

CPA Leadership Council Meeting Notes November 2, 2006

5:00-5:35 Introductions

* denise brown Presiding

Constituent Reports: Guiding Question—What are some of the current major activities and issues among CPA students, parents, and staff?

- **Parents:** (Rich) Holiday mixer planning in process. Raging parent debate about student performance. What kind of student are we creating? What kind of college will they end up in? Average CPA data/college attendance yield sobering statistics. Is CPA really a college prep program? Lots of Ds/Fs, 2.8 average GPA, and 60%-70% junior college attendance. Parents feel that Leadership Council is “out of touch” with student body. The data reveals that U.C eligibility declines as kids progress through CPA program. He feels that there is a fundamental structural problem. Parent’s feel that we have gifted teachers, but the leadership council is not dealing with the “enrichment”/ student support part of the plan. A lot of parents are getting upset and they are emotional about this situation because they are watching their kids fall through the cracks.

Response: denise tries to keep “collaborative spirit” by reminding Rich that while the parents may be upset, this effort to improve our student performance is a “community effort”. Flora wants to remind Rich to tell parents to make sure their kids are at the Homework Center with teachers and tutors on Tues, Weds, Thurs.

- **Students:** (Kimberly) A small group of students are trying to encourage students to participate, but they feel that the student body is not interested. While she’s personally happy, she feels that she doesn’t know what the kids who aren’t doing well need. She says that it’s hard to brainstorm with a “representative” group of students to voice needs. Pawan mentions that even when students received credit to come, they didn’t come.

Response: Jaime wonders what leadership needs in the way of support to get student participation. denise and Jackie will get together to talk about what can be immediately done to resolve the problem and get students interested. Maybe a lunchtime meeting with food?? Ken adds that all small schools have problems getting students involved when there is not a class structure to support it. This is not just a CPA problem.

- **Staff/Faculty:** (Annie) At the last staff development meeting, teachers looked at the D/F rate and data. We asked: “how do we as a school deal with failure?” “What do we do with students who aren’t passing” “What structures do we need to have in place?”. We’re trying to connect course outcomes and curriculum to school themes, habits of mind, and ideology. We’re now working on creating graduation portfolios and trying to fit the pieces together. We’re also talking about what we’re going to do with advisory next year as a school.

Response: Rich: Have you all thought of a way that staff can create a mandatory homework center or enrichment? Annie: We have 3 staff we don’t pay and 2 Berkeley folks we do pay who work the Homework Center. We’d have to require students to come to a 7th period and pay a teacher to do it. Kimberly: Teachers are there everyday during 7th period. The students need to come. Rich: We need to do

something to help the majority of CPA students who aren't mature enough to realize that they must do their work. Flora: I told the students about the Homework Center. Annie: A "mandatory" class we don't have the funding or the structure for. denise: Stops the debate and reminds everyone that we have to focus on process and *priority*. She reminds everyone that implementing a mandatory class structure will take an entire year to institute. Dave: Suggest that we have to re-think our conceptions of what is "mandatory." We can leverage kids in different ways. He gives a update: The academy was selected to do a presentation on its internal teaching model at CERAS conference in mid-november.

5:45-6:20 Leadership Council Operating Procedures

Guiding Question: How will the LC operate in 2006-07?

- denise: Discussed operating producers because they need revision. The way the agendas are set for LC is a little unrealistic. We don't have the time to get together to *set* the agendas for the meetings. She suggests that the LC sets the agenda by gathering information from constituent groups. Agenda-setting will be done by the leadership team.
- Ken: The *overall* priority for the year is set by this LC group. . .the big picture priorities are set by the group. This gives the leadership team a lot to work with. Each constituent group will then have an open door to email priorities. It's a balance.
- Rich: Who's on the leadership team?
- denise: Annie, Flora, denise, Ken, and Dave Stevens
- Rich: So, it sounds very administrative and staff-heavy
- denise: No, I should clarify. We don't set the agenda. We take the information from the Leadership Council meeting to set the agenda. We take in information from different constituent groups to help shape our agenda-setting.
- Rich: He feels that the leadership team, which is staff-heave, rearranges who talks about what. It isn't representative.
- denise: No. she feels that she can't be representative of the data subcommittee. She just takes their information and sets an agenda.
- Toby: Can parents and teachers be on the leadership team?
- Ken: In an ideal world, you'd want a cross-constituency, but the reality is the workload at Berkeley High. denise runs 2 small schools, has to worry about large school, afterschool things, etc. Leadership team meets during the school day. Can parents and students attend during the day? No. This is a time and practicality problem, again, NOT unique to CPA.
- Annie: Is trying to regularize the agenda so that everyone's concerns can have a space and time on the agenda on a regular basis. Wants to know if denise got her email.
- denise: I didn't get your email in time. This is the problem. I have information coming from everywhere.
- Annie: She stands up to explain how the LC agenda can be regularized. For example, she's recommending a "Major Policy Issues" section.
- Rich: Parents don't want to it feel like a "power grab" by the staff and administration. He wants the staff and administrators to "bend over backwards" to get parent input and feedback. This is a major concern for him---that parents are represented.

- denise: So, since the current structure does not work, who has a proposal? Leadership team meets on Tues/Thurs mornings.
- Flora recommends that we stick with one core parent/student group that is set for the year. She feels that it can easily be done.
- Ken: He strongly advises that we're making a big mistake. He thinks that the tone in here is really adversarial and bad. He feels that agenda-setting is a huge job that takes many hours. He feels that agenda-setting is fine-tuning and detail oriented; it doesn't happen in 30 minutes. He says that no other small school is going in this direction. He feels that we need to work on trust and communication first. He's dead set against having everyone involved in agenda-setting.
- Kimberly: Is confused by the discussion. (denise explains to clarify). Kimberly feels that having to miss one class period often would "freak her out" because she's a "worry wart." A lot happens in class and she doesn't want to miss class to attend a regular daytime meeting.
- Brad: Recommends that the parent council let the leadership team know before they set the agenda. Ken then explains that this is what has been happening. He urges them to not get locked into agenda-setting a month in advance because things come up. They need to be flexible.
- Ben: Wants to know who he can give his ideas to if he has a concern? Should he just "drop by" the leadership team meeting?
- Jaime: We should create a structure for constituent groups getting their concerns heard. It should not be someone just sticking their head in the door.
- Annie and denise: begin to physically change the wording of the "Leadership Council Structure" document to reflect the course of the discussion. Jaime emphasizes that *one form should come from the parent council. . . not individual parents*. Karen recommends a deadline. Everyone concludes that a week before the meeting sounds like it's adequate to allow constituent groups time to get their concerns in for the leadership team to set the agenda for the LC. Everybody votes largely a "thumbs up" for the policy change.

6:20-6:50 Leadership Council Priorities 2006-07

Guiding Question: What issues are appropriate for the Leadership Council? What will be the priorities in 2006-07?

- Annie: Hands out summary of priorities for this year that constituent groups voiced. Each constituent group is going to have to do the work to make sure their concerns are materialized. Each group has an interest in getting their needs met and accessing the resources to have them happen. Each group will have to write something up---a proposal, for example. She uses the student leadership as an example of how they have student leaders, but they are having a constituency problem since there is no one to "represent."
- Ben: wants to know if they would have to come up with suggestions and possible solutions, too. Annie says yes because good proposals are based on sound research and thoughtful reflection. Jaime concurs and jumps in to clarify.
- Kim: Wants to know *exactly* what students need to do. Annie clarifies that the student leaders will have to figure out what their constituents need, then write a proposal for what they think should happen to effect change.
- Annie reviews priorities from handout---1) achievement & equity goal, (2) develop whole

school outcomes, and (3) Addressing Constituent Group Issues. She emphasizes that subcommittees are crucial for researching their interests and bringing them back to the LC. The LC can't tackle everything in 2 hours. She notes the CPA "backward planning" documents were helpful to teachers while deciding CPA focus.

- *There seems to be some confusion about how the "CPA Leadership Team Priorities" fit into this discussion.*
- Flora clarifies that we need to create a **work plan** to address this year's priorities which are:
 - Instructional Leadership—PD, curriculum and instructional improvements to support high student achievement & equity
 - Equity-Centered Professional Learning Community
 - Family & Community Partnerships
 - Academic, Social, and Emotional Support for Student Learning
- Ken clarifies that the priorities represent "our best thinking". He feels that many of the things in the priorities-sheet are already underway. He wants everyone to read this when they have time, so they can see the processes that are already taking place.
- (Kim: Intervenes to say she came up with a form that constituent groups could use to talk to the leadership council. Denise asks her to pass it around for everyone to peruse.)
- Brad: Admits that the CPA priorities form is a commendable document. . .that many things are already in progress. He wants to know: how do we organize here in the LC to fit into the plan that which is already underway so that we can help realize these goals?
- Annie: Our goal is to monitor goals and to address structural issues and establish directions. The leadership team is to do the day-to-day work and to put it into structures and practices that are feasible. She recommends that LC spend a few minutes reading the document. Denise says that time is an issue, but everyone agrees to read.
- *Group takes 5 minutes to read document.*
- Rich: Repeats that the LC should be able to address a specific problem-class and talk about how to provide support for students.
- Ben says that "I think it's a mistake to think that a class is only a problem if students are getting Ds because you can have an awful teacher when everyone gets "As" and an excellent teacher when everyone gets "Ds.""(The entire LC is impressed with Ben's comment 😊)
- Jaime: He thinks that there needs to be more cohesion between students, parents, and teachers. He feels that many things are teacher and staff centered.
- Karen questions what "alternative evaluation" is for teachers.
- Dave: explains that the BFT (Berkeley Federation of Teachers) and the district created an agreement that would help struggling teachers. However, they decided that teachers who are doing fine can benefit from "alternative evaluation." The options for these teachers are (1) action research, (2) lesson study, and (3) national certification.
- There is some volleyed discussion between Denise and Annie about whether there will be time to meet in cross-constituent small groups to discuss priorities.
- Denise moves to quickly discuss Action Plan Proposal. LC agrees. Denise decides to focus only on number 1, the establishment of a data review subcommittee, Ken intervenes to suggest that we not try to "identify first set of data to review." There is just not enough time. Denise quickly asks LC for a thumb-vote to acknowledge consensus over the need

to create a subcommittee. Then, she ask who would like to be a part of the subcommittee. *Dave, Ken, Ben, Kimberly, and Brad* decide to create the committee. denise asks them to stay for a few minutes after the meeting ends to decide on a date to meet. Flora recommends that Brad and Rich communicate so that Brad can understand the data. Rich mentions that Brad has an MBA, so he should be perfectly capable.

- Kim’s constituent submission form is finally passed around the table and informally approved by the LC.

SAMPLE CONSTITUENT PROPOSAL FORM

<p>Date Submitted: (must be at least one week prior to the Leadership Council meeting)</p> <p>Constituent Group:</p> <p>Please propose the issue(s) that you would like to bring up to the Leadership Council. Make sure your explanation is as detailed as possible.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

- Annie ends, leaving the group with the big question” What is it that we want CPA students to know and be able to do?”
- denise ends the session. We’ve run out of time

6:50-7:00 Closure

- *Final Reflections Whip:* While most people feel that all of the leadership teams and LC’s planning has been important and wonderful, many people felt that the meeting was not as action-oriented and results-focused as they would have liked. In essence, people feel like they have planned their work, but they now want to start working their plans. denise emphasized the importance of structures and planning in a field that is often fueled by a lot of emotion.
- *Process Observation:* (Toby) While she felt that there certainly was tension in the room at certain points, she thought that folks were listening to one another and folks had been respectful for the most part.
- *Final Requests:* Karen would like to see CPA’s departmental outcomes so that the parents can have a better idea of the school’s vision for the students. Ken recommended that that the leadership team give Jackie it’s notes prior to the LC meeting so that she can debrief the students and prepare them for the sometimes dense discussions that will take place

there. The meeting was adjourned.