

District Administrator Report August 2010

Vision Statement

We had a wonderful turnout and participation in the vision retreat on Monday, August 2. About 35 board members, administrators, teachers and community members gathered for two and half hours to work through a process that identified what we value and want to be like. Ideas were very similar to those generated at earlier stages of the process which means we are on the right track. The information has been put together for the Board to determine its next steps at the August 23 Board Committee of the Whole meeting and is included in your packet. Paul Landers facilitated a process that generated many ideas and narrowed them to what we value most. Many thanks to Paula for her wonderful work. Jenny Kalson provided a variety of hors d'oeuvres to fit with the World Café model used in the process. Yum!

Fund 80

I have asked the city to draft a sample lease so we can talk in more concrete terms what taking over responsibility of the Youth Center might look like. As we have reviewed the process for establishing a Fund 80, I think the following bullet points will be helpful:

- The Evansville Youth Center Board and the City of Evansville have approached the District about establishing Fund 80 to keep the doors of the center open.
- The City is unlikely to continue funding due to caps they will be facing in their next budget and because the youth center serves youth throughout the District, not just in the city limits.
- The impact would be about \$20,000 for the 2010-11 school year. The city will fund the center through the end of 2010. \$40,000 will be needed for the 2011-12 year. At \$20,000 the impact on the mill rate is 3 cents per thousand of property value or about \$4.50 on a \$150,000 home. This would go up to \$9.00 the following year.
- This money is outside the revenue cap and will not take instructional services away from students.
- Once established, the Board can decide if it wants to use the fund for other qualifying expenses such as a summer enrichment program, community recreation programs that are used by residents of the entire school district community. This would further increase the tax levy.

I believe it is important to be transparent about this process with the community and its impact. Many other communities and school districts have a Fund 80 for programs such as this. It should be this community's informed decision if they want these opportunities for themselves and the youth of our district.

Program Based Budgeting Lay-Offs

Through the program based budget process, it was determined that laying off library media clerks and attendance clerks to the same number of hours as other members of the assistant unit was necessary. We have issued partial lay-off notices to these 7 employees for the 2010-11 school year. Since they are not issued contracts, this does not require board approval. Jenny Kalson worked closely with Atty JoAnn Hart in drafting the language for the lay-off notices. This will give us a year to see how these reductions work. If the process recommends it and funds are available, hours could be restored at any time. For example, if our enrollment exceeds projection and our revenue consequently increases, this might be a priority. These lay-offs were at the bottom of the list and might be the first thing considered for restoration. We may also be in need of bus assistants to ride with early childhood students and other routes as needed. These employees would have first rights to these hours.

Interim Middle School Principal

After listening to the Board conversation on July 26 and talking various options over with Mr. Flaherty and Mr. Everson, we have made the decision to keep things simple and hire an interim principal for Mr.

Flaherty for the days he is out for FMLA. Vince Maloney, former middle school principal, has expressed an interest. I hope to meet with him before Monday's meeting to see if we can agree on a per diem rate.

District Office Closed

Due to vacations, the district office will be closed on Friday, August 6.

ECSD Board Vision Retreat
J.C. McKenna Cafeteria
August 2, 2010
5:30 – 8:00 p.m.

- I. ECSD Vision Development Journey – timeline of progress made up to this point.
- II. Citizen Input from previous vision-setting activities – reviewed core values determined by focus group process
- III. Retreat Purpose – goal to draft a vision statement
- IV. Welcome and Introductions – Participants introduced themselves to the group
- V. Group Norms/ Ground Rules – norms presented for consideration of group
- VI. Mission – definition and identification of key elements of the ECSD Mission
- VII. Vision – definition and examination of Big Oak Flat-Groveland Unified School District (Groveland, CA) and ECSD Technology Committee mission and vision. Finding examples that show how vision statements connect to the mission statement.
- VIII. Overview of process used to develop a draft vision statement.
- IX. Gathering ideas – groups answered a series of questions that focused on ECSD realities and dreams. Through consensus, teams drafted their two best answers to the questions posed to their group. The ideas generated were as follows:
 - a. *What do we need to focus on as a school district?*
 - i. Creating a community of life-long learners that meets the needs of all students regardless of abilities or grade-level with a focus on real world application and instilling a love of learning.
 - b. *What do you see as the core values of the ECSD?*
 - i. Life-long learning for all
 - ii. Character – respect, “doing the right thing,” compassion, tolerance
 - c. *Three wishes to make the ECSD a better place to work and learn.*
 - i. Adequate resources (time, money, technology, staff...)
 - ii. Consistent and respectful partnerships between and among employees, community (families), and students
 - iii. Environment that fosters joyful learning
 - d. *If the ECSD followed its mission in everything it did, what would our school district look like?*

- i. Open and effective communication between the District and community
 - ii. We successfully encourage all students to pursue their own excellence and enjoy the pursuit.
- e. *What are the successes and achievements of the ECSD? What do we do very well?*
 - i. Maintain high quality staff who are student-centered and demonstrate life-long learning.
 - ii. The District fosters a partnership with the community as demonstrated through support of the arts.
- f. *What gives life to the ECSD? What is at the center of the District which, if it did not exist, would make the ECSD totally different?*
 - i. Community pride and investment in a culture of excellence and growing to meet changing needs.
 - ii. Dedicated, skilled, and enthusiastic faculty and staff along with adequate resources.
- g. *What do you admire about the ECSD?*
 - i. Positive child and community-centered environment with multiple opportunities in education, the arts, and athletics.
 - ii. Positive school district, small enough to be intimate; large enough to provide support for staff, students, parents, and community professionally and personally.
- h. *If time and money were unlimited, what would the ECSD look like?*
 - i. Providing updated facilities that are maintained to promote a safe and positive working and learning environment.
 - ii. Having the materials, people, resources, and technology available to truly meet the needs of all students and staff.

- X. Vision-setting by Consensus – Answers generated to each question were grouped according to the themes that emerged. Themed areas were assigned numbers. Groups worked on a “number” to consolidate ideas assigned to the same thematic area. The thematic areas included:
- a. Learning
 - b. Character
 - c. Resources and Facilities
 - d. Community
 - e. Pursuit of Excellence
 - f. Staff

- XI. Collaborative development of vision strands representing each thematic area – Groups crafted language that embodied the ideas of all of the statements in their common thematic area. The statements that emerged are as follows:
- In order to achieve our mission, we will...*
- a. Learning: *Nurture a community of life-long learners that meets the needs of all students regardless of abilities or grade level with a focus on real world application and instilling a love and joy for learning.*
 - b. Learning: *Create a positive learning environment, foster life-long learning, engage students in real-world application, and meet the needs of all students.*
 - c. Character: *Facilitate the development of character traits that promote respect, tolerance, compassion, and understanding in order to intrinsically respond to the environment.*
 - d. Resources and facilities: *Have the materials, resources*, people and technology available to truly meet the needs of all the students and staff. (Resources* = predictability, maintain certain baseline – multi-year, allocation)*
 - e. Community: *Build and cultivate consistent and respectful partnerships among students and their families, the community, and District employees.*

- f. Pursuit of Excellence: *Foster a community pride and investment in creating a culture of excellence in which all students achieve their own potential and enjoy the pursuit. (potential – wordsmith, not yet satisfied)*
 - g. Staff: *Support a culture that develops high-quality and enthusiastic staff who are student centered and demonstrate life-long learning.*
- XII. Selecting vision strands that most reflect our core values – participants cast 4 votes for the statements that they felt most characterized the vision for the ECSD of the future. The top 4 statements form the core of the draft vision statement. Statements (listed above) received votes in this order:
- a. Learning (two statements combined): 49 votes
Nurture a community of life-long learners that meets the needs of all students regardless of abilities or grade level engaging students in real world application and instilling a love and joy for learning.
 - b. Character: 27 votes
Facilitate the development of character traits that promote respect, tolerance, compassion, and understanding in order to intrinsically respond to the environment.
 - c. Staff: 26 votes
Support a culture that develops high-quality and enthusiastic staff who are student centered and demonstrate life-long learning.
 - d. Community: 22 votes
Build and cultivate consistent and respectful partnerships among students and their families, the community, and District employees.
 - e. Pursue Excellence: 18 votes
Foster a community pride and investment in creating a culture of excellence in which all students achieve their own potential and enjoy the pursuit.
 - f. Resources and Facilities: 10 votes
Have the materials, resources, people and technology available to truly meet the needs of all the students and staff.
- XIII. Draft vision statement – the 4 statements with the most votes constituted the body of the draft vision statement. Participants were offered the opportunity to offer suggestions or modifications to the vision draft for the Board to consider. The following suggestions were made by participants:
- a. Add something that specifically addresses student achievement.
 - b. “Intrinsically respond to the environment” does not make sense. What does this mean? It means “do the right thing.” Substitute “do the right thing” into the drafted vision.
 - c. Include students in the vision development process – student input is missing.
 - d. Include something that addresses students developing as people (e.g. self confidence, leadership skills)
 - e. Include something that has a focus on arts, athletics, personal excellence...include personal excellence language. This has been distilled out through the consensus process.
 - f. Is there any reason student’s can’t have a vision of their own? E.g. “We the students of J.C. McKenna Middle School...”

XIV. Mission and Draft Vision Statement – drafted by the committee on August 2, 2010 with suggested additions of “do the right thing” and “personal excellence” language included.

Mission: The Evansville Community School District, in active partnership with families and community, will provide a positive learning environment that challenges all students to achieve personal excellence and become contributing citizens of the world community. (2003)

Vision: In order to achieve our mission, we will...

- Nurture a community of life-long learners that meets the needs of all students regardless of abilities or grade level by engaging students in real world application and instilling a love of and joy for learning.
- Facilitate the development of character traits that promote respect, tolerance, compassion, and understanding so that students will respond by doing the right thing.
- Support a culture that develops high-quality and enthusiastic staff who are student-centered and demonstrate life-long learning.
- Build and cultivate consistent and respectful partnerships among students and their families, the community, and District employees.
- Foster a community pride and investment in creating a culture of excellence in which all students achieve their own potential and enjoy the pursuit.

(8/2/2010)