

MEMORANDUM

September 16, 2013

TO: Board Members

FROM: Terry B. Grier, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

CONTACT: Carla Stevens, 713-556-6700

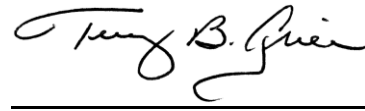
SUBJECT: **SHARED DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE AND DISTRICT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE BIENNIAL EVALUATION, 2012–2013**

Attached is the Shared Decision-Making Committee and District Advisory Committee Biennial Evaluation for 2012–2013. The advisory committees are mandated by Texas State law in order to positively impact student performance. The purpose of this report is to document 2012–2013 committee members' experiences with the committees in an effort to support and enhance their effectiveness.

Some of the highlights are as follows:

- Most Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC) survey respondents were generally satisfied with their preparation to perform their roles on the committees, but most District Advisory Committee (DAC) members reported a need for training in every topic of importance to the committee.
- Respondents from both the SDMC and DAC reported high rates of agreement with statements describing a well-organized committee, including that the diversity of the community was well represented on the committees. However, only 17 percent of DAC survey respondents reported agreement with a statement concerning holding a public meeting following the release of state achievement data, a state mandate, and 50 percent chose not to evaluate the statement.
- Most SDMC survey respondents rated their involvement with school-based educational decisions as excellent or good for every topic, including their review of the School Improvement Plan. The majority of DAC survey respondents indicated that their involvement with district decisions was fair or poor on each topic.
- A majority of both SDMC and DAC respondents indicated agreement or strong agreement with several indicators of positive results from their meetings, including that they could freely express their thoughts at meetings and that the committees were open to new ideas. While SDMC members reported agreement with all statements of positive results, DAC respondents indicated low rates of agreement with some statements.
- The most common benefit of the advisory committees, reported by both the SDMC and DAC survey respondents, was providing a voice to diverse constituents of the district and the schools.

Should you have any further questions, please contact Carla Stevens in Research and Accountability at 713-556-6700.


_____TBG

Attachment

cc: Superintendent's Direct Reports
Daniel Gohl
Lupita Hinojosa
School Support Officers



RESEARCH

Educational Program Report

SHARED DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE
AND DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BIENNIAL EVALUATION, 2012–2013

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND ACCOUNTABILITY
HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



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SHARED DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE AND DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE BIENNIAL EVALUATION 2012–2013

Executive Summary

Evaluation Description

Texas Education Code Section 11.252(d) mandates that each district conduct a biennial evaluation of the “effectiveness of the district’s decision-making and planning policies, procedures, and staff development activities related to district- and campus-level decision-making and planning to ensure that they are effectively structured to positively impact student performance.” The required procedures involve establishing and maintaining campus-based Shared Decision-Making Committees (SDMC) and a District Advisory Committee (DAC); details are specified in Texas Education Code Sections 11.251 through 11.255. The purpose of this evaluation is to document how members of Houston Independent School District’s District Advisory Committee and members of the individual campus Shared Decision-Making Committees perceive the support structures and the impact of the advisory committees on which they serve.

Highlights

- With the exception of establishing subcommittees and involving non-SDMC members, respondents to the SDMC survey indicated high rates of agreement with statements associated with a well-organized SDMC. The strongest rates of agreement were reported for the committee meeting on a set schedule (90 percent agreement or strong agreement), voting procedures being fair (88 percent), and the diversity of the community being well represented on the committee (84 percent).
- Respondents on the DAC survey also reported strong rates of agreement with selected indicators of a well-organized committee: 83 percent agreed or strongly agreed that the DAC met an adequate number of times and 72 percent agreed or strongly agreed that the diversity of the community was well represented on the committee. Only 17 percent agreed that the committee had held a public meeting to discuss achievement results from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), a state mandate, while 50 percent of respondents reported being unable to evaluate their agreement with the statement.
- The majority of SDMC survey respondents who felt able to evaluate the quality of their experience with school-based educational decisions rated their involvement as excellent or good for every topic. The topics with the highest percentages of excellent or good ratings for committee involvement concerned reviewing the School Improvement Plan (68 percent) and communication procedures (67 percent).
- The majority of DAC survey respondents rated their involvement with district decisions as fair or poor in every topic. None rated their involvement as excellent and 22 percent to 39 percent reported being unable to evaluate the involvement in specific decisions of concern to the DAC.
- At least half of the SDMC respondents agreed or strongly agreed with statements associated with positive results from a SDMC. Sixty-four (64) percent agreed or strongly agreed that the SDMC accomplished a great deal and 73 percent agreed or strongly agreed that in general, all the members were satisfied with the work of the committee. The lowest rate of agreement concerned appropriate representation by members of the business community (50 percent).

- A majority of DAC survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with several indicators of positive results from the DAC, including that they could freely express their thoughts at meetings (77 percent) and that the committee was open to new ideas (55 percent). The lowest rates of agreement were reported for the committee's recommendations being accepted by the district (six percent), the DAC accomplishing a great deal (17 percent), and business representatives being involved about the right amount (also 17 percent).
- The most common benefit of the advisory committees reported by both the SDMC and DAC survey respondents was providing a voice to diverse constituents of the district and the schools.
- The most common suggestions for making the advisory committee process more effective volunteered by both SDMC and DAC survey respondents were to clarify the roles and goals of the committees and to provide demonstrations of district and school responsiveness to committee recommendations.

Recommendations

- Education Code 11.251(b) and HISD policy (BQA) specify that district and campus-based advisory committees include, among other members, representative business representatives. It is therefore recommended that the District Advisory Committee include at least two members to act as business representatives on the committee. These members could be new additions to the committee or, though business representatives are not required to either reside or conduct their business(es) in the community, current community members, if appropriate.
- To assure that all members recognize their compliance with Education Code 11.252(e), it is recommended that the DAC meeting that follows receipt of the annual Texas Education Agency district performance report and focuses on district performance and performance objectives be more broadly publicized.
- It is recommended that all new advisory committee members and leaders be provided training in the purpose, responsibilities and procedures of the respective advisory committee at the beginning of the new members' period of service.
- It is further recommended that early in the period of service the committee members be polled concerning additional training that would be useful to them in fulfilling their responsibilities and that the committee leader meet perceived needs by arranging for appropriate training through an appropriate provider such as the district or Region 4.
- For shared decision-making committees identified as needing additional support to conduct productive meetings, it is recommended that an additional form of support and accountability be provided by the Office of School Support Services.
- It is recommended that a structure be added to DAC meetings to highlight the advisory process in which its members are engaged.

Administrative Response

The following priorities have been established by the Office of School Support Services in order to increase the participation and effectiveness of the Shared Decision-Making Committees (SDMC) at the school level:

- To increase awareness and understanding of the role and responsibilities of the SDMC, an Academic Service item was distributed to all school administrators outlining the SDMC role and responsibilities, the composition, and elections process. In addition, the significance of the SDMC was fully explained in instructions for the School Improvement Plan. The same message was then reinforced during SIP training sessions.

- To ensure that committee members are provided with training that will be useful in fulfilling their responsibilities, the Office of School Support Services collaborated with the Office of Leadership Development to:
 - Revise the SDMC training to increase the SDMC involvement and effectiveness:
 - SDMC 101 for new members where the purpose and procedures of the SDMC are clearly layout so that members understand their responsibilities
 - Budgeting
 - Personnel selection
 - School Waivers
 - Dropout Prevention (secondary schools)
 - Staffing and Professional Development strategies
 - Make available Region IV SDMC training to schools.
- To address the concerns of accountability, the schools have been asked to post their meeting minutes on their school website.
- To ensure that SDMC composition meets requirements, schools have been asked to actively solicit participation from parents and business representatives. It is noted that community and business representative members will always be low in participation and in survey response since only one of each is needed.

In relation to the District Advisory Committee, the Office of School Support Services will:

- Include items on the agenda that are required by state law, (TEC 11.251): planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development, and school organization in a coordinated manner to accomplish school improvement efforts. Additionally, the agenda will also address achievement results and dropout prevention.
- Ensure, clarify, and disseminate the process for submitting agenda items by DAC and non-DAC members.
- Make recommendations to the Board of Education regarding the composition of the DAC to ensure compliance with regulation in having members of different groups of stakeholders participate.
- Collaborate with the Office of Professional Development to revise and/or design training for the SDMC on:
 - Understanding student achievement as part of the District Needs Assessment
 - Evaluating and revising a District Improvement Plan
 - Budgeting

Introduction

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) Board of Education established a process for planning and decision-making on each campus in the district in 1992. The process included school-based Shared Decision-Making Committees (SDMC), which were charged with establishing student performance objectives for the respective campus. Representative professional and nonprofessional school staff, parents, community members and business representatives met together regularly to support the academic achievement of students at each school. In 1995, the Texas Education Code mandated a SDMC for every campus in the state. In addition, the law required a District Advisory Committee (DAC) for each school district. Requirements for the SDMC and DAC vary slightly, but both have been designed to complement each other in supporting high student achievement in every public school. A summary of state and local requirements for each of the committees can be found in Table 1 (pages 20–21).

Texas Education Code 11.252(d) establishes the requirement to evaluate the processes and impact of the SDMC and the DAC at least every two years to support a positive impact on student achievement. This report serves that function by disseminating the results of two surveys, one to members of HISD campus SDMCs and the other to members of the HISD DAC, to document members' perspectives on the support for and influence of the respective committees on student achievement.

Methods

Data Collection and Analysis

- Data were collected through surveys given to members of campus-based SDMC and members of the DAC.
- SDMC members were contacted through their school principals. Principals received a link to the survey and a message that could be used to introduce the survey to SDMC members through Academic Services on May 6, 2013. A second announcement on the Academic Services website on May 20 extended the due date to May 31, 2013. The survey, available online and as a hardcopy by request, was open for 20 business days.
- The number of SDMC surveys distributed was estimated by counting the number of campuses expected to have a SDMC in 2012–2013 by the minimum number of participants required on a SDMC. For the count of campuses, seven schools that provide temporary services or serve students with special needs at disparate campuses (Beechnut Academy, Community Services, Elementary Discipline Alternative Education Program, Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program, Regional Day School Deaf Program, SOAR, and Texas Connections) were eliminated from the count, yielding a total of 269 schools. The minimum number of participants required on an SDMC is nine: the principal, two teachers, one other school-based professional, two parents, two community members and one business representative.
- DAC members were informed of the upcoming survey at their regularly scheduled April 18, 2013 meeting. At the members' request, the survey was made available both online and in a hard copy that could be completed at the beginning of the next regularly scheduled DAC meeting. The Chair of the DAC e-mailed the members a link to the survey, which was open online from May 7 through May 17, 2013, and hard copies were offered to all members attending the May 16, 2013 meeting. Completed hard copies were collected before the end of the meeting on May 16. Five members elected to complete the hard copy during the meeting and 14 completed the online version.

Data Limitations

Two other surveys of importance to advisory committee members were open within the same time frame that the SDMC and DAC surveys were distributed, potentially reducing the number of respondents to the surveys.

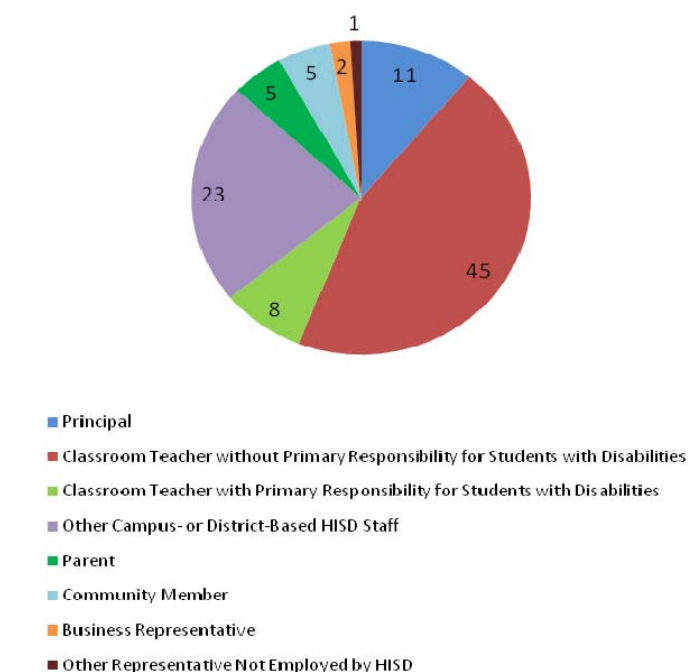
The margin of error was computed using the formula for standard error of the mean with a standard deviation of 1 (Vogt, et al, 2012). The margin of error for questions on the survey of shared decision-making committee members, with 766 respondents, was ± 3.6 percent; the survey of the district advisory committee had 19 respondents, yielding a margin of error of ± 22.9 percent.

Results

Shared Decision-Making Committees

- Of the estimated 2,421 recipients, 766 (32 percent) responded to the 2012–2013 Shared Decision-Making Committee Survey. By comparison, in 2010–2011, an estimated 47 percent of SDMC members responded and an estimated 48 percent of members responded in 2008–2009.
- The majority of respondents, 668 (87 percent), were HISD employees, including 83 principals (11 percent of respondents), 406 teachers (53 percent), and 110 other campus-based professionals (14 percent). Respondents who were not employed by the district included 38 parents (five percent of respondents), 37 community members (five percent), and 13 business representatives (two percent). The percentage of representation for the roles of respondents to the SDMC survey are shown in Figure 1 and numbers and percentages are reported in Table 2 (page 22).

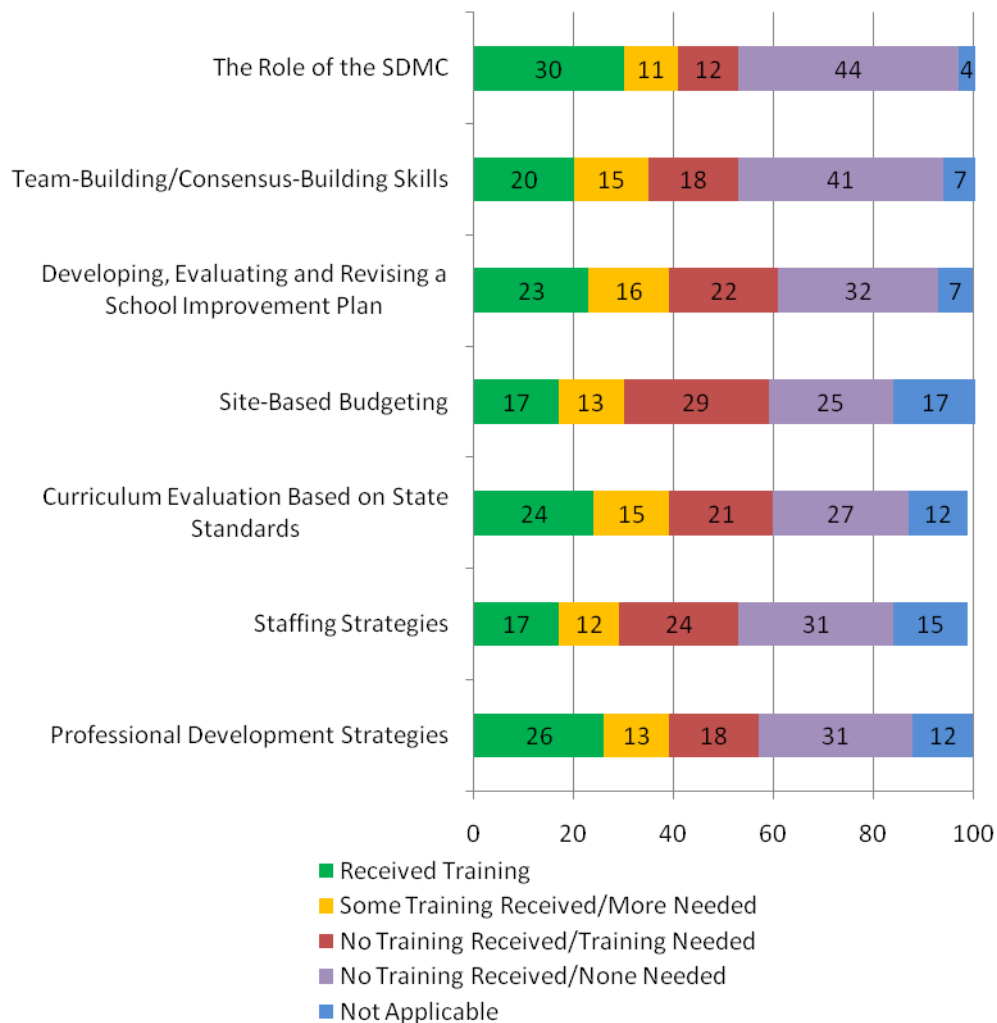
Figure 1. Percentage of representation for roles of respondents to the 2012–2013 Shared Decision-Making Committee survey



N=766

- A majority, 505 (66 percent), of the 760 respondents to the SDMC who identified grade level affiliation indicated an association with elementary schools; 110 (14 percent) represented middle schools; 133 (18 percent) were associated with high schools; and 12 (two percent) were affiliated with combined-level schools.
- Respondents represented diverse levels of experience with the SDMC. Nearly one-third, 241 (32 percent), had served less than one year; 326 (43 percent) had served between one and two years, and 192 (25 percent) had served more than two years.
- A large majority of SDMC survey respondents, 667 of 762 (88 percent), reported meeting with their committees once a month, the recommendation in district policy. A similar percentage (87 percent of 758 respondents) stated that the frequency of meetings was neither too many nor too few, but “just right.” Responses on the frequency and adequacy of the number of 2012–2013 SDMC meetings can be found in Tables 3 and 4 (page 22).
- The majority of respondents (60 percent) stated that the function of their SDMC was primarily as a decision-making entity for the campus. Twenty-seven (27) percent reported that the committee served as an advisory committee for the principal. Respondents were able to qualify their responses in an “Other” category, yielding 22 (three percent) who reported the committee serving both as an advisory and decision-making entity, 10 (one percent) stating that the committee served neither purpose, and 69 (nine percent) who remained unsure about the function of the SDMC on which they served. These results are listed in Table 5 (page 23).
- Results of a survey item asking about the training and technical assistance that SDMC members received in 2012–2013 are depicted in Figure 2 and detailed in Table 6 (page 23). With one exception, the highest percentage of respondents indicated that training was “not received and not needed” for all topics. The exception was for training in Site-Based Budgeting; the highest percentage of respondents for this topic indicated that training was “not received but needed.” Combining categories of responses, a higher percentage of respondents stated that training was received and no further training was needed or stated that training was not needed (the green and purple categories in Figure 2) than stated training was needed (the orange and red categories in Figure 2) in every given topic.

Figure 2. Percentage of SDMC survey responses concerning training and/or technical assistance for the committee, 2012–2013

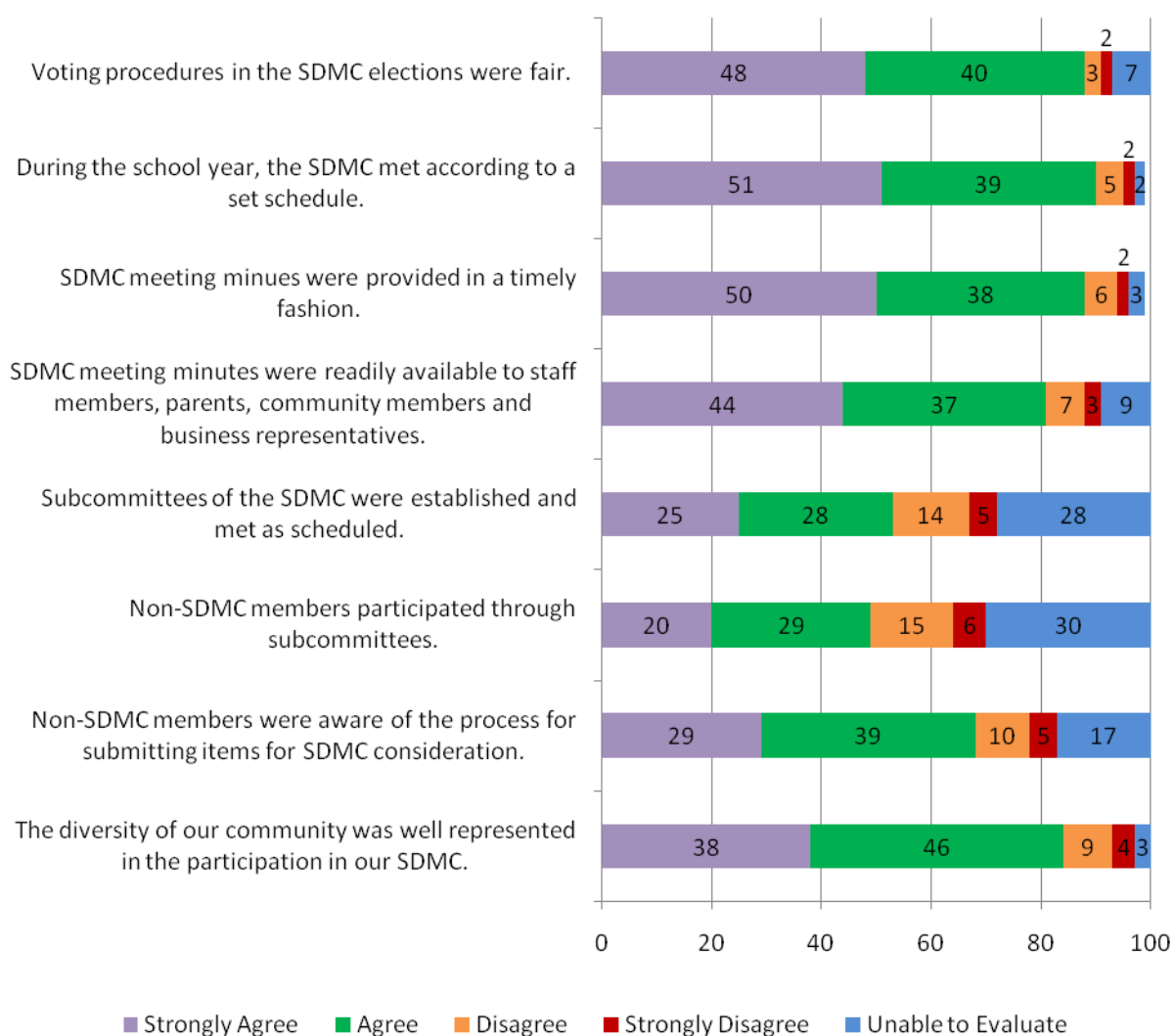


Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

- One hundred eighty-two (182) respondents volunteered answers about other topics on which they had received training as SDMC members, shown in Table 7 (page 24). Most reported that they had not received other training or that their training was not associated with the SDMC. Fifteen (15) listed other topics on which they had received training, including the use of assessments in making school-based decisions (three respondents), school safety, the teacher appraisal system, and programs specific to the individual school.
- Respondents' suggestions for topics for further training are listed in Table 8 (page 25). Nearly half of the respondents, 48 percent, volunteered that no further training was needed. Forty-seven (47) respondents, 26 percent, reinforced the need for training in the categories listed in Figure 2; the most requested of the topics were the Role of the SDMC and Site-Based Budgeting. Other frequent requests were How to Conduct Successful SDMC Meetings (17 requests) and Compliance Laws and Policies (11 requests).

- Reports of SDMC respondents on the organization of their committees are found in Figure 3 and Table 9 (page 26). With the exception of establishing subcommittees and involving non-SDMC members, respondents indicated very high rates of agreement with statements concerned with a well-organized SDMC (the purple and green sections in Figure 3). Ninety (90) percent agreed or strongly agreed that the committee met according to a set schedule and 88 percent agreed or strongly agreed that voting procedures were fair. More than 80 percent agreed or strongly agreed that the minutes were provided promptly and were readily available to constituents, and that the diversity of the community was well represented in the participation of the SDMC. The item related to organization with the lowest agreement rate was on the participation of non-SDMC members through subcommittees (49 percent agreement or strong agreement).

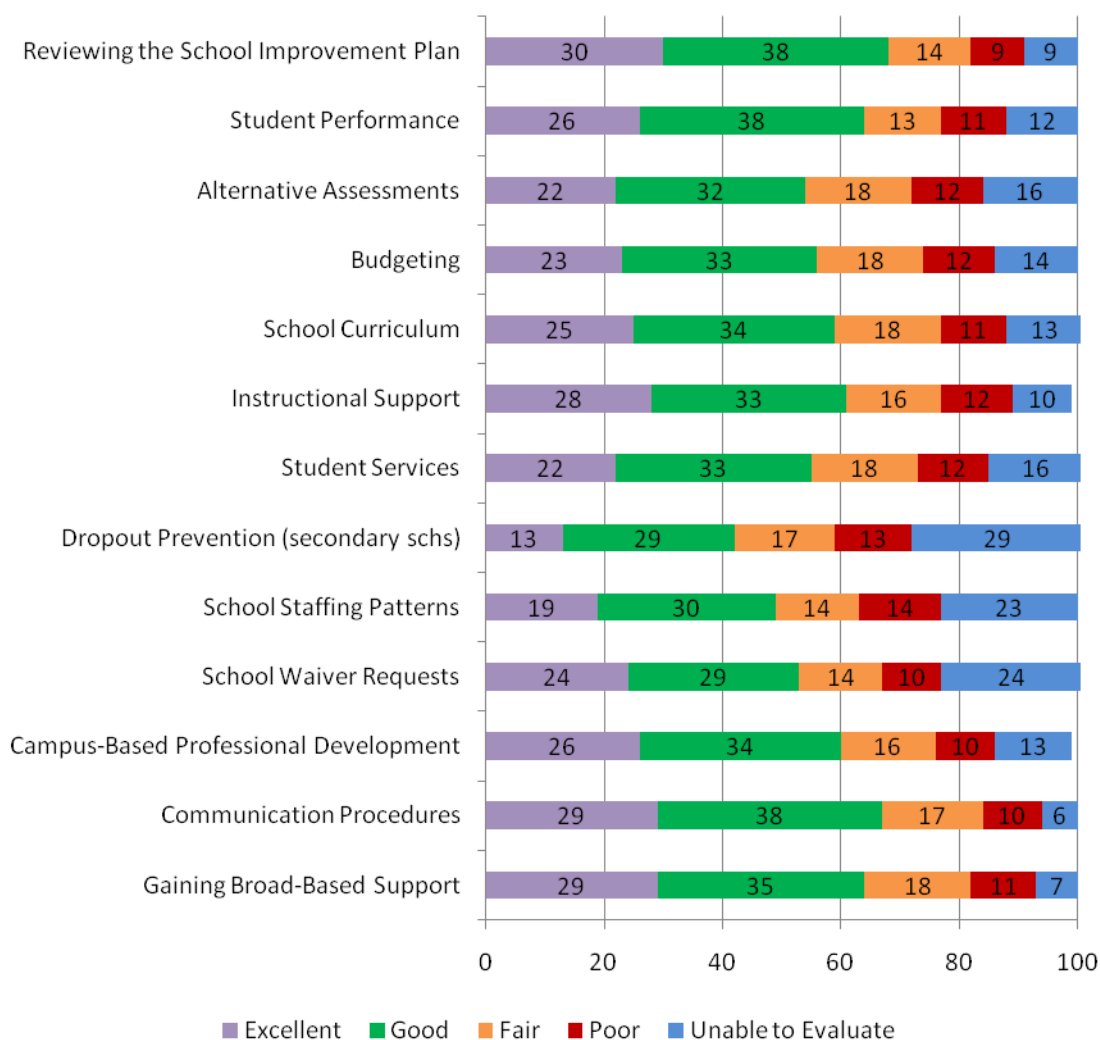
Figure 3. Percentage of SDMC survey responses concerning organization of the committees, 2012–2013



Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

- The majority of SDMC survey respondents rated the quality of their involvement with educational decisions made at the school as excellent or good on every measure, with the exception of dropout prevention issues. The largest percentages of excellent and good ratings were reported for committees developing, evaluating, and/or revising the school improvement plan (SIP) (68 percent) and communication procedures (67 percent). The lowest percentage of excellent and good ratings was given for dropout prevention (42 percent). It must be noted that the responses reported here include only those given by representatives of secondary schools. Some elementary school teachers volunteered an evaluation of the dropout prevention measure although it was not a topic required to be discussed at their SDMCs; one volunteered a comment that elementary schools are also very involved with dropout prevention so the topic should be a requirement for all advisory committees. Survey responses on the quality of involvement of the SDMC in school-based decisions are illustrated in Figure 4 and detailed in Table 10 (page 27).

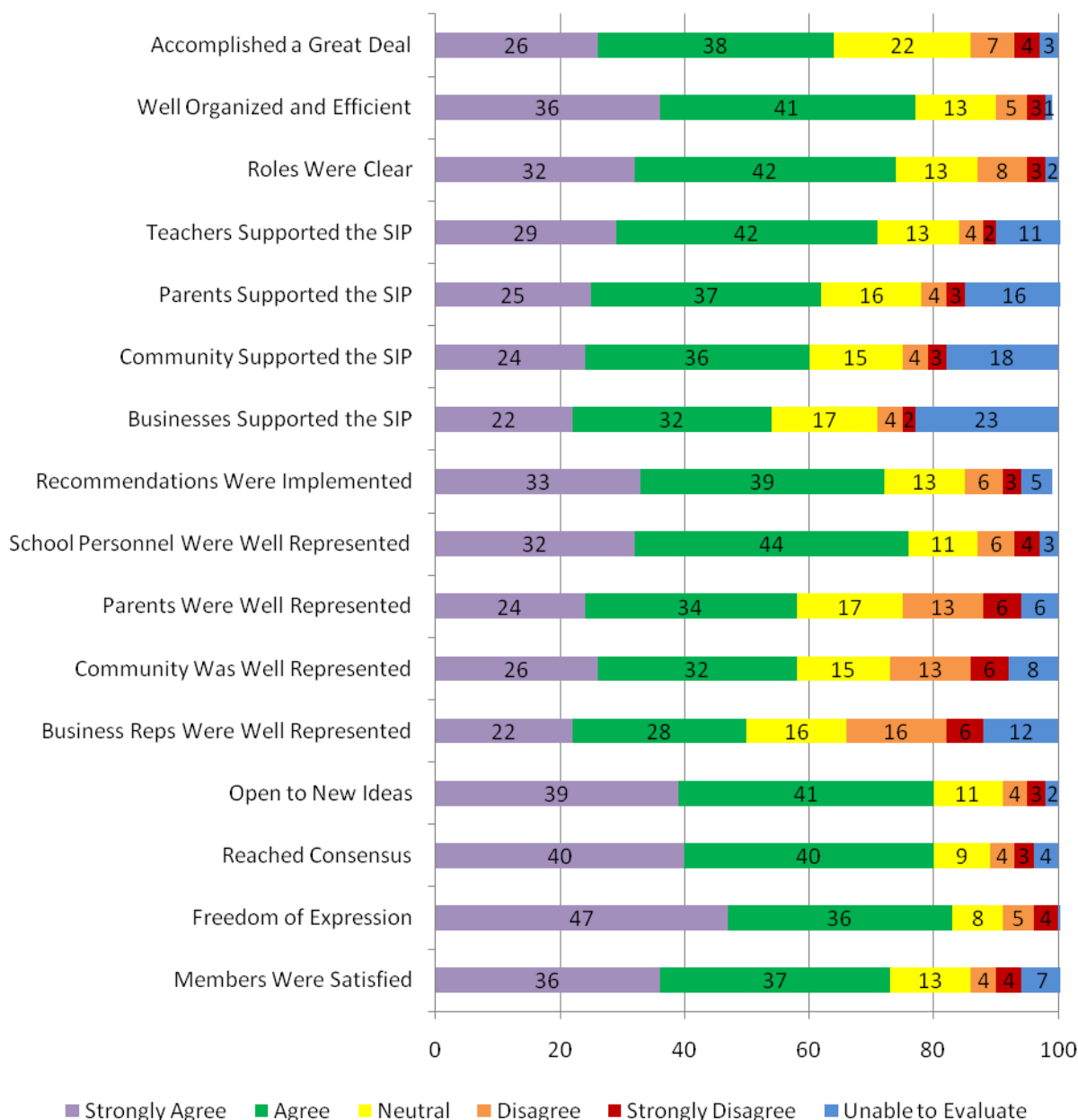
Figure 4. Percentage of SDMC responses concerning quality of involvement of the committees in school-based educational program decisions, 2012–2013



Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

- SDMC survey respondents' agreement with positive statements about the results of their committees' work is depicted in Figure 5 and detailed in Table 11 (pages 28–29). At least half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with each of the statements. The statements with which the highest percentages of respondents agreed or strongly agreed included respondents' freedom to express thoughts (83 percent), committees being open to new ideas (80 percent), committees reaching recommendations through consensus (80 percent) and committees being well organized and run efficiently (77 percent). The statement with which the lowest percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed was the adequacy of involvement of business representatives on the committees (50 percent).

Figure 5. Percentage of SDMC responses concerning results of the committee's work



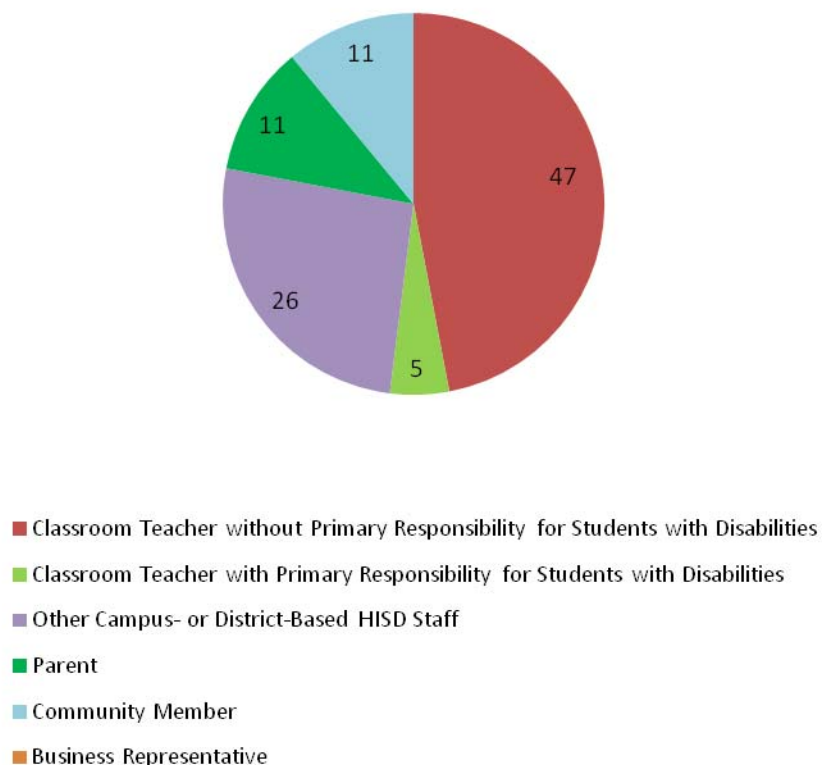
Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

- Table 12 (page 30) provides a summary of SDMC survey responses to an open-ended question concerning the benefit(s) afforded the school by Shared Decision-Making Committees. The most common response (from 31 percent of respondents) concerned the voice provided to constituents of the school. Fifteen (15) percent volunteered that the process built community both within and outside the school. On the other hand, nine percent responded that the SDMC had not benefitted the school and one percent noted that the only benefit was that the school got credit for meeting a legal requirement.
- Nearly 22 percent (82 of 375) SDMC survey respondents, when asked how to make the SDMC more effective, volunteered that the committee was already effective. The remaining comments included suggestions for enhancing the composition and organization of the SDMC (52 percent of respondents), clarifying the purpose of the SDMC (15 percent), enhancing the impact of the SDMC (12 percent), and modifying the topics under consideration by the SDMC (10 percent). The most common comments concerned increasing the representation of specific roles of SDMC members (83 respondents), encouraging discussion and allowing committees to come to recommendations (33 respondents), demonstrating that the school follows through on recommendations (31 respondents) and enhancing training for SDMC members (27 respondents). More detail on survey responses concerned with making the SDMC process more effective can be found in Table 13 (page 31).
- Additional or summary comments (other than “no comment”) were entered by 122 respondents to the SDMC survey. Seventy-nine (79; 65 percent) of the comments indicated general satisfaction with the SDMC and 43 (35 percent) expressed some dissatisfaction. Thirty-four of the respondents, both those satisfied and those desiring change, offered or reinforced a specific suggestion. Specific suggestions included providing SDMC members some recognition for their service and providing more monitoring of committee work to assure that they serve the purpose established by law. Sample suggestions can be found in Table 14 (page 32) and other suggestions are included in other sections of the results, particularly in Table 13 (page 31). Sample general summary comments, from those satisfied and those less satisfied, are also included in Table 14 (page 32).

District Advisory Committee

- Nineteen (19; 58 percent) of the 33 DAC members who received access to the survey responded to it. For comparison, 18 percent of DAC members responded to the 2010–2011 District Advisory Committee Survey and 46 percent responded to the 2008–2009 District Advisory Committee Survey. The roles of the 2012–2013 survey respondents are depicted in Figure 6 and detailed in Table 15 (page 33). At least one representative of each required role on the DAC responded, with the exception of a Business Representative.

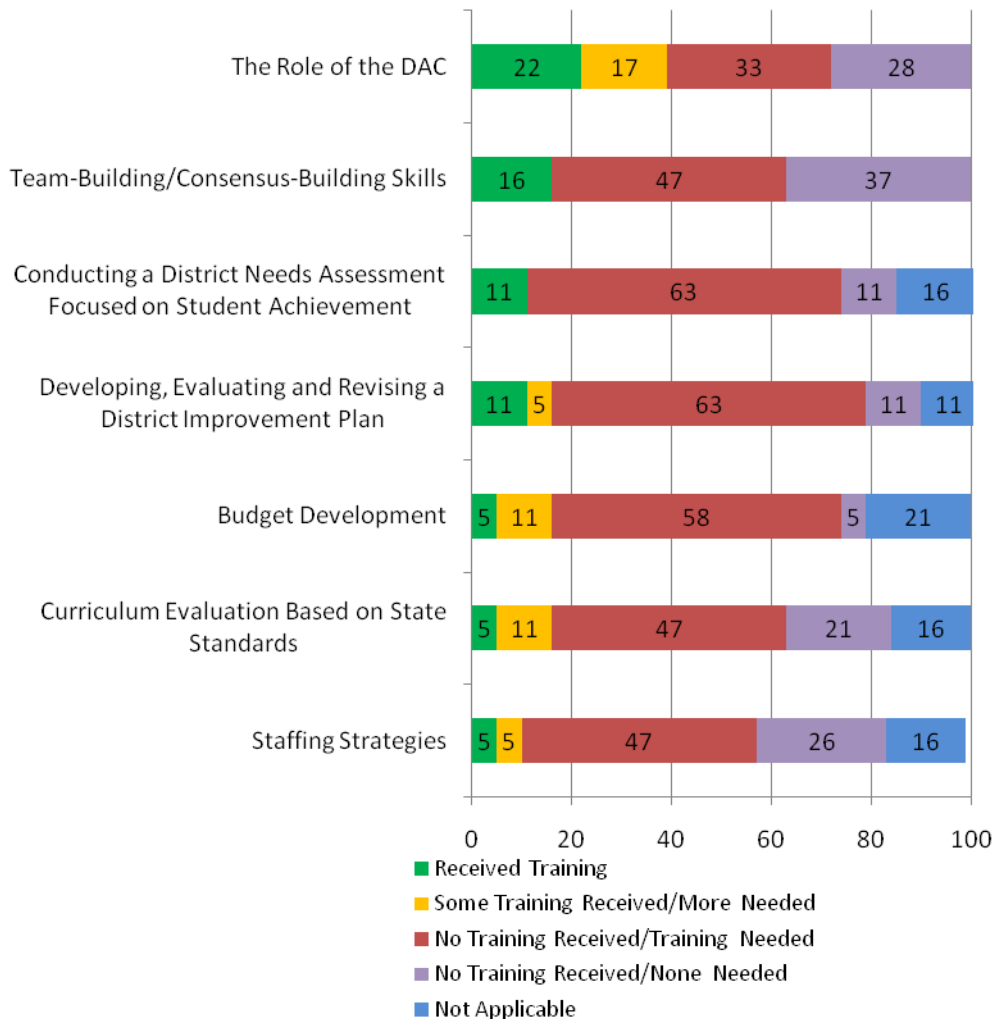
Figure 6. Percentage of representation for roles of respondents to the 2012–2013 District Advisory Committee survey



N=19

- All respondents to the survey had participated on the DAC for two years or less. Eight (42 percent) reported having served less than one year and 11 (58 percent) responded that they had served from one to two years.
- A majority of DAC survey respondents reported a need to receive training in nearly every responsibility associated with the committee. As shown in Figure 7, the topics on which the most respondents reported a need for training were budget development (69 percent) and developing, evaluating and revising the district improvement plan (68 percent); the fewest respondents reported a need for training in the role of the DAC (50 percent) and using team- and consensus-building skills (47 percent). Numbers, percentages, and an average rating for each of the items concerning training for the DAC members are in Table 16 (page 34).

Figure 7. Percentage of DAC survey responses concerning training and/or technical assistance for the committee, 2012–2013

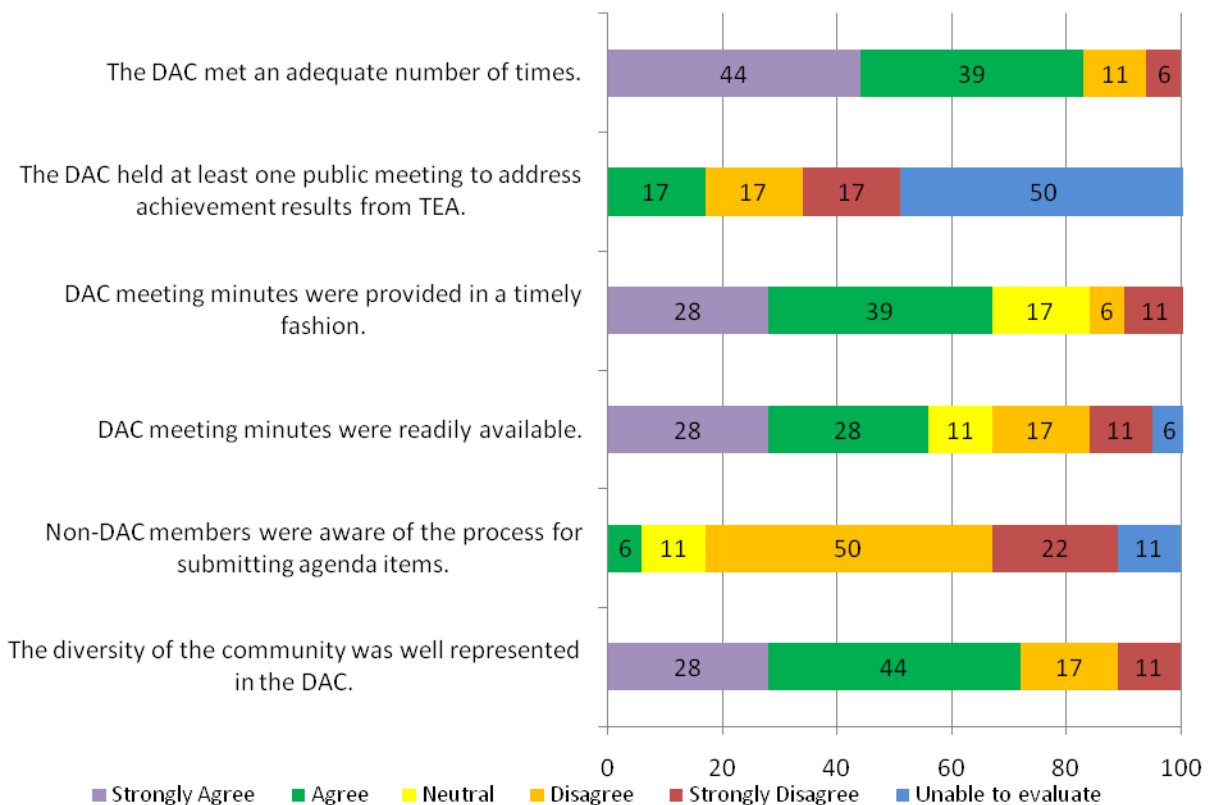


Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

- Asked for additional topics on which DAC members had received training, the six respondents who added a comment stated that they had received no other training. One noted that he/she had experience serving on the DAC and another specified that, though it may not be formal training, the DAC members received many explanations of processes and procedures that were either in place or being considered by the district.
- Six respondents offered comments when asked for other topics in which training was needed. Four of the six suggested clarification of the role of the DAC and the responsibilities of its members in the district decision-making process, and one reported that training is not needed on other topics. More information about respondents' comments on the need for training can be found in Table 17 (page 35).

- Results from 18 respondents who provided information on the organization of the DAC are shown in Figure 8. Fifteen (15) of the 18 respondents, 83 percent, agreed or strongly agreed that the DAC met an adequate number of times. Other statements with which most respondents agreed included that meeting minutes were provided in a timely manner (67 percent), that meeting minutes were readily available (56 percent) and that the diversity of the community was well represented in the DAC (72 percent). Only one respondent, six percent, agreed that non-DAC members knew how to submit agenda items for committee consideration. Three respondents, 17 percent, agreed that the committee had a public meeting to discuss achievement results from the Texas Education Agency while 50 percent reported being unable to evaluate the accuracy of the statement. Numbers, percentages and an average for each response choice for the statements on organization of the DAC can be found in Table 18 (page 36).

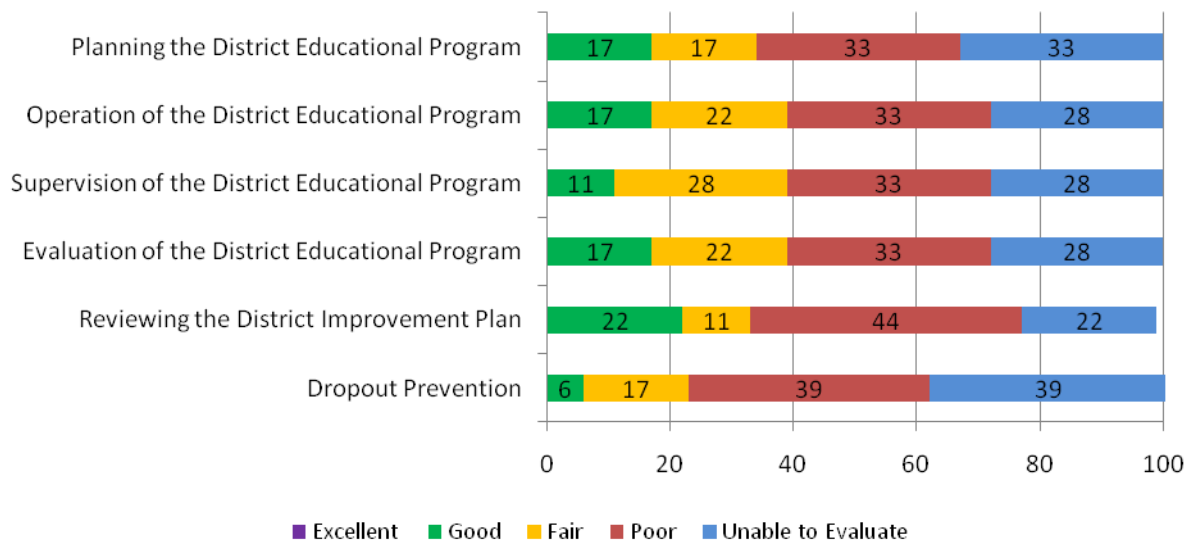
Figure 8. Percentage of DAC survey responses concerning organization of the committee, 2012–2013



Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

- Eighteen respondents provided feedback on the quality of the DAC's involvement in decisions made concerning the district, depicted in Figure 9. Given six areas, no one rated the quality of the committee's involvement with district decisions in any area as excellent; 50 percent or more rated the quality of their involvement as fair or poor, and from 22 to 39 percent reported being unable to evaluate the involvement. The numbers and percentages of respondents reporting the quality of DAC involvement in each category of making decisions are included in Table 19 (page 37).

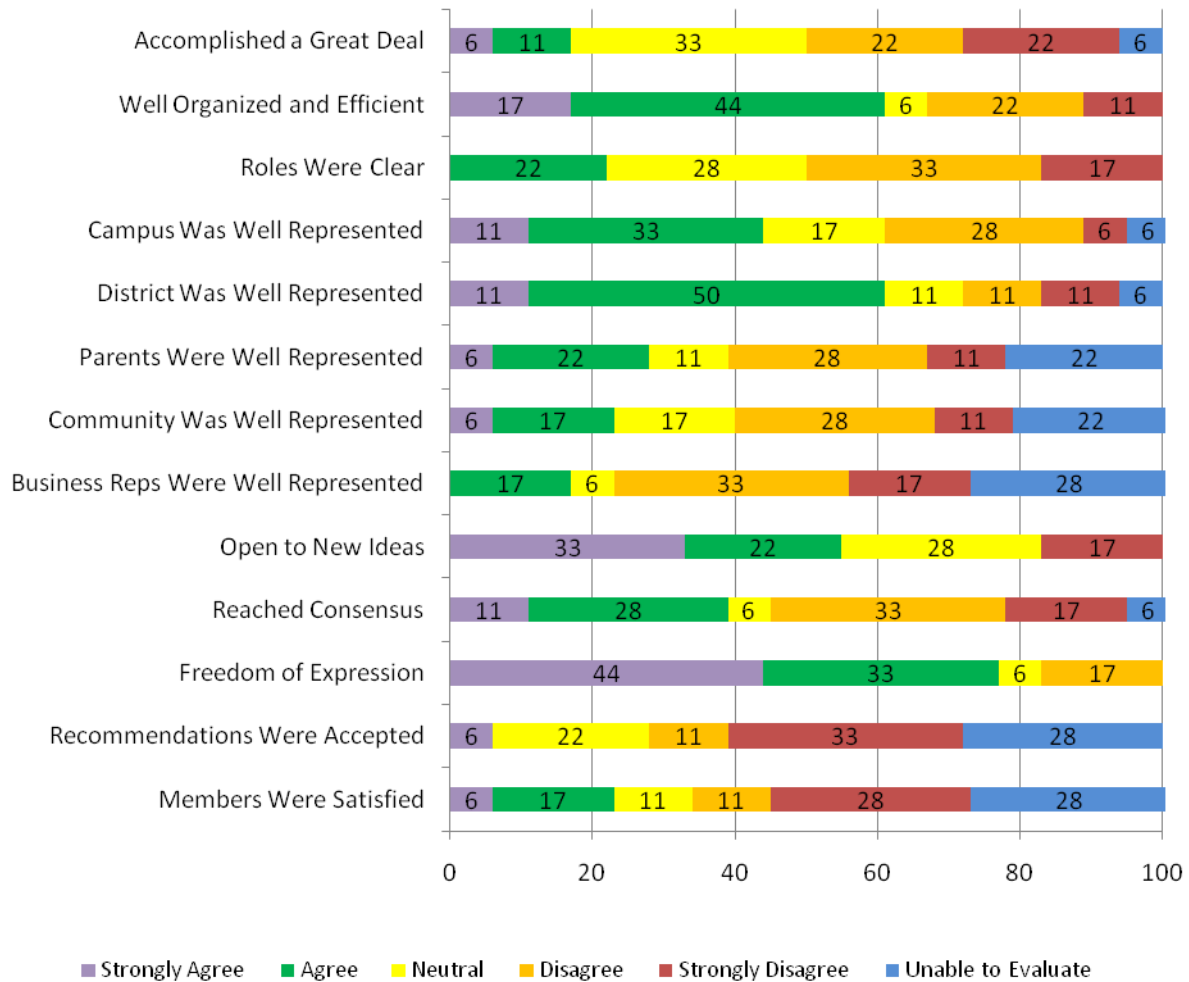
Figure 9. Percentage of DAC responses concerning involvement of the committee in educational program decisions made in the district, 2012–2013



Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

- Ratings from 18 respondents on the results achieved by the 2012–2013 DAC are shown in Figure 10. Fourteen (14) of the respondents (77 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that they could freely express their thoughts at the meetings, 11 (61 percent) reported that the DAC was well organized and run efficiently, and 10 (55 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that the DAC was open to new ideas. Respondents generally reported that district- and campus-based professionals were well represented on the committee, but that parents, community members, and particularly business representatives could be more involved. A number of respondents indicated concern in several areas. For example, 22 percent of respondents agreed that members were clear about their roles on the committee while 50 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed, and six percent of respondents strongly agreed that a majority of the committee's recommendations were implemented in the district while 44 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed and 28 percent chose not to make an evaluation. More detail on responses to issues concerning results of the DAC are in Table 20, (pages 38–39).

Figure 10. Percentage of DAC responses concerning results of the committee's work



Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

- A summary of responses to an open-ended item asking for the benefit to HISD of having a DAC can be found in Table 21 (page 39). The fifteen respondents were nearly equally divided in their perceptions, with one declining to evaluate, seven seeing the benefit to the district as an opportunity to hear voices from multiple constituents and seven reporting seeing little or no benefit to the district. Suggestions from respondents included encouraging discussion of topics presented to the committee and providing updates on the impact of recommendations or suggestions coming from the committee.
- Respondents' suggestions for making the DAC process more effective are summarized in Table 22 (page 40). The most common suggestions included making the goals and objectives of the committee clear and providing demonstrations that the district is responsive to the committee's recommendations.
- The comments of the nine DAC members who chose to respond to the open-ended item "Additional comments you may have regarding the District Advisory Committee" are listed in Table 23 (page 40). Though some of the comments reinforced concerns of some of the members that were expressed

earlier in the survey, further suggestions included specific topics for discussion, allowing members to make additions to the agenda in advance, and including members' comments in the minutes.

Discussion

Mandated advisory committees, the campus Shared Decision-Making Committees and the District Advisory Committee, are composed of volunteers and elected representatives, people who show their commitment to student achievement in Houston Independent School District by contributing their time and attention to the process. Committee members who responded to the surveys offered a broad variety of perspectives on how effectively their respective committees function. Whether the survey respondents were satisfied with their advisory committee function or wanted to make changes, the passion they expressed in their responses was remarkable. Their responsiveness in offering suggestions indicated the importance that they place on their service. However, the energy they bring is not as well focused on some committees as it is on others. Many survey respondents suggested that basic training for new members on the purpose of the respective committees, including appropriate topics for committees to consider, along with training for committee leaders on how to effectively create and support an advisory committee, would contribute to providing a focus to the work.

The majority of respondents to the SDMC survey reported satisfaction with their commitment. Though the process was not always easy, most generally felt that they could express their perspectives and that their contributions were considered. That satisfaction, however, was not universal. The chair of the committee, the principal, takes a strong role in establishing a cohesive and effective school-based committee. Several survey respondents reported frustration with things like irregular meeting times or times that conflicted with other school-related responsibilities, meetings being used to re-disseminate information rather than allow discussion and contributions to decision-making, and erratic attendance making the committee unrepresentative of the community. Issues like these are directly evaluated through the School Improvement Plan report, which is required of every school for approval by the Board of Education, so an extra measure of accountability might be appropriate to assure that meetings are being held as planned. One survey respondent, for example, suggested that meetings be monitored by an SSO or district personnel. Respondents to the survey indicated that Shared Decision-Making Committees are most effective and satisfying when they are embedded in their communities so the committees should be allowed to be as unique as the schools they serve, but an established structure and purpose that meet the requirements of the law would allow more participants to share in the satisfaction of an efficient and effective advisory committee.

Respondents to the DAC survey expressed some frustration in their answers to several of the questions. They repeatedly reinforced the value of diverse constituents providing feedback on issues of fundamental importance to student achievement in the district and they offered suggestions for better harnessing their optimism in the service of the district. They expressed appreciation for hearing about district initiatives but also wanted an opportunity to provide feedback and discuss options that could be considered to make the benefits more obvious to all members of the community. Minor modifications in the structure of the meetings to allow more interaction between presenters and committee members and to highlight progress on issues, could provide participants with a sense of the goals of the committee as well as its continuing impact and could allow the committee to serve the purpose established for it by the state more smoothly.

An advisory committee is necessarily composed of people with diverse concerns and perspectives. It is to be expected that the members will seldom agree on responses to topics under consideration, but it is

necessary for them to feel that their views are heard and respected in order to feel that their thought and time is valued. Though the process is unlikely to be peaceful, the result can be powerful in the form of diverse committee members who positively influence and share a sense of accomplishment in the schools' and the district's progress in supporting student achievement.

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Table 1. Summary of Texas State Requirements for Shared Decision-Making Committees and District Advisory Committees

Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC)	
Purpose	To direct and support the improvement of student performance for all students [Texas Education Code 11.253(a)]
Composition	The school principal, who serves as chairperson and a member of the committee and who appoints those members who are not elected to the committee (Houston ISD Board Policy BQB2, paragraph 4)
	Professional staff of the district, members who are nominated and elected to the position. Two-thirds of professional staff must be classroom teachers and the remainder are campus and district professional staff members. When practical, one professional staff member must have the primary responsibility of educating students with disabilities. No more than one non-instructional staff member should be elected to the SDMC (Houston ISD Board Policy BQB2, paragraph 3)
	At least two parents of students enrolled in the district who are selected by the campus parent organization (Houston ISD Board Policy BQB2, paragraph 3)
	A minimum of two community members (Houston ISD Board Policy BQB2, paragraph 3)
	A minimum of one business representative (Houston ISD Board Policy BQB2, paragraph 3)
Responsibilities	Develop, review, and/or revise the School Improvement Plan (SIP) annually. The SIP must include detail included in Texas Education Code 11.253(d), must go through a process of review, revision and approval at the school site, and must be submitted to the Superintendent to be presented to the HISD Board according to a published schedule (HISD Board Policy BQB1, paragraph 3)
	Participate in making decisions about planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development, and school organization [Texas Education Code 11.253(e)]
	If the school is a junior high, middle school or high school, analyze information related to dropout prevention, including data specified in Texas Education Code 11.255(a)
	Hold at least one public meeting per year, held after receipt of the annual TEA district performance report, to discuss campus performance and performance objectives [Texas Education Code 11.253(g)]
	Solicit input from a broad base of community, parent, and staff members [Texas Education Code 11.253(g)]
	Disseminate SDMC recommendations to the community, parents and staff of the district [Texas Education Code 11.253(g)]
Responsibilities to the SDMC	The principal must regularly consult the committee about the planning, operation, supervision, and evaluation of the campus educational program [Texas Education Code 11.253(h)]
	The district must evaluate the effectiveness of the SDMC in positively impacting student performance at least every two years [Texas Education Code 11.252(d)]

Table 1 (continued). Summary of Texas State Requirements for Shared Decision-Making Committees and District Advisory Committees

District Advisory Committee (DAC)	
Purpose	To establish and review the district's educational plans, goals, performance objectives, and major classroom instructional programs [Texas Education Code 11.251(b)]
Composition	Professional staff of the district, members who are nominated and elected to the position. Two-thirds of professional staff must be classroom teachers and the remainder are campus and district professional staff members. When practical, one professional staff member must have the primary responsibility of educating students with disabilities [Texas Education Code 11.251(e)]
	Parents of students enrolled in the district; a parent cannot be an employee of the district [Texas Education Code 11.251 (b) and (c)]
	Community members; each member must be at least 18 years old and a resident in the district but not a parent of a student in the district [Texas Education Code 11.251(b) and (c)]
	Business representatives; members are selected without regard to residence or business being in the district [Texas Education Code 11.251(b)]
Responsibilities	Develop, review, and/or revise the District Improvement Plan annually. The plan must be made available to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) on request and must include detail included in Texas Education Code 11.252(a)
	Analyze information related to dropout prevention, including data specified in Texas Education Code 11.255(a)
	Hold at least one public meeting per year, held after receipt of the annual TEA district performance report, to discuss district performance and performance objectives [Texas Education Code 11.252(e)]
	Solicit input from a broad base of community, parent, and staff members [Texas Education Code 11.252(e)]
	Disseminate DAC recommendations to the community, parents and staff of the district [Texas Education Code 11.252(e)]
Responsibilities to the DAC	The board or the board's designee must consult periodically with the DAC to review the committee's deliberations [Texas Education Code 11.251©]
	The Superintendent must regularly consult with the DAC in the planning, operation, supervision, and evaluation of the district educational program [Texas Education Code 11.252(f)]
	The district must evaluate the effectiveness of the DAC in positively impacting student performance at least every two years [Texas Education Code 11.252(d)]

Table 2. Shared Decision-Making Committee Survey Respondents' Roles, 2012–2013

Committee Role	Number of Respondents	Percent
Principal	83	10.8
Classroom Teacher Without Primary Responsibility for Students with Disabilities	342	44.6
Classroom Teacher With Primary Responsibility for Students with Disabilities	64	8.4
Other Campus-Based Professional (e.g., assistant principal, counselor, magnet coordinator, nurse, librarian, etc.)	110	14.4
Non-instructional Staff (clerical worker, custodian, food service worker, teacher aide)	54	7.0
Non-Professional School or HISD Staff	15	2.0
Parent	38	5.0
Community Member	37	4.8
Business Representative	13	1.7
Other Representative Not Employed by HISD	6	0.8
No Committee Role Reported	4	0.5
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	766	100.0

Table 3. Frequency of 2012–2013 SDMC Meetings Reported by Survey Respondents

Frequency	Number of Respondents	Percent
Never	0	0.0
Once	8	1.0
Once each semester	15	2.0
Twice each semester	29	3.8
Once a month	667	87.5
More than once a month	26	3.4
Not sure	17	2.2
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	762	99.9

Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 4. Adequacy of the Number of 2012–2013 SDMC Meetings

Adequacy	Number of Respondents	Percent
Too Few	47	6.2
Just Right	661	87.2
Too Many	24	3.2
Not Sure	26	3.4
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	758	100.0

Table 5. Functions of the 2012–2013 SDMC

Function	Number of Respondents	Percent
Decision-Making Entity for the Campus	456	59.8
Advisory Committee to the Principal	206	27.0
Not Sure	69	9.0
Both Advisory and Decision-Making Entity	22	2.9
Neither Advisory nor Decision-Making Entity	10	1.3
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	763	100.0

Table 6. SDMC Survey Responses to “Please Indicate Whether or Not You Received Training and/or Technical Assistance at any Time in Each of the Following Areas and Whether or Not Additional Support is Needed,” 2012–2013

	Received Training		Some Training Received/More Needed		No Training Received/Training Needed		No Training Received/None Needed		Not Applicable	
	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct
The Role of the SDMC (717 respondents)	212	29.6	78	10.9	85	11.9	312	43.5	30	4.2
Team-Building/ Consensus-Building Skills (700 respondents)	143	20.4	102	14.6	125	17.9	284	40.6	46	6.6
Developing, Evaluating and Revising a School Improvement Plan (704 respondents)	160	22.7	115	16.3	158	22.4	225	32.0	46	6.5
Site-Based Budgeting (705 respondents)	123	17.4	89	12.6	201	28.5	175	24.8	117	16.6
Curriculum Evaluation Based on State Standards (700 respondents)	171	24.4	107	15.3	148	21.1	188	26.9	86	12.3
Staffing Strategies (701 respondents)	121	17.3	85	12.1	169	24.1	218	31.1	108	15.4
Professional Development Strategies (700 respondents)	182	26.0	93	13.3	124	17.7	214	30.6	87	12.4

Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

**Table 7. Responses to the Open-Ended Item, “What Other Training Have You Received?”
2012–2013**

Answer	Number of Responses	Percent
No Other Training	126	69.2
Training Not Associated with SDMC	34	18.7
Other SDMC Training Identified	15	8.2
Other	7	3.8
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	182	99.9

SDMC Training Received:

- Best Performance as Environmental Campus
- Campus safety/security
- Catch Me If You Can
- Developing the Five-Year Plan
- Effective Teachers
- HISD Teacher Appraisal and Development System (TADS; identified by three respondents)
- Instructional Leadership
- Meeting protocols
- Montessori Leadership
- Parental and Community Involvement
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC)
- Steven Covey 7 Habits Signature Training
- Tribes training

Using assessments to make campus-based decisions (identified by 3 respondents)

Notes: Some respondents identified multiple other topics of SDMC training

Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 8. Responses to the Open-Ended Item, “What Other SDMC Training is Needed?” 2012–2013

Answer	Number of Responses	Percent
No Other Training is Needed	87	47.8
A Category Listed in Table 6 (page 23)	37	20.3
The Role of the SDMC (14 respondents)		
Site-Based Budgeting (13 respondents)		
Developing, Evaluating, and Revising a School Improvement Plan (3 respondents)		
Curriculum Evaluation Based on State Standards (3 respondents)		
Team-Building/Consensus-Building Skills (2 respondents)		
Staffing Strategies (1 respondent)		
Professional Development Strategies (1 respondent)		
Cannot Evaluate	20	11.0
How to Conduct Successful SDMC Meetings	17	9.3
Compliance Laws and Policies	11	6.0
Other Comment	11	6.0
All Categories Listed in Table 6 (page 23)	10	5.5
How to Involve Community Members and Parents	5	2.7
Other Suggestions: Code of Conduct/Discipline; Creative Thinking; Technology Training; Access to Resources	5	2.7
More Training is Needed	3	1.6
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	182	

Note: Some respondents gave multiple answers.

Table 9. SDMC Survey Responses Concerning Organization of the Committee, 2012–2013

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Unable to Evaluate		Average Rating (4 is high; 1 is low)
	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	
Voting procedures in SDMC elections were fair. (719 respondents)	346	48.1	286	39.8	24	3.3	14	1.9	49	6.8	3.4
During the school year, the SDMC met according to a set schedule. (719 respondents)	370	51.5	284	39.5	38	5.3	14	1.9	13	1.8	3.4
SDMC meeting minutes were provided in a timely fashion. (720 respondents)	360	50.0	277	38.5	43	6.0	16	2.2	24	3.3	3.4
SDMC meeting minutes were readily available to staff members, parents, community members and business representatives. (718 respondents)	318	44.3	269	37.5	47	6.5	18	2.5	66	9.2	3.4
Subcommittees of the SDMC were established and met as scheduled. (717 respondents)	176	24.5	199	27.8	103	14.4	38	5.3	201	28.0	3.0
Non-SDMC members participated through subcommittees. (714 respondents)	143	20.0	209	29.3	104	14.6	41	5.7	217	30.4	2.9
Non-SDMC members were aware of the process for submitting items for SDMC consideration. (717 respondents)	206	28.7	283	39.5	72	10.0	34	4.7	122	17.0	3.1
The diversity of our community was well represented in the participation in our SDMC. (716 respondents)	275	38.4	326	45.5	64	8.9	26	3.6	25	3.5	3.2

Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 10. SDMC Survey Responses Concerning Quality of the Involvement of the Committee in Contributing to School Decisions, 2012–2013

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Unable to Evaluate		Average Rating (4 is high; 1 is low)
	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	
Developing, evaluating and/or revising the school improvement plan (SIP) (701 respondents)	210	30.0	263	37.5	97	13.8	66	9.4	65	9.3	3.0
Student performance (state-mandated tests, college readiness measures, TEA accountability ratings, etc.) (693 respondents)	182	26.3	263	38.0	92	13.3	73	10.5	83	12.0	2.9
Alternative assessment methods and/or instruments (691 respondents)	149	21.6	220	31.8	125	18.1	85	12.3	112	16.2	2.8
Budget development and recommendations (688 respondents)	159	23.1	229	33.3	122	17.7	83	12.1	95	13.8	2.8
School curriculum (686 respondents)	170	24.8	231	33.7	121	17.6	75	10.9	89	13.0	2.8
Instructional support (library, media, technology, etc.) (686 respondents)	194	28.3	227	33.1	110	16.0	84	12.2	71	10.3	2.9
Student services (counseling, nursing, nutrition, etc.) (683 respondents)	148	21.7	223	32.7	122	17.9	81	11.9	109	16.0	2.8
Dropout prevention (secondary schools only) (255 respondents)	32	12.5	73	28.6	43	16.9	33	12.9	74	29.0	2.6
School staffing patterns (685 respondents)	133	19.4	206	30.1	95	13.9	94	13.7	157	22.9	2.7
School waiver requests (686 respondents)	165	24.1	196	28.6	94	13.7	68	9.9	163	23.8	2.9
Campus-based professional development (682 respondents)	178	26.1	232	34.0	112	16.4	71	10.4	89	13.0	2.9
Communication procedures (684 respondents)	200	29.2	257	37.6	117	17.1	66	9.6	44	6.4	2.9
Procedures to gain broad-based community, parent and staff input (690 respondents)	202	29.3	239	34.6	124	18.0	79	11.4	46	6.7	2.9

Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 11. SDMC Survey Responses Concerning Results of the Committee's Work, 2012–2013

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Unable to Evaluate		Average Rating (5 is high; 1 is low)
	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	
The SDMC accomplished a great deal. (703 respondents)	183	26.0	268	38.1	155	22.0	49	7.0	30	4.3	18	2.6	3.8
Our SDMC was well organized and run efficiently. (704 respondents)	254	36.1	292	41.5	93	13.2	36	5.1	22	3.1	7	1.0	4.0
Everyone on the SDMC seemed clear about his or her role. (707 respondents)	227	32.1	294	41.6	93	13.2	56	7.9	23	3.3	14	2.0	3.9
Teachers at the school supported our school improvement plan. (705 respondents)	205	29.1	299	42.4	89	12.6	25	3.5	12	1.7	75	10.6	4.1
Parents at our school supported our school improvement plan. (704 respondents)	174	24.7	263	37.4	110	15.6	27	3.8	20	2.8	110	15.6	3.9
Community members in our area supported our school improvement plan. (706 respondents)	172	24.4	255	36.1	109	15.4	27	3.8	18	2.5	125	17.7	3.9
Businesses in our community supported our school improvement plan. (704 respondents)	155	22.0	222	31.5	119	16.9	30	4.3	16	2.3	162	23.0	3.9
The principal implemented the majority of the SDMC recommendations. (706 respondents)	236	33.4	277	39.2	93	13.2	41	5.8	23	3.3	36	5.1	4.0
The level of involvement of school personnel on the SDMC was about right. (702 respondents)	228	32.5	306	43.6	75	10.7	45	6.4	28	4.0	20	2.8	4.0
The level of involvement of parents on the SDMC was about right. (701 respondents)	169	24.1	236	33.7	120	17.1	90	12.8	44	6.3	42	6.0	3.6

Table 11 (continued). SDMC Survey Responses Concerning Results of the Committee's Work, 2012–2013

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Unable to Evaluate		Average Rating (5 is high; 1 is low)
	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	
The level of involvement of community members on the SDMC was about right. (701 respondents)	179	25.5	226	32.2	107	15.3	93	13.3	43	6.1	53	7.6	3.6
The level of involvement of business partners on the SDMC was about right. (705 respondents)	153	21.7	198	28.1	110	15.6	113	16.0	45	6.4	86	12.2	3.5
Our SDMC was open to new ideas. (700 respondents)	276	39.4	284	40.6	77	11.0	26	3.7	22	3.1	15	2.1	4.1
The committee reached most recommendations by consensus. (703 respondents)	283	40.3	280	39.8	63	9.0	31	4.4	21	3.0	25	3.6	4.1
I felt free to express my thoughts at our SDMC meetings. (705 respondents)	329	46.7	253	35.9	56	7.9	34	4.8	25	3.5	8	1.1	4.2
In general, all of the members of the SDMC were satisfied with the committee's work. (700 respondents)	250	35.7	262	37.4	89	12.7	26	3.7	27	3.9	46	6.6	4.0

Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 12. Responses to the Open-Ended Item, “How Has Your School Benefited from Having a Shared Decision-Making Committee?” 2012–2013

Answer	Number of Responses	Percent
Diverse members had a voice All constituents had a voice (87 respondents) Teachers had a voice (39 respondents) Parents and community members had a voice (5 respondents)	131	31.3
The process built community	64	15.3
Decision-making was effective or easier	46	11.0
No benefit	38	9.1
Other	37	8.9
Information was disseminated	35	8.4
The committee generated new ideas and programs that benefitted students	35	8.4
Cannot evaluate	17	4.1
The school was better organized to accomplish its goals	16	3.8
The process allowed discussion of all concerns and problems	11	2.6
Safety was improved	9	2.2
A requirement was met	4	1.0
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	418	

Sample responses:

- It gives a broad base of experience to the decision-making process.
- Our school has benefited from SDMC because it allows teachers to be anonymous when submitting concerns.
- I believe that if our roles were clearly defined in the beginning and we met at a set date every month, we could have accomplished a lot more than we did.
- I don't feel that what we accomplished was worth the time invested. The committee has served to diffuse responsibility for unpopular decisions.
- The SDMC this year was sporadic in meeting, usually during school time, with only a few days' notice. In 20 years of serving on this SDMC as a business partner, this is easily the most poorly run SDMC that I have experienced!
- Our school works as a team and the SDMC helped guide any decisions that needed to be made.
- The principal has done an outstanding job of listening to all the members' suggestions, asking for input, and following through with plans. It is a pleasure to work with her and the other members of the committee.
- It's given members a feeling of ownership concerning important decisions for our school.

Note: Some respondents gave multiple answers.

Table 13. Responses to the Open-Ended Item, “How Could the Shared Decision-Making Process be More Effective?” 2012–2013

Answer	Number of Responses	Percent
Enhance the Composition and Organization of the SDMC	196	52.3
Change the balance of representation on the committee, for example, increase the representation of parents, business member, community representatives, staff members, multicultural members, and students, but do not include appraisers other than the principal (83 respondents)		
Encourage discussion and allow committees to come to recommendations (33 respondents)		
Change meeting times as needed to allow committee discussions; meetings should have a minimum number of representatives there (21 respondents)		
Follow district policy on composition, meeting times, and purpose of the committee (15 respondents)		
Provide more organized meetings and allow fewer distractions (15 respondents)		
Distribute the agenda ahead of time (14 respondents)		
Change meeting times to support members’ attendance, including using technology for summer meetings (10 respondents)		
Provide advance notifications of meeting times (5 respondents)		
The committee is already effective	82	21.9
Clarify the Purpose of the SDMC	55	14.7
Enhance training for SDMC members (27 respondents)		
Make goals and objectives clear (18 respondents)		
Encourage commitment from members to attend and participate (10 respondents)		
Enhance the Impact of the SDMC	46	12.3
Demonstrate that the school follows through on recommendations (31 respondents)		
Disseminate the minutes of the SDMC meetings promptly (9 respondents)		
Educate the community about the role, function and decisions of the SDMC (6 respondents)		
Modify the Content Considered during SDMC Meetings	39	10.4
Solicit suggestions from all constituents (16 respondents)		
Consider more topics pertinent to the individual school, for example, discipline, at-risk students, recruitment and budget, but not repetitive dissemination of information (14 respondents)		
Establish subcommittees to involve more participants and elicit more ideas (5 respondents)		
Involve the SDMC more in the School Improvement Plan (4 respondents)		
Other	17	4.5
Cannot Evaluate	11	2.9
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	375	

Note: Some respondents gave multiple answers.

Table 14. Sample Responses to the Open-Ended Item, "Additional Comments You May Have Regarding the Shared Decision-Making Process," 2012–2013

Sample Specific Suggestions
Recognition of the members by the district will provide some prestige for their service.
All communication regarding SDMC goes to the Principal from Headquarters. The Principal is often behind on e-mail. Information does not get passed along. Could another person also receive SDMC information, another person on campus? Thanks.
I just want the SDMC Committee to keep the avenue of communications open to the entire school community.
SDMC meetings, etc., should be closely monitored by SSO's and or district personnel.
The entire staff should be more aware of activities of the committee.
If we are a "Decision-Making" committee, you need to stop defining us as an "advisory" committee. Make the title match the actual job.
I believe before a topic is up for discussion we should ask, how is this going to positively affect our students' academic achievement?
Sample General Comments
I like the manner in which it is run because it provides opportunities for in-depth deliberation of issues and is run in a very democratic way in which everyone is free to voice an opinion.
It was an eye-opener to be on the committee. I learned more about how the school is run.
It's not "shared" decision making. It's the parents and teachers coming to admin with concerns and admin doing only what the district allows, not what is in the best interest of the school.
This allows the community to have access to important school information and allows staff to have engaging interactions with community representatives.
The Committee needs to fairly represent the school and community, work as a team, and truly work toward school improvement.
We have an excellent SDMC. Our principal makes us feel like we are important, and that our opinion really does make a difference.
It is a great committee that is vital for continuous academic achievement.
I have served on Shared Decision-Making Committees on the elementary, middle school, and high school levels and it has been an honor to be selected to have a voice in what goes on in our school.

Table 15. District Advisory Committee Survey Respondents' Roles, 2012–2013

Committee Role	Number of Respondents	Percent
Classroom Teacher Without Primary Responsibility for Students with Disabilities	9	47.4
Classroom Teacher With Primary Responsibility for Students with Disabilities	1	5.3
Other Professional Campus-Based Staff (e.g., principal, assistant principal, counselor, magnet coordinator, nurse, librarian, etc.)	3	15.8
District-Level Professional Staff	1	5.3
Non-Professional Campus- or District-Based HISD Staff	1	5.3
Parent	2	10.5
Community Member	2	10.5
Business Representative	0	0.0
TOTAL	19	100.0

Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 16. DAC Survey Responses to “Please Indicate Whether or Not You Received Training and/or Technical Assistance at Any Time in Each of the Following Areas and Whether or Not Additional Support is Needed,” 2012–2013

	Received Training		Some Training Received/More Needed		No Training Received/Training Needed		No Training Received/None Needed		Not Applicable	
	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct
The Role of the DAC (18 respondents)	4	22.2	3	16.7	6	33.3	5	27.8	0	0.0
Team-Building/ Consensus-Building Skills (19 respondents)	3	15.8	0	0.0	9	47.4	7	36.8	0	0.0
Conducting a District Needs Assessment Focused on Student Achievement (19 respondents)	2	10.5	0	0.0	12	63.2	2	10.5	3	15.8
Developing, Evaluating and Revising a District Improvement Plan (19 respondents)	2	10.5	1	5.3	12	63.2	2	10.5	2	10.5
Budget Development (19 respondents)	1	5.3	2	10.5	11	57.9	1	5.3	4	21.1
Curriculum Evaluation Based on State Standards (19 respondents)	1	5.3	2	10.5	9	47.4	4	21.1	3	15.8
Staffing Strategies (19 respondents)	1	5.3	1	5.3	9	47.4	5	26.3	3	15.8

Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 17. DAC Survey Responses to Open-Ended Questions on Training for the Committee, 2012–2013

	Number of Responses	Percent
Question: What other training have you received?		
None	6	100.0
Additional comments:		
“None, but I have served on the DAC in the past”		
“I have not received training relative to my position on the DAC, however, we have had several meetings discussing and examining different processes and procedures that are practiced or being considered by the district.”		
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	6	100.0
Question: What other DAC training is needed?		
Clarity on the purpose of the DAC and member responsibilities.	3	50.0
Clarity on the district's decision-making process and how DAC input is used.	2	33.3
“Training is not the issue. We don't finish tasks and we tend to jump from subject to subject without closure of the different tasks.”	1	16.7
None	1	16.7
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	6	

Note: A respondent's answer may be represented in more than one category.

Table 18. DAC Survey Responses Concerning the Organization of the Committee, 2012–2013

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Unable to Evaluate		Average Rating (5 is high; 1 is low)
	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	
The DAC met an adequate number of times. (18 respondents)	8	44.4	7	38.9	0	0.0	2	11.1	1	5.6	0	0.0	4.1
The DAC had at least one public meeting to address district performance following receipt of the annual district performance report from the Texas Education Agency. (18 respondents)	0	0.0	3	16.7	0	0.0	3	16.7	3	16.7	9	50.0	2.3
DAC meeting minutes were provided in a timely fashion. (18 respondents)	5	27.8	7	38.9	3	16.7	1	5.6	2	11.1	0	0.0	3.7
DAC meeting minutes were readily available to staff members, parents, community members and business representatives. (18 respondents)	5	27.8	5	27.8	2	11.1	3	16.7	2	11.1	1	5.6	3.5
Non-DAC members were aware of the process for submitting items for DAC consideration. (18 respondents)	0	0.0	1	5.6	2	11.1	9	50.0	4	22.2	2	11.1	2.0
The diversity of our community was well represented in the participation in our DAC. (18 respondents)	5	27.8	8	44.4	0	0.0	3	16.7	2	11.1	0	0.0	3.6

Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 19. DAC Survey Responses Concerning Quality of the Involvement of the Committee in Contributing to District Decisions, 2012–2013

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Unable to Evaluate		Average Rating (4 is high; 1 is low)
	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	
Planning the District Educational Program (18 respondents)	0	0.0	3	16.7	3	16.7	6	33.3	6	33.3	1.8
Operation of the District Educational Program (18 respondents)	0	0.0	3	16.7	4	22.2	6	33.3	5	27.8	1.8
Supervision of the District Educational Program (18 respondents)	0	0.0	2	11.1	5	27.8	6	33.3	5	27.8	1.7
Evaluation of the District Educational Program (18 respondents)	0	0.0	3	16.7	4	22.2	6	33.3	5	27.8	1.8
Reviewing the District Improvement Plan (18 respondents)	0	0.0	4	22.2	2	11.1	8	44.4	4	22.2	1.7
Dropout Prevention (18 respondents)	0	0.0	1	5.6	3	16.7	7	38.9	7	38.9	1.5

Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 20. DAC Survey Responses Concerning Results of the Committee's Work, 2012–2013

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Unable to Evaluate		Average Rating (5 is high; 1 is low)
	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	
The DAC accomplished a great deal. (18 respondents)	1	5.6	2	11.1	6	33.3	4	22.2	4	22.2	1	5.6	2.5
The DAC was well organized and run efficiently. (18 respondents)	3	16.7	8	44.4	1	5.6	4	22.2	2	11.1	0	0.0	3.3
Everyone on the DAC seemed clear about his or her role. (18 respondents)	0	0.0	4	22.2	5	27.8	6	33.3	3	16.7	0	0.0	2.6
The level of involvement of campus-based professional staff on the DAC was about right. (18 respondents)	2	11.1	6	33.3	3	16.7	5	27.8	1	5.6	1	5.6	3.2
The level of involvement of district-based professional staff on the DAC was about right. (18 respondents)	2	11.1	9	50.0	2	11.1	2	11.1	2	11.1	1	5.6	3.4
The level of involvement of parents on the DAC was about right. (18 respondents)	1	5.6	4	22.2	2	11.1	5	27.8	2	11.1	4	22.2	2.8
The level of involvement of community members on the DAC was about right. (18 respondents)	1	5.6	3	16.7	3	16.7	5	27.8	2	11.1	4	22.2	2.7
The level of involvement of business representatives on the DAC was about right. (18 respondents)	0	0.0	3	16.7	1	5.6	6	33.3	3	16.7	5	27.8	2.3

Table 20 (continued). DAC Survey Responses Concerning Results of the Committee's Work, 2012–2013

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Unable to Evaluate		Average Rating (5 is high; 1 is low)
	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	
The DAC was open to new ideas. (18 respondents)	6	33.3	4	22.2	5	27.8	0	0.0	3	16.7	0	0.0	3.6
The committee reached most recommendations by consensus. (18 respondents)	2	11.1	5	27.8	1	5.6	6	33.3	3	16.7	1	5.6	2.8
I felt free to express my thoughts at our DAC meetings. (18 respondents)	8	44.4	6	33.3	1	5.6	3	16.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	4.1
The majority of the DAC's recommendations were implemented in the district. (18 respondents)	1	5.6	0	0.0	4	22.2	2	11.1	6	33.3	5	27.8	2.1
In general, all the members of the DAC were satisfied with the committee's work. (18 respondents)	1	5.6	3	16.7	2	11.1	2	11.1	5	27.8	5	27.8	2.5

Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 21. Responses to the Open-Ended Item, "How Has HISD Benefited from Having a District Advisory Committee?" 2012–2013

Answer	Number of Responses	Percent
The district has not benefited from the DAC	7	46.7
All constituents have a voice/are a sounding board for the district	4	26.7
Teachers have a voice	3	20.0
Cannot evaluate	1	6.7
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	15	100.1

Sample responses:

- I'm not sure that HISD has benefited from our meetings this year. It seems like people come talk to us and what we say goes in one ear and out the other. Maybe it would be helpful to have short updates at later meetings where we are given the opportunity to see our recommendations and concerns being implemented and addressed.
- The committee serves to be a sounding board for upcoming district initiatives, to review the calendar, and to represent the campuses at the district level. I feel DAC is NOT a decision making body, and that the members should be clear what the duties are.

Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 22. Responses to the Open-Ended Item, “How Could the District Advisory Committee Process be More Effective?” 2012–2013

Answer	Number of Responses	Percent
Clarify the goals and objectives of the committee	5	33.3
Demonstrate that the district follows through on recommendations by the committee	4	26.7
Other	2	13.3
Provide continuity in the committee's consideration of topics	1	6.7
Encourage discussion and the committee coming to recommendations	1	6.7
Publish committee minutes online in a timely manner	1	6.7
Cannot evaluate	1	6.7
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	15	100.0

Sample responses:

- Have some board members, principals, SIOs and the Superintendent attend some of these meetings.
- I think if the process was more transparent and teachers and the community knew what the DAC actually did and what their decisions were it would help.
- Use a “parking lot” method for questions and address them via email (or at the end of the meeting) in order to allow discussions to flow and be more productive.

Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 23. Responses to the Open-Ended Item, “Additional Comments You May Have Regarding the District Advisory Committee,” 2012–2013

Answers
There were more presentations by district-based professionals this Spring 2013 so we were able to get more first-hand knowledge of district programs.
I wouldn't mind hearing about the 1:1 implementation. How were the schools chosen for the pilot?
I feel the district has already made policy decisions and the comments/decisions made by DAC are never considered.
We are not given the opportunity in advance to incorporate new items to the agenda and our comments are not reflected in the minutes. Also, we have not worked on developing an effective mechanism to follow up on our feedback.
The District needs to listen!!!!
The tone of the crowd is anger toward the district. It is mainly a volley of complaints against whoever is presenting and speaking. I am not clear that we have “advised” on anything.
Serious changes need to be considered!
It's a great organization that just needs a little bit of more power to bring about change.
I have enjoyed being part of the DAC committee. My voice was heard.
TOTAL RESPONDENTS