

May 14, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: School Board Members

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

SUBJECT: **SHARED DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE AND DISTRICT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE SURVEY RESULTS: 2008–2009**

CONTACT: Carla Stevens, Research and Accountability, 713-556-6700

Attached is a copy of the 2008–2009 report of the Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC) and District Advisory Committee (DAC) Survey Results. The purpose of the report is to determine the perceptions of general committee procedures by committee members who participated in the SDMCs and DAC during the 2008–2009 school year.

Some of this year's key findings are as follows:

- Forty-eight percent (or 1,276 members) of the estimated 2,655 SDMC committee members in the district responded to the SDMC survey and 17 DAC members responded to the survey for a 45.9 percent response rate.
- When describing the SDMC, 42.4 percent of respondents indicated that it operated as a decision-making entity for the campus and 30.3 percent indicated that the operated as an advisory committee to the principal.
- The majority of responses to all but one question relating to the overall planning of the SDMC were rated good and all questions received a majority of excellent and good responses.
- Over half the of DAC respondents (53.0 percent) judged the “overall quality” of DAC's involvement in providing input for curriculum issues as excellent, or good and only 11.8 percent indicated it was poor.
- The current DAC committee is made up of solely of district staff and employees. As a result the committee lacks the input of parents, community, and business partners.

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

TBG

Attachment

c: Superintendent's Direct Reports
Regional Superintendents
Executive Principals
Mark Smith
Carla Stevens

RESEARCH

Educational Program Report

HOUSTON
Independent School District



Creating a College-Bound Culture

Shared Decision-Making Committee and District Advisory Committee Survey Results 2008–2009

**Department of Research and Accountability
Houston Independent School District**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SHARED DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE AND DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE SURVEY RESULTS: 2008–2009

Program Description

In 1992, the Houston Independent School District (HISD) Board of Education established and approved the campus-level planning and decision-making process. This process included the creation and maintenance of a Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC) at each school to review the district's educational goals, objectives, and major districtwide classroom instructional programs. Each committee was designed to involve professional and non-professional staff, parents, community members, and business representatives in establishing academic and other performance objectives of the school for each academic excellence indicator adopted in the Texas Education Code (TEC §11.253, TEC §39.051).

The SDMC is required to meet at least once a year to discuss the performance of the school and the school's objectives. The committee must maintain a record of all decisions and significant discussion items. This information should be disseminated to appropriate school and district personnel as well as be available upon request for public review. Finally, the SDMC is required to fulfill the following responsibilities:

1. Implement all pertinent campus-level planning processes;
2. Develop recommendations for the school budget;
3. Submit recommendations for the school curriculum;
4. Recommend changes in the school's staffing patterns;
5. Develop and approve the campus staff development plans;
6. Develop, review, and revise the School Improvement Plan (SIP) for the purpose of improving student performance for all student populations (after principal approval of the SIP, the SDMC presents the plan to staff for approval);
7. Review and make recommendations regarding the school's organizational structure, and
8. Establish procedures to obtain broad-based community, parent, and staff input periodically.

In addition, HISD has also implemented the District Advisory Committee (DAC) under state statute, as an integrated process for planning and decision-making at the district level (TEC §11.251). The committee is designed to provide input to district staff in matters of planning, budgeting, curriculum, school organization, staffing patterns, and staff development. The DAC is to be composed of parents, community and business representatives, and HISD faculty elected by their peers. Since its inception, DAC has been responsible for providing input on the school calendar, district staff development, district budget updates, review of the student code of conduct, and summer school review.

Purpose

According to state law, the SDMCs and DAC are to be evaluated every two years. The last evaluation was in 2006–2007. The purpose of this report is to determine the perceptions of teachers, non-instructional school personnel, parents, community members, and business representatives who participated on SDMCs and the DAC during the 2008–2009 school year. Surveys were administered in spring 2009 to all school SDMC members. The surveys were

designed to allow committee members to give their opinions about general committee procedures such as school planning, training/technical assistance, and experiential/perceptual effectiveness. The following research questions were addressed:

Key Findings

1. What were the perceptions of SDMC members with regard to general SDMC procedures and activities, overall quality of the committees, adequacy of training received by members, their experiences having served on the committees, and some of the benefits to the school?
 - Forty-eight percent (or 1,276 members) of the estimated 2,655 SDMC committee members in the district responded to the SDMC survey, including 1,178 HISD employees and 98 non-HISD personnel. Among the HISD employees who returned the survey, 61.0 percent were classroom teachers and 10.7 percent were principals.
 - When describing the SDMC, 42.4 percent of respondents indicated that it operated as a decision-making entity for the campus and 30.3 percent indicated that it operated as an advisory committee to the principal. The largest percentage of respondents had served 1–2 years (49.9 percent), and a lower percentage of members had served more than two years (28.0 percent). The majority of respondents answered that their SDMC met 1–2 times a month (83.2 percent) and 85.6 percent of the respondents felt that the amount of meeting times was *just right*. In addition, 94.0 percent of the SDMC respondents indicated that they had received notice of meetings in a timely fashion.
 - The majority of responses to all but one question relating to the overall planning of the SDMC were rated *good* and all questions received a majority of *excellent* and *good* responses. This is in contrast to 2006–2007 when the majority of responses to all but two questions were rated as excellent.
 - For open-ended responses regarding the overall quality of the SDMC’s involvement in decisions made at their school, the largest percentage (26.0 percent) of respondents cited the active involvement and effectiveness of the SDMCs in the decision-making process within schools. On the other hand, 12.5 percent of respondents commented that the SDMC needed to increase communication and consist of elected members.
 - The majority of the respondents received at least *some training* on the role of SDMC in Team/Consensus Building. While more than a third (39.2 percent) of respondents received at least *some training* in site-based budgeting, 26.2 percent had not received any training and needed training.
 - Experiential items with the highest percentage of rated *Strongly Agree* or *Agree* were “our committee reached recommendations by consensus/majority” (88.5 percent), “felt comfortable to express my thoughts at SDMC meetings” (87.2 percent), and “SDMC meeting schedule was set at the beginning of the school year” (87.1 percent).
 - Of the 1,276 survey participants, 708 (55.4 percent) responses were received for the item: “How has your school benefited from having a Shared Decision-Making Committee?” The highest response was that the SDMC facilitated better communication among school staff and other stakeholders. (21.5 percent), followed by 15.4 percent of the respondents

indicating that the SDMC helped the school. Two thematic categories had the third highest percentage (14.0 percent: SDMC has given teachers and other stakeholders a voice and SDMC allowed for greater participation by school staff and other stakeholders.

2. What were the perceptions of DAC members with regard to the general DAC procedures and activities, overall quality, their experiences in having served on the committee, and benefits to the district?
 - DAC surveys were distributed to 37 members of the 2008–2009 committee, which included classroom teachers, other school-based professional staff such as librarians, assistant principals, counselors, and district administrators. Subsequently, 17 DAC members responded to the survey for a 45.9 percent response rate. Respondents included four teachers, ten other school-based professional staff members, one regional office staff, and three central office staff member, with one member identifying two staff positions.
 - Of the 17 DAC survey participants, 76.5 agreed that the number of times the DAC met during the 2008–2009 school year was *just right*. Most of the respondents (88.2 percent) felt that they received notice of DAC meetings in a timely fashion. In addition, 70.6 percent indicated that the school nomination procedures for DAC members were *very fair*.
 - Over half the of DAC respondents (53.0 percent) judged the “overall quality” of DAC’s involvement in providing input for curriculum issues as *excellent, or good* and only 11.8 percent indicated it was *poor*. The majority of the respondents (64.7 percent) rated the overall quality of DAC’s involvement in providing input for district staff development waivers as excellent or good. The majority of the respondents (58.8 percent) indicated that the overall quality of DAC’s involvement in providing input for budget development and recommendations was either *good* or *excellent*, however 23.5 percent indicated that the DAC’s involvement was *poor for both catagories*. Although the majority of these responses to these questions were positive in 2008–2009, the percentages rating the overall quality of these items excellent or good were higher in 2006–2007.
 - Of the 17 DAC surveys completed, 14 responses were received for the question: “How has HISD benefited from having a District Advisory Committee?” The largest proportion of the respondents (50.0 percent) indicated that the DAC has facilitated better communication among school staff and other stakeholders. On the other hand, 21.4 percent of the respondents indicated that DAC has not benefited the district.
 - In 2008–2009, the majority of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the items designed to assess DAC members’ perceptions and experiences. However, of the nine items, six had decreases in the percentage agreement from 2006–2007 to 2008–2009. The largest decrease was “Our DAC accomplished a great deal in the past year,” decreasing from 77.8 to 52.9 percent.

Recommendations

1. To enhance the functions of the role of the SDMC and its members, all SDMC members must be provided with up-to-date and continuous training in the areas of site-based budgeting, team/consensus building, community support/involvement, and school improvement plans. Additionally, all new members should receive training in the role and functions of SDMCs.
2. The membership of the DAC should include non-HISD employees to encourage more input from the community.
3. It is recommended that the DAC be involved earlier in the decision-making process and be provided information prior to the meetings to improve discussion.
4. Both SDMCs and the DAC should consider ways to allow for additional input and representation of the various departments, academies, and other stakeholders in the decision-making process, as the Texas Education Code specifies the responsibility to establish “procedures...to periodically obtain broad-based community, parent, and staff input” (TEC §11.253 (g)).

SHARED DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE AND DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE SURVEY RESULTS: 2008–2009

Introduction

Program Description

In 1992, the Houston Independent School District (HISD) Board of Education established and approved the campus-level planning and decision-making process. This process included the creation and maintenance of a Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC) at each school to review the district's educational goals, objectives, and major district wide classroom instructional programs. Each committee was designed to involve professional and non-professional staff, parents, community members, and business representatives in establishing academic and other performance objectives of the school for each academic excellence indicator adopted in the Texas Education Code (TEC §11.253, TEC §39.051).

The SDMC is required to meet at least once a year to discuss the performance of the school and the school's objectives. The committee must maintain a record of all decisions and significant discussion items. This information should be disseminated to appropriate school and district personnel as well as be available upon request for public review. Finally, the SDMC is required to fulfill the following responsibilities:

1. Implement all pertinent campus-level planning processes;
2. Develop recommendations for the school budget;
3. Submit recommendations for the school curriculum;
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6. Develop, review, and revise the School Improvement Plan (SIP) for the purpose of improving student performance for all student populations (after principal approval of the SIP, the SDMC presents the plan to staff for approval);
7. Review and make recommendations regarding the school's organizational structure, and
8. Establish procedures to obtain broad-based community, parent, and staff input periodically.

In addition, HISD has also implemented the District Advisory Committee (DAC) under state statute, as an integrated process for planning and decision-making at the district level (TEC §11.251). The committee is designed to provide input to district staff in matters of planning, budgeting, curriculum, school organization, staffing patterns, and staff development. The DAC is to be composed of parents, community and business representatives, and HISD faculty elected by their peers. Since its inception, DAC has been responsible for providing input on the school calendar, district staff development, district budget updates, review of the student code of conduct, and summer school review.

Purpose

According to state law, the SDMCs and DAC are to be evaluated every two years. The last evaluation was 2006–2007. The purpose of this report is to determine the perceptions of teachers, non-instructional school personnel, parents, community members, and business representatives who participated on SDMCs and the DAC during the 2008–2009 school year. Surveys were administered in spring 2009 to all school SDMC members. The surveys were designed to allow committee members to give their opinions about general committee procedures such as school

planning, training/technical assistance, and experiential/perceptual effectiveness. The following research questions were addressed:

1. What were the perceptions of SDMC members with regard to general SDMC procedures and activities, overall quality of the committees, adequacy of training received by members, their experiences having served on the committees, and some of the benefits to the school?
2. What were the perceptions of DAC members with regard to the general DAC procedures and activities, overall quality, their experiences in having served on the committee, and benefits to the district?

Methods

Data Collection

To determine the perceptions of teachers, non-instructional school personnel, parents, community members, and business representatives who participated on their schools' SDMCs or the district's DAC during the 2008–2009 school year, surveys were administered in the spring 2009. The online surveys (see **Appendices A and B**), were designed to allow committee members to give their opinions about general committee procedures such as school planning, training/technical assistance, and experiential/perceptual effectiveness (Houston Independent School District, 2007). Questions primarily employed a Likert-scale or a multiple-response format, with respondents given the opportunity to provide additional comments in a few open-ended questions. The responses were completely anonymous.

All SDMC committee members, including principals, teachers, school-based personnel, non-instructional staff, parents, community members and business partners, were invited to participate in the survey process online. Principals were asked (via e-mail) to distribute the notice to all committee members at their school, including those without an HISD email address. Committee members without Internet access completed printed copies of the survey by hand and forwarded them to the Research and Accountability Department where they were manually inputted. Seven surveys were recorded in this manner. The Assistant Superintendent of the Research and Accountability Department notified DAC members of the survey directly, using a list of e-mail addresses provided by the district's DAC coordinator.

Survey Participants

Of the estimated 2,655 SDMC committee members in the district, there were 1,276 SDMC members (48.1 percent) who responded to the survey, including: 53 parents, 29 community members and 16 business partners not employed by HISD. Among HISD employees, 61.0 percent were classroom teachers, 10.7 percent were principals, 20.5 percent were other school-based staff (e.g. librarians, assistant principals, and counselors), and 7.8 percent were non-instructional (e.g. clerical, cafeteria) staff. The number of surveys completed by both SDMC and DAC members are presented in **Table 1**.

In addition, Table 1 shows that respondents represented all five HISD geographic administrative regions plus Alternative. The Central and West regions had the highest number of respondents with 280 (22.1 percent) and 312 (24.6 percent), respectively. The smallest administrative region of alternative schools had the lowest amount with 20 respondents (1.6 percent). SDMC survey respondents represented all school levels within HISD, with 68.6 percent of respondents representing HISD elementary schools, 15 percent representing middle schools, 13.2 percent representing high schools, and 3.2 percent combined-level schools (see **Figure 1**).

Table 1. Number of Surveys Returned by the SDMC and DAC Committee Members, 2008–2009 and 2006–2007

	SDMC				DAC			
	N		%		N		%	
	2006-07	2008-09	2006-07	2008-09	2006-07	2008-09	2006-07	2008-09
HISD Employee Members								
Classroom Teacher	727	718	62.5	61.0	8	4	42.1	22.2
Other School Based Professional Staff	247	242	21.2	20.5	7	10	36.8	55.6
Principal	130	126	11.2	10.7	-	-	-	-
Non-Instructional Staff	59	92	5.1	7.8	-	-	-	-
Central Office Staff	-	-	-	-	1	1	5.3	5.6
District Office Staff	-	-	-	-	3	3	15.8	16.7
Not Applicable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total HISD Employees	1,163	1,178	100.0	100.0	19*	18*	100.0	100.1
Non-HISD Employee Members								
Parent	36	53	58.1	54.1	-	-	-	-
Community Member	21	29	33.9	29.6	-	-	-	-
Business Partner	5	16	8.1	16.3	-	-	-	-
Total Non-HISD Employee Members	62	98	100.0	100.0				
Total	1,225	1,276			19*	18*		
Administrative Region								
Alternative	22	20	1.8	1.6	-	-	-	-
Central	253	280	20.4	22.1	-	-	-	-
East	207	192	16.7	15.2	-	-	-	-
North	281	266	22.7	21.0	-	-	-	-
South	159	196	12.8	15.5	-	-	-	-
West	316	312	25.5	24.6	-	-	-	-
Total Members by Administrative District	1,238†	1,266††	99.9	100.0	-	-	-	-
Total Respondents	1,225	1,276			18	17		

* One DAC respondent was identified as working both in a school and in a regional office

† Respondents selected multiple regions

†† Regions not identified by all respondents

Note: Items may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding

Of the 37 DAC members invited to take the survey 17 responded, yielding a 45.9 percent response rate. One respondent was identified working both in a school and regional office. Other School Based Professionals comprised the largest group, 55.6 percent of the respondents. It is important to note that respondents consisted only of members employed by the district.

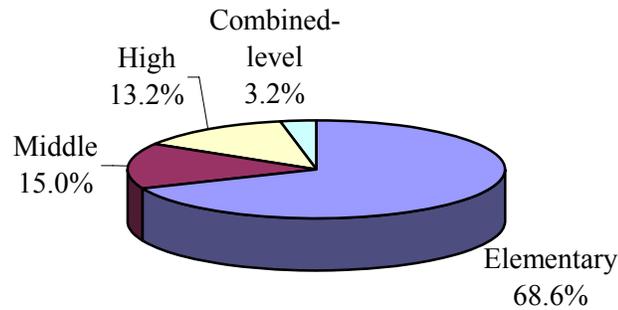


Figure 1. SDMC respondents by school level, 2008–2009, N=1,257.

Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed to analyze the results of the surveys. First, descriptive statistics in terms of frequencies and percentages were used to examine the multiple-response and Likert-type questions. Four response options were scored: “Strongly Agree” = 4; “Agree” = 3; “Disagree” = 2; and “Strongly Disagree” = 1. Items marked “N/A” indicated that the item did not apply. Next, qualitative analysis was used to analyze the data from the open-ended short answer questions. For the short-answer questions, emergent categories were developed using existing categories from the previous administration of the surveys and any new categories emerging for 2008–2009. The data are presented using descriptive statistics.

The descriptive data from the SDMC survey were analyzed for the following areas: general SDMC procedures, SDMC and school planning, training and technical assistance procedures and activities, and experiential/perceptual effectiveness. Similarly, the DAC survey was analyzed for the following areas: general DAC procedures, overall quality of DAC, and experiential/perceptual effectiveness. Content analysis was used to evaluate the results from the open-ended questions of both surveys that assessed the benefits of both committees, how both processes could be more effective, as well as soliciting any other comments about either the SDMC or DAC processes.

Results

What were the perceptions of SDMC members with regard to general SDMC procedures and activities, overall quality of the committees, adequacy of training received by members, their experiences having served on the committees, and some of the benefits to the school?

General SDMC Procedures and Activities

Seven of the 55 multiple-response questions included on the survey were items related to general SDMC procedures and activities (see **Table 2**). The SDMC members were asked how long they had been a member of the SDMC. The largest percentage of respondents had served 1–2 years (49.9 percent) and a smaller proportion of respondents reported more than two years of membership on the SDMC (28.0 percent). The majority of respondents indicated that their SDMC met 1–2 times a month (83.2 percent) and felt that the amount of times their committee met was *just right* (85.6 percent). When meetings were scheduled, 94.0 percent of the respondents felt that they had received notice in a timely fashion. The next two questions dealt with the voting

procedure. The majority of respondents answered that the ten-day nomination period was *just right* and that the voting procedure was *very fair* (73.8 percent and 72.2 percent, respectively). Finally, respondents were asked in what capacity their school’s SDMC operates. The largest percentage of respondents (42.4 percent) felt that they were the decision-making entity for the campus, while 30.3 percent indicated that they were the advisory committee to the principal. These results were fairly consistent with findings from 2006–2007 (Houston Independent School District, 2007).

Table 2. Response Rates to General SDMC Procedures and Activities Questions, 2006–2007 and 2008–2009

	N		Percent									
	06–07	08–09	Less than a Year		1–2 Years		More than 2 Years					
How long have you been a member of the SDMC?	1,210	1,248	25.6	22.0	40.6	49.9	33.8	28.0				
How often did your school’s SDMC meet during 2004–05?			1–2 times Per Month		3+ Per Month		Quarterly	Annually	Not Sure			
	1,213	1,247	72.6	83.2	3.5	2.2	16.6	12.8	1.6	1.8	5.7	1.8
The number of times your SDMC met was:			Too few		Just Right		Too Many		Not Sure			
	1,217	1,264	11.4	07.0	83.2	85.6	1.0	3.6	4.4	3.9		
Notices of SDMC meetings received in a timely fashion?			Yes		No		Not Sure					
	1,208	1,246	92.0	94.0	6.9	4.7	1.1	1.4				
The ten-day nomination period for elections to the SDMC is:			Too Short		Just Right		Too Long		Not Sure			
	1,220	1,261	2.7	2.0	80.3	73.8	9.8	12.8	7.2	11.4		
How fair are the voting procedures in SDMC elections for committee members?			Very Fair		Somewhat Fair		Not Very Fair		Not Fair At All		Not Sure	
	1,222	1,264	73.2	72.2	19.3	16.7	2.1	2.4	1.3	0.9	4.0	7.8
In what capacity does the SDMC operate on your campus?			Advisory Committee to the Principal		Decision-Making entity for Campus		Advisory Committee to the Principal, with approval of staff development				Not Sure	
	1,216	1,262	33.5	30.3	43.3	42.4	15.2	17.6	8.0	9.7		

Note: Items may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

Overall Quality of SDMCs

There were fourteen of the Likert-type and one open-ended question included in the survey related to the quality of the SDMC's involvement in decision-making and school planning (see **Table 3**). The largest percentage of responses to all but one of the questions were *good*. All questions received a majority of *excellent* and *good* responses, however the percentages of *excellent* ratings decreased while the percentage of *good* ratings increased from 2006–2007 to 2008–2009 for almost all questions. In 2006–2007 the most notable *fair* to *poor* responses were for questions relating to modifications for special needs students, use of discretionary funds, input on staffing patterns, student services, and student grouping patterns. In 2008–2009, the most notable items with fair to poor responses were input on staffing patterns (23.0 percent) and communication procedures (22.8 percent).

For the open-ended question, participants were asked to provide any other information regarding the overall quality of the SDMC's involvement in decisions made at their school. Of the 280 responses received, the largest percentage (26.0 percent) of respondents cited the active involvement and effectiveness of the SDMCs in the decision-making process within schools. On the other hand, 12.5 percent of respondents commented that the SDMC needed to increase communication and consist of elected members and 9.3 percent said that the principal needed to be more supportive. Finally, 37.1 percent of respondents had no comment. In many cases, respondents noted that while SDMC members were kept abreast of issues and concerns of the school community, the committee often had very little say in the decisions made. Others noted that the role of the committee was to rubber stamp or approve decisions that were already made by the principal and school administrators.

Table 3. Response Rates to Overall Quality of SDMC's Involvement in Decision Making and School Planning Items, 2006–2007 and 2008–2009

	N		Percent										
			Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't Know		Not Involv.*
			06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	
Student performance– TAKS scores, Texas Education Agency accountability ratings, etc.	1,238	1,225	43.8	30.9	33.0	40.2	13.1	13.9	5.5	3.0	4.6	2.5	9.6
Curriculum issues	1,238	1,221	42.2	29.6	33.1	40.1	13.0	14.7	7.4	4.4	4.3	1.6	9.5
Student grouping patterns	1,238	1,205	35.9	20.0	28.0	34.9	14.6	14.8	9.3	4.6	12.1	5.0	20.7
School waiver requests	1,238	1,207	54.5	34.9	24.1	34.6	7.5	9.2	4.4	2.2	9.5	6.4	12.8
Input on staffing patterns	1,234	1,197	36.8	21.6	26.7	33.0	14.3	15.1	11.7	7.9	10.6	4.0	18.5
Campus-based staff development	1,238	1,200	48.1	31.9	28.9	37.3	11.7	13.5	7.2	4.0	4.0	2.1	11.2
Communication procedures	1,238	1,201	45.3	32.7	28.8	36.7	14.3	17.2	7.2	5.6	4.4	1.6	6.2
Modifications for special needs students	1,238	1,219	35.4	22.0	27.9	32.4	15.9	14.1	9.3	4.9	11.5	4.3	22.2

Table 3. Response Rates to Overall Quality of SDMC’s Involvement in Decision Making and School Planning Items, 2006–2007 and 2008–2009 (continued)

	Percent												
	N		Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don’t Know		Not Involv.*
	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	08-09
Alternative assessment instruments and/or methods	1,238	1,206	38.6	21.0	27.1	35.4	14.5	12.4	8.2	3.7	11.6	6.2	21.3
Budget development and recommendations	1,238	1,208	41.7	30.0	28.3	36.7	14.0	13.2	9.8	6.2	6.2	3.4	10.6
Use of discretionary campus funds	1,238	1,208	38.0	26.7	26.5	33.1	13.2	13.8	12.0	7.0	10.3	6.0	13.3
Organization of departments or teaching teams	1,238	1,208	41.1	24.5	26.8	32.7	12.9	13.6	11.0	5.5	8.2	2.5	21.3
Instructional Support – library, media, technology, etc.	1,221	1,204	35.3	32.1	36.4	36.0	16.2	15.5	7.5	4.6	4.6	1.9	9.8
Student Services – counseling, nursing, nutrition, etc.	1,218	1,217	26.8	25.9	35.5	33.0	19.6	14.8	9.9	5.4	8.2	3.5	17.4

* Not Involved added to the 2008–2009 survey

Note: Items may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

Training/Technical Assistance for SDMC Members

Four of the multiple-response questions related to the degree of training and technical assistance SDMC members have received. Participating members were asked to rate these items in terms of the level of training and technical assistance they have received and whether further training and technical assistance is needed. The results from the survey for the training and technical assistance questions are presented in **Figure 2**.

The majority of the respondents (59.4 percent) received either *training* or *some training* on the role of SDMC. Just over half (56.2 percent) of the respondents also received *training* or *some training* in developing School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and 57.5 percent had some level of training in Team/Consensus Building. While more than a third (39.2 percent) of respondents received *training* or *some training* in site-based budgeting, 26.2 percent had not received any training and needed training.

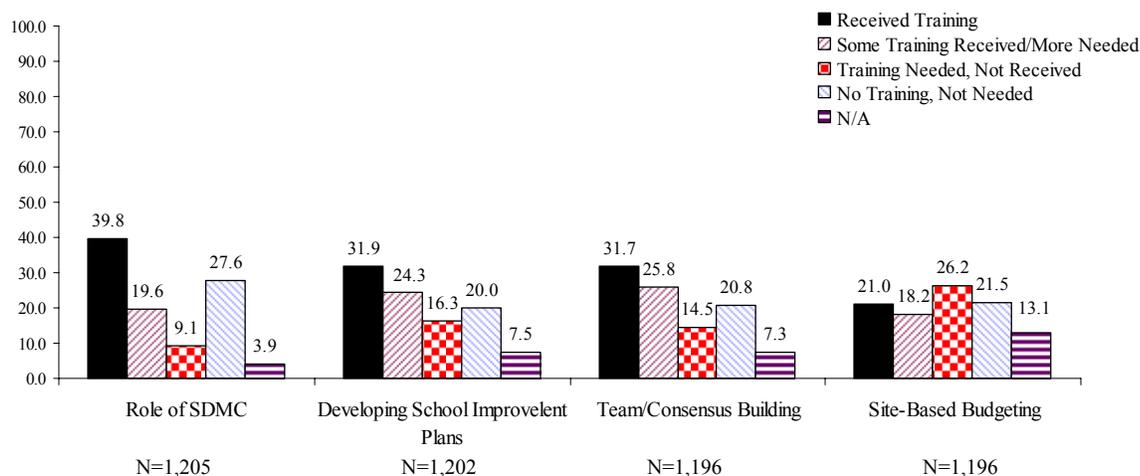


Figure 2. SDMC response rates to training and technical assistance items, 2008–2009.

In addition to the four multiple-choice questions included on the surveys, participants were also asked, in an open-ended format, to list any further training that they would like to see offered. In all, 89 respondents answered this question. One-third (33.7 percent) of the respondents indicated that they did not need further training. Among those who indicated that they would need further SDMC training, 20.2 percent centered on training that could potentially enhance the functions of SDMCs including training on the change process, the role and responsibilities of SDMCs and committee members, leadership development, and team-building. Twenty-eight (28.0) percent indicated a need for on-site budgeting, staff development, curriculum, Special Education, grant writing, and building community support/involvement.

SDMC Experiential/Perceptual Items

Twenty-six of the multiple-response items included on the survey were statements designed to assess SDMC members' perceptions and experiences. A five-point Likert scale was used as a format for these items: *Strongly Agree*, *Agree*, *Disagree*, *Strongly Disagree*, and *Not Sure*. The results for these items are presented in **Table 4**. Among the items presented, the following were rated as *Strongly Agree* and *Agree* by more than 80 percent of the SDMC members who participated in the survey process and are listed in decending order:

- "Our committee reached most recommendations by consensus/majority," 88.5 percent;
- "I felt very comfortable and free to express my thoughts at our SDMC meetings," 87.2 percent;
- "The SDMC meeting schedule was set at the beginning of the school year." 87.1 percent
- "My role on the SDMC was clear" 86.7 percent;
- "Our SDMC was well organized and conducted itself an effective manner" 86.1 percent;
- "SDMC meeting minutes were provided in a timely fashion," 85.5 percent
- "Our principal supported most of the recommendations of our SDMC," 85.0 percent;
- "SDMC meeting minutes were readily available to staff members, parents, and community members." 83.2 percent
- "Our SDMC was open to new ideas from non-SDMC members," 82.5 percent;
- "Teachers at our school supported the recommendations of our SDMC," 82.1 percent
- "It seemed that everyone on the SDMC was clear about his or her role," 80.5 percent.

Only one item decreased slightly in the percentage rating *Strongly Agree*, “I felt very comfortable and free to express my thoughts at our SDMC meetings.

The percentages rated *Strongly Disagree* increased slightly in 2008–2009 for four items:

- “Our principal supported the recommendations of our SDMC” (0.6 percent)
- “I felt free and comfortable to express my thoughts at the SDMC meetings.” (0.2 percentage point increase)
- “During the school year the SDMC schedule was regularly changed” (0.5 percentage point increase)
- “Our principal supported most of the recommendations of our SDMC” (0.7 percentage point increase)

Among these items, only two were rated by less than 80 percent of the respondents in the 2006–2007 survey.

- SDMC schedule was set at the beginning of the school year – 79.2 percent.
- SDMC minutes readily available to staff members, parents, and community members – 79.5 percent.

Table 4. Response Rates to Experiential/Perceptual Items for the SDMC Committee Members, 2006–2007 and 2008–2009

	N		Percent									
			Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Not Sure	
	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09
Our SDMC accomplished a great deal in the past year.	1,209	1,189	22.2	24.7	55.0	53.2	10.8	11.0	5.0	3.1	7.1	7.9
In general, all of the members of the SDMC were satisfied with the committee's work.	1,215	1,191	19.1	23.2	56.1	51.1	9.2	9.2	2.5	2.2	13.0	14.4
Our principal supported the recommendations of our SDMC.	1,214	1,188	37.1	37.9	48.5	47.1	4.8	5.3	2.0	2.6	7.7	7.2
Teachers at our school supported the recommendations of our SDMC.	1,215	1,182	24.3	26.8	60.3	55.3	4.0	4.0	1.0	0.9	10.5	12.9
The parents at our school supported the recommendations of our SDMC.	1,209	1,181	19.3	21.5	54.3	49.5	2.7	2.8	2.0	0.8	21.8	25.3
Community members in our area supported our school plan.	1,208	1,164	19.3	21.5	51.2	45.5	1.7	2.0	1.7	0.8	26.2	30.2
Businesses in our community supported our school plan.	1,212	1,168	16.3	19.2	45.4	40.5	2.6	2.3	1.7	0.6	34.1	37.4

Table 4. Response Rates to Experiential/Perceptual Items for the SDMC Committee Members, 2006–2007 and 2008–2009 (continued)

	Percent											
	N		Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Not Sure	
	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09
Our SDMC was well organized and conducted itself an effective manner.	1,210	1,169	33.8	36.0	52.0	50.1	7.2	7.2	3.2	2.0	3.8	4.7
My role on the SDMC was clear.	1,219	1,169	32.3	35.8	54.0	50.9	7.1	7.2	2.3	2.0	4.3	4.1
It seemed that everyone on the SDMC was clear about his or her role.	1,226	1,164	25.0	31.4	55.2	49.1	9.9	8.6	2.7	1.5	7.3	9.4
The level of involvement of parents on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right.	1,223	1,153	14.3	19.0	45.5	45.4	20.8	18.2	9.0	5.8	10.5	11.5
The level of involvement of community members on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right.	1,213	1,161	12.4	17.2	44.9	42.6	20.0	18.5	7.7	5.6	14.9	16.0
The level of involvement of business partners on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right.	1,213	1,167	11.0	15.1	38.4	36.0	21.7	20.5	8.7	6.3	20.3	22.2
Our SDMC was open to new ideas from non-SDMC members.	1,203	1,176	30.9	31.0	53.9	51.5	3.1	5.4	2.3	1.4	9.8	10.5
Other staff members and parents were aware of the process for submitting items to the SDMC for consideration.	1,212	1,174	18.6	19.9	50.2	47.8	9.2	9.5	4.5	2.8	17.4	20.0
I felt very comfortable and free to express my thoughts at our SDMC meetings.	1,213	1,172	41.4	41.3	46.6	45.9	6.7	7.2	2.7	2.9	2.6	2.7
Our committee reached most recommendations by consensus/majority.	1,209	1,165	37.5	39.0	53.3	49.5	3.0	5.2	2.0	2.0	4.2	4.4
The SDMC meeting schedule was set at the beginning of the school year.	1,217	1,151	34.7	38.4	44.5	48.7	9.4	5.6	3.0	1.1	8.3	6.1

Table 4. Response Rates to Experiential/Perceptual Items for the SDMC Committee Members, 2006–2007 and 2008–2009 (continued)

	N		Percent									
			Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Not Sure	
	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09
During the school year, the SDMC schedule was regularly changed.	1,214	1,158	3.7	5.5	23.2	17.8	47.0	51.4	18.8	19.3	7.2	6.0
The SDMC played an important role in campus-based professional development.	1,218	1,158	20.9	23.2	47.7	43.8	17.1	15.5	4.7	4.1	9.7	13.5
SDMC meeting minutes were readily available to staff members, parents, and community members.	1,208	1,173	33.9	38.1	45.6	45.1	7.1	4.9	2.6	1.8	10.7	10.1
SDMC meeting minutes were provided in a timely fashion.	1,218	1,173	33.0	39.0	48.1	46.5	8.9	6.9	2.1	1.2	8.0	6.4
The SDMC subcommittees met regularly.	1,215	1,180	13.7	17.0	41.3	36.9	17.9	15.0	6.6	4.8	20.5	26.3
Other non-SDMC faculty members and parents participated through subcommittees.	1,209	1,160	9.3	10.3	40.4	37.1	17.9	15.2	6.3	5.8	26.1	31.7
Our SDMC operated in the way described in our School Improvement Plan.	1,210	1,179	24.5	25.5	51.7	50.6	3.9	3.5	2.9	1.6	17.0	18.7
The principal implemented the majority of the SDMC recommendations.	1,212	1,172	27.1	28.2	51.2	49.1	10.2	9.1	2.8	2.2	8.6	11.3
Our principal supported most of the recommendations of our SDMC	1,218	1,188	37.0	37.9	48.5	47.1	4.8	5.3	1.9	2.6	7.7	7.2
Teachers at our school supported the recommendations of our SDMC	1,219	1,182	24.2	26.8	60.3	55.3	4.0	4.0	1.0	0.9	10.5	12.9

Items may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

A closer look at these multiple response items revealed that the relationship between SDMCs and their schools were strong and operated in a collaborative manner. First, the respondents indicated that their SDMC committee was well organized and the school staff supported the recommendations of the committee. Second, committee recommendations were reached by a consensus or majority. Third, respondents felt comfortable when expressing their thoughts in meetings. Finally, respondents acknowledged that the principal supported and implemented most of the recommendations.

The following statements were rated *Strongly Disagree* and *Disagree* by more than 20.0 percent of the participating SDMC members and are listed in descending order:

- “The level of involvement of business partners on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right,” 26.8 percent;
- “The level of involvement of community members on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right,” 24.1 percent;
- “The level of involvement of parents on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right,” 24.0 percent;
- “Other non-SDMC faculty members and parents participated through subcommittees,” 21.0 percent.

An examination of the aforementioned statements indicated less SDMC involvement among members who were not HISD employees. On a positive note, over two-thirds (70.7 percent) of respondents disagreed with the statement regarding the regular changing of the SDMC schedule; thus supporting another statement where 87.1 percent of the respondents indicated that the schedule was set at the beginning of the year. It is interesting to note that the level of strong agreement increased for all items from 2006–2007 to 2008–2009 except one, “I felt very comfortable and free to express my thoughts at our SDMC,” and strong disagreement decreased for all items except four.

Benefits, Suggested Improvements, and Comments on SDMCs

There were three additional open-ended questions included to collect information about the perceptions of the SDMC members. The questions allowed participating SDMC members to voice their opinions about the benefits of the SDMC, ways in which the shared-decision-making process could be made more effective, and any other comments about SDMCs. Thematic categorical analysis was used to develop emergent categories and classify SDMC members’ responses for each of the open-ended questions.

Eight specific categories emerged from the analysis of the SDMC members’ responses to the question “How has your school benefited from having a Shared Decision Making-Committee?” **Table 5** presents the number and percent of respondents for the eight emerging categories. Of the 1,276 surveys completed, 708 responses (55.4 percent) were received for “How has your school benefited from having a Shared-Decision-Making Committee?” The highest category of response was that the SDMC facilitated better communication among school staff and other stakeholders. (21.5 percent), followed by 15.4 percent of the respondents indicating that the SDMC has helped the school. Two thematic categories had the third highest percentage (14.0 percent): the SDMC has given teachers and other stakeholders a voice and the SDMC allowed for greater participation by school staff and other stakeholders. In addition, respondents also indicated that the SDMC has facilitated more effective decision-making (13.6 percent).

Table 5. Numbers and Percentages of Responses Describing the Benefits of SDMCs, 2006–2007 and 2008–2009

Emergent Response Category	N		Percent	
	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09
SDMC has facilitated better communication among school staff and other stakeholders.	63	152	9.3	21.5
SDMC helped the school.	214	109	31.5	15.4
SDMC has given teachers and other stakeholders a voice.	161	99	23.7	14.0
SDMC allowed for greater participation by school staff and other stakeholders.	53	99	7.8	14.0
SDMC facilitated more effective decision-making.	34	96	5.0	13.6
SDMC brought cohesion among school staff and other stakeholders.	35	50	5.1	7.1
SDMC has not benefited the school.	71	47	10.4	6.6
SDMC has given the feeling of ownership and leadership to the SDMC members.	15	10	2.2	1.4
Other	34	46	5.0	6.5
Total	680	708	100.0	101.1*

Note: Items may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding

How could the Shared-Decision-Making process be more effective?

Most of the respondents did not provide additional comments. Among those responding, 19.6 percent indicated their SDMC is “excellent” or does not need to be changed and 16.8 percent of the respondents indicated that the SDMC needed to be more open to staff and community and improve communication. The third highest response, 12.5 percent, was that the committee needed to be more open and people needed to know the process to bring up items for discussion in the SDMC.

Six specific categories emerged from the analysis of the SDMC members’ responses to the question “Additional comments you may have regarding the SDMC Committee?” **Table 6** presents the number and percent of respondents for the eight emerging categories.

Table 6. Numbers and Percentages of Responses with Additional Comments, 2008–2009

Emergent Response Category	N	Percent
No Comment, N/A, None	104	37.1
SDMC is highly efficient and productive	72	25.7
SDMC needs to be more open and increase communication	35	12.5
The Principal/District was non-supportive	26	9.3
Principal was supportive	10	3.6
SDMC needs more community/parental support	7	2.5
Other	26	9.3
Total	280	100.0

What were the perceptions of DAC members with regard to the general DAC procedures and activities, overall quality, their experiences in having served on the committee, and benefits to the district?

General DAC Procedures and Activities

Twelve of the multiple response items included on the DAC survey were statements designed to assess the members’ perceptions and experiences. A four-point Likert type scale (Too Few, Just Right, Too Many, Not Sure) was used to assess perceptions regarding DAC meetings. Of the 17 respondents, 76.5 agreed that the number of times the DAC met during the 2008–2009 school year was just right. Most of the DAC members (88.2 percent) indicated that notification of meetings was received in a timely fashion. In addition, 70.6 percent of respondents indicated that the school nomination procedures for DAC members were very fair, none indicated that the procedures were not very fair.

Overall Quality of DAC

Table 7 contains the results from the multiple response items addressing the quality of the DAC using a five-point Likert type scale (*Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, N/A*). Of the 17 respondents, 53.0 percent of the respondents judged the overall quality of DAC’s involvement in providing input for curriculum issues as *Excellent* or *Good*, while 11.8 percent indicated it was *Poor*. The majority of the respondents (64.7 percent) rated the overall quality of DAC’s involvement in providing input for district staff development waivers as *Excellent* or *Good* although 23.5 percent rated it as *Poor*. The majority of the respondents (58.8 percent) indicated that the overall quality of DAC’s involvement in providing input for budget development and recommendations was either *Excellent* or *Good*, while 23.5 percent indicated that the DAC’s involvement was *Poor*. Although the majority of these responses to these questions were positive in 2008–2009, the percentages rating the overall quality of these items *Excellent* or *Good* were higher in 2006–2007.

Table 7. Response Rates to the Overall Quality of the DAC’s Involvement, 2006–2007 and 2008–2009

Survey Items (N=18)	Percent									
	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't Know	
	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09
To provide input for curriculum issues.	44.4	41.2	16.7	11.8	22.2	29.4	11.1	11.8	5.6	5.9
To provide input for district staff development waivers.	38.9	35.3	33.3	29.4	16.7	11.8	11.1	23.5	0.0	0.0
To provide input for budget development and recommendations.	38.9	35.3	22.2	23.5	11.1	5.9	16.7	23.5	11.1	11.8

DAC Experiential/Perceptual Items

Table 8 presents the results from the items designed to assess DAC members’ perceptions and experiences. A five-point Likert scale was used as a format for these items: *Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, and Not Sure*. In 2008–2009, the majority of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with all the items with the exception of “The DAC played an important role in district-based staff development (47.0 percent). The highest percent of agreement was for feeling “very comfortable and free to express my thoughts at our DAC meetings” (93.8 percent). Of the nine items, six had decreases in the percentage agreement from

2006–2007 to 2008–2009. The largest decrease was “Our DAC accomplished a great deal in the past year,” decreasing from 77.8 to 52.9 percent.

Table 8. Response Rates to Experiential/Perceptual Items for DAC Committee Members, 2006–2007 and 2008–2009

	N		Percent									
			Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Not Sure	
	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09
Our DAC accomplished a great deal in the past year.	18	17	16.7	29.4	61.1	23.5	5.6	17.6	5.6	5.9	11.1	23.5
Our DAC was well organized and conducted in an effective manner.	18	17	61.1	47.1	33.3	35.3	5.6	5.9	0.0	5.9	0.0	5.9
My role on the DAC was clear.	18	17	27.8	29.4	61.1	52.9	5.6	11.8	0.0	0.0	5.6	5.9
I felt very comfortable and free to express my thoughts at our DAC meetings.	18	16	50.0	62.5	38.9	31.3	5.6	6.3	0.0	0.0	5.6	0.0
Our committee reached most recommendations by consensus.	18	17	38.9	41.2	38.9	29.4	5.6	11.8	0.0	11.8	16.7	5.9
The DAC meeting schedule was set at the beginning of the school year	18	16	33.3	31.3	38.9	50.0	5.6	6.3	0.0	0.0	22.2	12.5
The DAC played an important role in district-based staff development.	18	17	27.8	23.5	33.3	23.5	22.2	29.4	5.6	11.8	11.1	11.8
DAC meeting minutes were readily available to staff members and parents.	18	17	38.9	41.2	22.2	17.6	11.1	17.6	0.0	0.0	27.8	23.5
DAC meeting minutes were provided in a timely fashion.	18	17	38.9	29.4	11.1	23.5	16.7	23.5	0.0	5.9	33.3	17.6

Benefits, Suggested Improvements, and Comments on DAC

Similar to the SMDC survey, the DAC survey employed three additional open-ended questions in order to collect information about the perceptions of the DAC members. The questions allowed participating DAC members to voice their opinions about the benefits of the DAC, ways in which the district advisory committee could be made more effective, and any additional comments about the DAC. Because of the limited number of responses to the open-ended items, thematic categorical analysis was used to develop emergent categories and classify DAC members’ responses where appropriate. Otherwise, responses were briefly summarized and are discussed below.

Four categories emerged from the analysis of DAC members’ responses to the question: “How has HISD benefited from having a District Advisory Committee?” Only 14 members provided responses to this question. The results are presented in **Table 9**. The largest proportion of the respondents (50.0 percent) indicated that the DAC has facilitated better communication among school staff and other stakeholders. This represented an improvement compared to 2006–2007 when 18.2 percent noted that the DAC facilitated communication. Improved perceptions of the DAC were also indicated by the decreasing percentage of members who believed that the

DAC has not benefited the district, dropping from 36.4 percent in 2006–2007 to 21.4 percent in 2008–2009. However, there was a decrease from 2006–2007 in the sentiment that the DAC gave the teachers and other stakeholders a voice (23.3 percent to 14.3 percent).

Table 9: Numbers and Percentages of Responses Describing the Benefits of the DAC, 2006–2007 and 2008–2009

	N		Percent	
	06-07	08-09	06-07	08-09
<i>How has HISD Benefited from having a District Advisory Committee?</i>				
DAC has given teachers and other stakeholders a voice.	3	2	27.3	14.3
DAC has facilitated better communication among school staff and other stakeholders.	2	7	18.2	50.0
DAC has not benefited the district	4	3	36.4	21.4
Other	2	2	18.2	14.3
Total	11	14	100.1	100.0

Note: Items do not sum to 100 percent due to rounding

How could the District Advisory Committee process be more effective?

There were eleven responses to this item. The majority of the respondents commented that no changes were needed in the DAC process. Respondents also suggested that the DAC could be more effective by involving the committee early in the decision-making process, as well as by providing information prior to the meeting to improve discussion.

Additional comments you may have regarding the DAC?

As with the previous question, there were 11 respondents who provided additional comments on the DAC process. The majority of respondents noted that there was an absence of discussion within the committee and that members needed to feel valued.

Discussion

The Shared-Decision-Making and the District Advisory Committees at HISD were created to work to meet the individual and special needs of each school in the district by giving stakeholders the opportunity to participate in the decisionmaking process. Consequently, this biannual review of the SDMC committee process was designed to determine the perceptions of teachers, non-instructional school personnel, parents, community members, and business representatives who participated on SDMCs and the DAC during the 2008–2009 school year. The surveys were designed to allow committee members to give their opinions about general committee procedures such as school planning, training/technical assistance, and experiential/perceptual effectiveness.

In general, most responses by SDMC members were positive relative to the procedures and activities of the committee and the overall quality of the SDMC decision-making process. The committees' survey respondents overwhelmingly indicated that they had excellent involvement in providing input on school waivers. In contrast, lower ratings were received for providing input on issues such as use of discretionary funds, input on staffing patterns, communication procedures, student services, and instructional support.

The overall experiences and perceptions of SDMC members were also positive. Most members felt that their committee reached most recommendations by consensus/majority and they felt free and comfortable to express their thoughts in the meetings. Moreover, the majority

(85.0 percent) of respondents indicated that the principal supported most of the recommendations of the SDMC committee. The level of agreement increased from 2006–2007 to 2008–2009 for almost all items. Respondents also suggested that SDMCs develop a method by which the opinions of school staff and other stakeholders who are not members of the SDMC can be incorporated into the decision-making process.

With regards to the training and technical assistance received by members of the committees, most members received some form of training and indicated that they did not need further training. However, among those who indicated a need for further training, the majority requested training in site-based budgeting, staff development, curriculum, grant writing and building community support/ involvement. Additionally, all new members should receive training in the role and functions of SDMCs.

This report also presents the fifth biannual review of the DAC process. The survey was designed to allow committee members to give their opinions about general DAC procedures, planning, budget, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development, and school organization. The DAC members reported that the process was well organized and that they were very comfortable and free to express their thoughts in meetings. The uncertainty expressed in 2006–2007 about minutes not being provided in a timely manner was addressed. However, they indicated uncertainty if the DAC played an important role in district-based staff development. The level of agreement decreased from 2006–2007 to 2008–2009 for six of the nine of the items measured.

The DAC is perceived to run smoothly; however, the committee is still perceived to be under-utilized in its capacity as an advisory committee. The committee should be made up of district staff and employees and non-district members. However, the committee remains composed solely of district staff and employees and this was not the case in 2005 (Houston Independent School District, 2005). As a result, the committee lacks the input and participation of parental, community, and business partners.

Recommendations

1. To enhance the functions of the role of the SDMC and its members, all SDMC members must be provided with up-to-date and continuous training in the areas of site-based budgeting, team/consensus building, community support/involvement, and school improvement plans. Additionally, all new members should receive training in the role and functions of SDMCs.
2. The membership of the DAC should include non-HISD employees to encourage more input from the community.
3. It is recommended that the DAC be involved earlier in the decision-making process and be provided information prior to the meetings to improve discussion.
4. The SDMCs and the DAC should consider ways to allow for additional input and representation of the various departments, academies, and other stakeholders in the decision-making process, as the Texas Education Code specifies the responsibility to establish “procedures...to periodically obtain broad-based community, parent, and staff input” (TEC §11.253 (g)).

References

Houston Independent School District. (2005). Shared Decision-Making Committee and District Advisory Committee Survey Results: 2004–2005. Houston, TX: Author, Department of Research and Accountability.

Houston Independent School District. (2007). Shared Decision-Making Committee and District Advisory Committee Survey Results: 2006–2007. Houston, TX: Author, Department of Research and Accountability.

APPENDIX A

Shared-Decision Making Committee Survey 2008-2009

1. Section I: Introduction

Thank you in advance to responding for this survey about your Shared Decision -Making Committee (SDMC). State law requires that the district administer these surveys every two years. Please select your responses for each of the multiple choice questions below. In addition, please respond to short answer questions in the spaces provided in this survey. We appreciate your time and effort used to complete this survey.

1. If you are employed in the district, what is your position?

- Principal
- Classroom Teacher
- Non-Instructional Staff (e.g. clerical, cafeteria)
- Other School Based Professional Staff (e.g. Librarian, Assistant Principal, Counselor)
- Not applicable

2. If you are not employed by the district, what is your position, on the Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC)?

- Parent
- Business Partner
- Community Member
- Not Applicable

3. In what Region is your school located? (Choose one Region and fill in only the corresponding letter.)

- Alternative
- East
- South
- Central
- North
- West

4. For what school level are you serving on this SDMC?

- Elementary School
- High School
- Middle School
- Combined-level School

5. How long have you been a member of this SDMC?

- Less than a year
- 1-2 years
- More than 2 years

6. How often has your school's SDMC met during 2008–2009?

- 1-2 times per month
- Quarterly
- 3 or more times per month
- Annually/Not sure

Shared-Decision Making Committee Survey 2008-2009

7. The number of times your SDMC met during the 2008–2009 school year was:

Too few

Too many

Just right

Not sure

8. Did you receive notice of SDMC meetings in a timely fashion?

Yes

No

Not sure

9. The ten-day nomination period for elections to the SDMC is:

Too short

Too long

Just right

Not sure

10. In your opinion, how fair are the voting procedures in SDMC elections for committee members?

Very fair

Not very fair

Not sure

Somewhat fair

Not at all fair

11. In what capacity does the SDMC operate on your campus?

Advisory committee to the Principal

Decision-making entity for the campus

Advisory committee to the Principal, with approval of staff development

Not sure

Shared-Decision Making Committee Survey 2008-2009

2. Section II: Planning

Shared Decision-Making and School Planning- Using the scale below, please judge the overall "quality" of the SDMC's involvement in decisions made at your school regarding the following topics:

12. Curriculum issues

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

13. Student performance—TAKS scores, TEA Accountability Ratings, etc.

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

14. Modifications for special needs students

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

15. Student grouping patterns

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

16. School waiver requests

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

17. Alternative assessment instruments and/or methods

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

18. Budget development and recommendations

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

19. Use of discretionary campus funds

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

Shared-Decision Making Committee Survey 2008-2009

20. Input on staffing patterns

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

21. Campus-based staff development

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

22. Organization of departments or teaching teams

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

23. Communication procedures

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

24. Instructional support—library, media, technology, etc.

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

25. Student services—counseling, nursing, nutrition, etc.

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

Not involved in this topic

26. Other:

Shared-Decision Making Committee Survey 2008-2009

3. Section III: Training and Technical Assistance

Using the scale below, please indicate whether or not you have received training and/or technical assistance at any point in time in each of the following areas AND whether or not further training and/or technical assistance is needed:

27. The role of the SDMC

Received Training

No Training Received/Not Needed

Some Training Received/More Needed

Not Applicable

No Training Received/Training Needed

28. Developing School Improvement Plans

Received Training

No Training Received/Not Needed

Some Training Received/More Needed

Not Applicable

No Training Received/Training Needed

29. Team-building skills/Consensus-building

Received Training

No Training Received/Not Needed

Some Training Received/More Needed

Not Applicable

No Training Received/Training Needed

30. Site-based budgeting

Received Training

No Training Received/Not Needed

Some Training Received/More Needed

Not Applicable

No Training Received/Training Needed

31. What further SDMC training would you like?

Shared-Decision Making Committee Survey 2008-2009

4. Section IV: Organization

Considering the current school year (2008–2009), please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

32. Our SDMC accomplished a great deal in the past year.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

33. In general, all of the members of the SDMC were satisfied with the committee's work.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

34. Our principal supported the recommendations of our SDMC.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

35. Teachers at our school supported the recommendations of our SDMC.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

36. The parents at our school supported the recommendations of our SDMC.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

37. Community members in our area supported our school plan.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

38. Businesses in our community supported our school plan.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

Shared Decision Making Committee Survey 2008-2009

39. Our SDMC was well organized and conducted itself in an effective manner.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

40. My role on the SDMC was clear.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

41. It seemed that everyone on the SDMC was clear about his or her role.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

42. The level of involvement of parents on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

43. The level of involvement of community members on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

44. The level of involvement of business partners on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

45. Our SDMC was open to new ideas from non-SDMC members.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

46. Other staff members and parents were aware of the process for submitting items to the SDMC for consideration.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

Shared-Decision Making Committee Survey 2008-2009

47. I felt very comfortable and free to express my thoughts at our SDMC meetings.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

48. Our committee reached most recommendations by consensus/majority.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

49. The SDMC meeting schedule was set at the beginning of the school year.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

50. During the school year, the SDMC schedule was regularly changed.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

51. The SDMC played an important role in campus-based professional development.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

52. SDMC meeting minutes were readily available to staff members, parents, and community members.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

53. SDMC meeting minutes were provided in a timely fashion.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

54. The SDMC subcommittees met regularly.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

Shared-Decision Making Committee Survey 2008-2009

55. Other non-SDMC faculty members and parents participated through subcommittees.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

56. Our SDMC operated in the way described in our School Improvement Plan.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

57. The principal implemented the majority of the SDMC recommendations.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

Shared-Decision Making Committee Survey 2008-2009

5. Section V: Summary

Please answer the following short answer questions:

58. How has your school benefited from having a Shared Decision-Making Committee?

59. How could the Shared Decision-Making process be more effective?

60. Additional comments you may have regarding the Shared Decision-Making Committee Process:

APPENDIX B

District Advisory Committee Survey 2008-2009

Thank you in advance for responding to this survey about the HISD District Advisory Committee (DAC). State law requires that the district administer these surveys every two years. Please select your responses for each of the multiple choice questions below. In addition, please respond to short answer questions in the spaces provided in this survey. We appreciate your time and effort used to complete this survey.

1. If you are employed in the district and work in a school, what is your position?

Classroom Teacher

Other School Based Professional Staff (e.g. Librarian, Assistant Principal, Counselor)

2. If you are employed by the district, but not in a school, where are you located?

Central Office

Regional Office

3. If you are not employed by the district, what is your position on the District Advisory Committee (DAC)?

Parent

Community Member

Business Partner

4. The number of times your DAC met during the 2008–2009 school year was:

Too few

Just right

Too many

Not sure

5. Did you receive notice of DAC meetings in a timely fashion?

Yes

No

Not sure

6. In your opinion, how fair are the voting procedures in DAC elections for committee members?

Very fair

Not at all fair

Somewhat fair

Not sure

Not very fair

District Advisory Committee Survey 2008-2009

Using the scale below, please judge the overall quality of the DAC 's involvement in providing input for the following topics:

7. Curriculum issues

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

8. District staff development waivers

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

9. Budget development and recommendations

Excellent

Fair

Don't Know

Good

Poor

10. Other

District Advisory Committee Survey 2008-2009

Considering the current school year (2008–2009), please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

11. Our DAC accomplished a great deal in the past year.

- Strongly Agree Disagree Not Sure
 Agree Strongly Disagree

12. Our DAC was well organized and conducted itself an effective manner.

- Strongly Agree Disagree Not Sure
 Agree Strongly Disagree

13. My role on the DAC was clear.

- Strongly Agree Disagree Not Sure
 Agree Strongly Disagree

14. I felt very comfortable and free to express my thoughts at our DAC meetings.

- Strongly Agree Disagree Not Sure
 Agree Strongly Disagree

15. Our committee reached most recommendations by consensus/majority.

- Strongly Agree Disagree Not Sure
 Agree Strongly Disagree

16. The DAC meeting schedule was set at the beginning of the school year.

- Strongly Agree Disagree Not Sure
 Agree Strongly Disagree

17. The DAC played an important role in campus-based professional development.

- Strongly Agree Disagree Not Sure
 Agree Strongly Disagree

District Advisory Committee Survey 2008-2009

18. DAC meeting minutes were readily available to staff members, parents, and community members.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

19. DAC meeting minutes were provided in a timely fashion.

Strongly Agree

Disagree

Not Sure

Agree

Strongly Disagree

District Advisory Committee Survey 2008-2009

Please answer the following short answer questions:

20. How has HISD benefited from having a District Advisory Committee?

21. How could the District Advisory Committee process be more effective?

22. Additional comments you may have regarding the District Advisory Committee: