Reimagine SPF Committee Meeting 1 - Meeting Notes

August 14, 2019
Bruce Randolph School
4:30-7:30pm

Goals for Meeting 1:
Meet the committee and set grounding information for the committee work, and gather interest for committee work moving forward.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
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<tr>
<td>Susana: Listening Tour, What I've Learned, Vision for Looking Ahead with Reimagine SPF</td>
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<td>BOE: Carrie's journey, What I've Learned (SPF)</td>
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<td>Reimagine the SPF Charge Statement</td>
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<td>Anticipated Topics &amp; feedback</td>
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Trend Findings from Reimagine SPF, Meeting 1:
- Define “Equity” as it relates to our vision and the accountability framework
- Name and define the purpose of the framework
- Name the scope of the committee work
Feedback on Reimagine Charge Statement and “big buckets”

The Board and Superintendent offered a draft of the “Charge Statement” for this project, and the committee provided feedback on this topic. Additional discussion notes on this topic is also listed under the discussion trend notes.

Reimagine the traditional SPF in a manner that: Represents our promises to students and families across schools about the baseline outcomes we will create for students; Centralizes equity, as equity represents our most important work going forward; Simplifies measures to the maximum extent possible and creates a tool that is easier to understand; Is unifying across school models and governance types.

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<th>Charge Statement:</th>
<th>Committee Comments: Participants offered comments outlined below, as well as the comments in the larger trend section.</th>
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<td>Reimagine the traditional SPF in a manner that:</td>
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| Represents our promises to students and families and across schools about the baseline outcomes we will create for students; | What are “our promises”? We need to define this term as it relates to a framework. Are the promises reflective of our values?  
  • How are the promises aligned to our values and SEL and whole child? In what ways are whole child measures included?
  Is the purpose of the framework a “baseline” that all schools can meet, or is it an aspiration for all schools to strive for?  
  • Will this include evidence beyond test scores? |
| Centralizes equity, as equity represents our most important work going forward; | What is our normed definition of Equity?  
  • We need to define the end result with the vision for equity  
  • Need to set vision for equity across all schools  
  • Adding equitable measures that reflect our diverse students and learners.  
  • Seems that we mostly measure Reading and Math in defining equity - how can we measure other areas of brilliance, strengths, etc?  
  Consider the bias that lies within the framework  
  • Consider the racial bias in these measures  
  • Consider our assessments and what we measure. For example, PSAT is an assessment designed for students with strong mastery of English language. How can we ensure equity with these measures?  
  • Consider equity across all schools and students, and equity on the framework. |
| **Simplifies measures to the maximum extent possible and creates a tool that is easier to understand:** | ● Need to check validity and reliability of assessments and measures  
  ○ Need to norm referenced tests and measures.  
  ○ Measures over time (more than two years), and the two year matrix - is this the best approach?  
● Question: Will simplifying lose any of its strength or purpose, would this make it loose and not representative of schools?  
  ● Check language of this statement - Who decides the “maximum extent” and what this means? |
| **Is unifying across school models and governance types.** | ● Depending on the purpose, nuance matters - may push on another process that is coupled with this tool.  
  ○ Can there be one tool for all schools, and a nuanced tool to capture the uniqueness of individual schools?  
● Are all schools held to the same measures, and if not, is this important and how can we ensure all schools are held to the same expectations and measures? |
| **Overall Comments on Charge Statement** | ● The Charge Statement does not seem vastly different from what we already have - how will be allowed to actually “Reimagine” this framework?  
  ○ How much can we actually change or what can be reimagined? |
Anticipated Topics:

Board Member, Carrie Olson, shared the pre-work and internal research that was conducted to learn about what the community has noted as important topics to review, change, and add to the Reimage the SPF committee work. This research included reviewing public comment sessions and Board conversations, reviewing the work of previous DPS task forces and committees, as well as reviewing the findings from the Superintendent Supersearch and the Superintendent’s Entry Plan Listening Tour.

From this, the Anticipated Topics include:
Conversation & Feedback:

The Committee participated in a conversation about both the “Charge Statement” and “Anticipated Topics” and the notes from this conversation are below:

From Conversation and feedback: Equity:

● Defining equity:
  ○ We need to define what we mean by equity - Equity is a buzzword, and we need to define it.
  ○ Caution the deficit language we use. For example:
    ■ a young elementary student can be labeled “off track,” or the term Academic Gap, comes from a deficit mindset. Does this align with our vision for equity?
    ■ Currently Equity measures or The Gap measures are normed against white students - is this best? Consider the deficit language and process with this method.

● Equity and our values
  ○ There is an inequality of funding, and the district needs to prioritize funding for schools that need it. The funding distribution should align with our values.
  ○ We need to continue to question if this framework and our accountability system is aligned to our values.
  ○ Equity - when we talk about equity, we need to continue to highlight that we only have 30% of our students are performing at grade level. We need a framework that sets expectations for every child [aligned to our values for every student]

● Equity and bias in the framework
  ○ Focus needs to be on equity. There is a racial bias in this framework and in school accountability, and there needs to be a focus on equity.
  ○ Need to consider biased assessments that are used on this framework.
  ○ Equity: we need to consider learning styles with the measures
  ○ Equity measures & SPED
    ■ Consider students with special needs and families of students with special needs, and the different needs these families have in an equitable framework, or the information they would want to know about a school that might be different from the info currently provided.
      ● For example: SPED consider social emotional goals vs educational goals that are a large part of some IEP goals and student development.
● Equity and Academic Gap:
  ○ Academic Gap - we need to be mindful about what we mean by “Gap” - it is a gap if we measure it in a certain way, or we compare it to something, and there needs to be caution in the way we measure, compare, and discuss with an asset-based mindset.

Feedback on Vision/Purpose of SPF:
● What is the Purpose and Use of the framework:
  ○ We need to decide how this framework and information is used.
    ■ We need to also think about how we want this framework and information to be received. Is our goal for all teachers and leaders to use this for improvement? Currently the framework is sometimes so frustrating or un-useful that schools ignore it, or it becomes the single narrative of schools. What can change? What is the ultimate use or purpose?
    ■ Current SPF is connected to school choice, and it drives budgets- will the reimagined SPF hold the same amount of power and influence on schools?
    ■ We need to address the implication of “winners” and “losers” or good/bad schools with the current uses and structure.
    ■ We need to ensure we can define the purpose of this tool.
    ■ What is the purpose of the SPF - is it used for improvement, allocation of resources, etc?
  ○ This needs to be an approach that we hold all schools to the same basic expectations
  ○ We need to define - what is it that we are promising to students and families
  ○ What is the purpose and vision because currently, the scope of this framework is not representative of schools - for example arts are not represented even for Arts schools.

● What is the end goal for our students?
  ○ Instead of backwards planning from state assessments that implies that our end goal is the assessment, we need to backwards plan from the graduate. What do we want all of our graduates to be able to do by the time they graduate from our schools, and then we plan back from that goal?

Overall/General:
● Call for the focus and passion of the committee to remain at this level throughout the entirety of this work.
● Question of validity often arises - is this a valid tool
  ○ Validity of measures - for example iStation (Early Literacy)?
Proposed timeline of the reimagined SPF rollout might not be fitting for schools. Schools conduct budget planning and hiring in January of each year in preparation for the following year. If we are naming this framework until April - and this will be the framework for the following year, schools will have already finished their budget planning and hiring for the next year, and this would have been done without the lens of the new framework.

What’s missing:

Committee members reviewed the “buckets” of topics and also created a list of items that are missing from this list that are important to the conversation:

Purpose/how the framework is used (in addition to the notes above):

- How the SPF is used
- How the SPF is communicated
- Missing the Purpose - [what is the purpose of SPF]
  - Purpose of education in our communities
- Discreteness of the details: the “buckets” hold some information, but the devil is in the details - depends on what is inside each of these buckets.
- What are we doing with scores?
- The bigger vision of what’s possible and what we need this tool to do/measure
- Values, Audience, Intended uses, transparency, Accountability - transparency about how we use this data to evaluate schools

Community focus:

- Missing from the charge statement is a larger focus on community. We need to include the voices of the community, especially in the communities most impacted by the SPF.
  - Community voice specifically for equity “gaps” measures. If we’re measuring students of color, have communities of color be involved or invited to the conversation
- Community involvement - how to share/expand opportunities
- We need to ensure students are also included in the community
  - What do students think? Can we get students on this task force?

What’s Missing: Other

- Adding “Environmental Justice” - We won’t have schools if we don’t care about the climate crisis and teach DPS scholars about it.
- Student voice is missing from this charge statement and this reimagine work
- Whole child
- In what ways are these culturally responsive
● describes the communities and district's values about what constitutes a high-quality school, without implying that it describes all important aspects of quality.
● What have we learned from accountability research across the country (same laws, different approaches to learn from)
● How to measure whole child development prior to graduation
● Include local university reps for voice in "college ready"
● Centralize expectations and definitions
● Holding district accountable for resources to have equitable resources (close the gap)

Questions:
● Purpose/process of the task force:
  ○ Is this task force a decision-making body?
  ○ When this group disagrees what's the process?
  ○ Can we understand the demographics of this committee - educators vs parents, etc.?  
● How can we gather on-going community input:
  ○ Can the DPS people working on this do community pulls or professional surveys of West Denver and Montbello?
  ○ Can we gather info on how this impacts teachers, admin, and students?
● The framework is flawed - can we analyze measure by measure looking for the issues?
● Could we adopt person-first language?
● Learning from other states/district/research:
  ○ What have we learned from accountability research from across the country?  
    What are the best practices?
  ○ In what ways can we include conversations with college reps about this work?
● How are central office staff accountable to the SPF?
● Is there a way to use Relative Risk Ration (Dr. Edward) as a tool in the SPF?
● Do we need a parallel tool with additional, unique measures?