that it is less confusing for families, checks the boxes
- Lots of cons, bar seems lower for students overall
- Pro is there is an opportunity to create a dashboard or report card that shows a robust story to parents and families and schools if there is a
- Noted that State SPF growth does not outweigh status
- Pro is “moving from DPS to state de-emphasizes to some degree growth and emphasizes status more”

There was additional discussion about what the State SPF does and does not capture that was informed by expert support in the room.

The Committee then agreed to vote using the tech tool on the following question: Should we move forward with the State SPF as the academic baseline? With 24 total votes including SPF Committee Members and students, 75% indicated they wanted to move forward with the State SPF as the academic baseline.

The facilitators encouraged those who voted not to move forward with the State SPF to express their concerns. The tech tool captured additional comments from the Committee and the discussion in the room included comments such as:

- No parent input on current SPFs at the DPS or State levels]
- If you adopt the State SPF, then local Boards no longer have the authority to change things – the DPS Board would still define whole child measures, equity, other things, but in terms of academic accountability, it would be the STATE that would decide
- Some people excited to let the STATE decide the academic cut points (for scores and academics) so that the DPS Board could focus on the other measures such as thinking through child success holistically
- “Setting our kids up for comparison to an average that is not setting up the majority of kids at the state level for success doesn’t feel good.”
- “Our SPF is convoluted as it is.”

Board President Carrie Olson indicated the next steps would be to gather public feedback that could inform the Committee further and final recommendations will be proposed to the Board for its evaluation and vote.

In the second small group breakout session, Committee Members discussed the additional information each priority audience would require beyond the State baseline -- Parents, caregivers, families [students]; School administration, principals, teachers; Community; School District; CO Department of Education. Comments shared in the full group debrief included:

Group: Family and community members
- All grade levels need to be IEP compliant
- Early literacy
- College-going rates
- Equity indicator
- Remediation rates
- Post secondary readiness plan that is more comprehensive than the state
- Measure 4 year grad rates
- Measure on-track literacy by graduation (on-track seal)
- Critical thinking
- Science or general information literacy assessment
- Assessment or evaluation on civics

Group: Family and community members
- Catch-up/keep-up measures
- Academic gaps and equity indicator – what is it measuring and is it fair? Is it reflective of what is happening in schools related to students
- GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS “in bold big capital letters”

Group: Teachers and students
- Competency-based graduation requirements
- Parent guardians having some sort of say on academics (their opinions)
- Bonus for things that are not common offerings, ie computers (ways to earn points instead of penalizing people)

Group: School/District Administrators
- High schools – graduation promise
- Put iCAP in same bucket as assessments SAT, ACT, IB
- MGP data on reading and math
- Access data
- Cohort data and how are students truly doing over time
- Surveys for teachers
- DO WE NEED TO ASSOCIATE ANYTHING WITH POINTS
- Equity “Are all students learning at a rate where they will have access to a life of their choosing”

The meeting closed with updates from the Board President about upcoming public meetings and a commitment from the meeting facilitators to share an agenda for the February convening for advance feedback.