

Stakeholder Group Meeting Notes September 10, 2014

Meeting Overview:

Following a community building game and the awarding of prizes, the co-chairs welcomed everyone and provided a brief recap of the kick-off meeting. We then briefly reviewed the priority questions that the group of stakeholders had generated at the kick-off meeting in the context of creating the community's vision for public education in the Orange County Schools Community; specifically that visioning deals primarily with "why" questions. The creation of the district's strategic plan will be built to support the vision through the creation of a mission and goals, "the what" of the strategic plan, and strategies, "the how" of the strategic plan. (See notes from August 27, 2014 Kick-off Meeting.)

To explore the idea of vision creation and the importance of starting with "the why" questions, we viewed the Simon Sinek TED Talk "How Great Leaders Inspire Action." Next, Dr. Steve Halkiotis, Chair of the OCS Board of Education presented on the history of OCS since 1983, building on the document provided to all stakeholders, "A History of Orange County Schools: 1732 to 1983" by Irene Oliver Pender. Stakeholders then engaged in small group conversations of the "take aways" they gleaned from the two presentations.

Take Aways:

- Generations of passionate educators; we should want to keep/perpetuate this
- Historical issues such as equity seem to continue/stay the same
- From the history presentation; why didn't we know these stories; these recognitions
- Unintended consequences of the programs we have; example if you are in the IB program you can't take a shop class because it doesn't meet the IB requirements
- Need more communication, both internally and externally about the programs in our schools
- From the history presentation; do we still have passionate educators and other folks who are passionate about education or are we losing them?
- How welcomed we feel being here and nurtured as teachers
- Didn't know before that the Partnership Academy is a school of choice
- We have a lot to be proud of: OCS, Cultural Arts Programs, new schools (left out two schools in presentation – Stanback MS and Hillsborough ES
- Enrollment issues and challenges; changes that we need to stay on top of for example Orange High School before Cedar Ridge HS was built

- Free and Reduced Lunch → numbers reported may be lower than numbers of student that might actually qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch. Maybe our district should consider “Universal Lunch” which other school systems have.
- The more things change the more they stay the same
- Racial make-up of schools → why is the percentage of African-American students dropping?
- High School students need a plan to follow starting with 9th grade; not just 11th grade and need guidance to stay with their plan; on target
- Liked TED Talk and the importance of starting with “why”
- Poverty in our county → will this impact a child’s ability to learn/drop out rate?
- Increase in diversity, increase in ethnicity of Indian, Asian and Hispanic students in our system → how does this impact the teachers’ abilities to teach all groups of students?
- Partnership School → exploring new ways to educate our children
- Recommended listening to TED Radio Hour’s “The Way We Learn”
- We believe there is a responsibility to provide quality education to our youth
- Back to the basics → students need a solid educational foundation
- Fortunate to have a HS student at our table; diverse group at our table
- Don’t need to do every new program that comes our way
- Reforms needed because not all students are or want to be on a college track
- Early intervention → the three Rs
- Public schools need to remain; we need public schools → concern about charter schools impact on that
- Increases in Free and Reduced Lunch, Increases in Poverty → How do we address that?
Need industry in our county
- Where do we need to improve? What’s not working well?
- I appreciate being in Orange County and what we have; passion

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Issues Log:

Arts in Education (Arts defined as Art, Music, Foreign Language)
Block Scheduling
Brick and Mortar
Bullying
Charter Schools
Civics
Dance/Movement
Data and Statistics on OCS; Trend Data from Department of Public Instruction
Diversity and changing demographics in our schools
Elementary School Curriculum
Early Childhood Education
Educational Equality
Extra Curricular Activities
Funding
Impact of Change
Music
Mental Health
Needs of Business
On-line Learning
Poverty
Role of Community in Schools
Role of Parents in Public Education
Schools as Community Centers
STEM
Student Health
System Competitiveness
Teacher Quality
Teaching History
Theatre and Acting
Theater
Vocational/Technical/Trades Education

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What worked well during today's meeting:

- + Inclusion of High School students and their valuable perspectives
- + TED Talk with Simon Sinek – “How Great Leaders Inspire Action”
- + The diversity of stakeholders/people in the room

What could be improved from today's meeting:

- Δ Include a female student?
- Δ Include more about what is happening in other communities/systems
- Δ Talk about racial makeup of educators in OCS → how that impacts learning of students given the changing demographics of students and growing population
- Δ I need to know where we are going and what this will look like
- Δ I question, based on past experiences, if the BOE will take the vision we create/our recommendations → history of not doing so
- Δ Room too cold this time; please raise the temperature