

June 29, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: School Board Members

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

SUBJECT: **SHARED DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE AND DISTRICT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE BIENNIAL EVALUATION: 2010–2011**

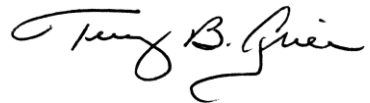
CONTACT: Carla Stevens, Research and Accountability, 713-556-6700

Attached is a copy of the 2010–2011 report of the Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC) and District Advisory Committee (DAC) Biennial Evaluation as required by the Texas Education Code (TEC §11.253, TEC §39.051). 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 2010–2011 school year.

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

- Forty-seven percent (or 1,234 members) of the estimated 2,628 SDMC committee members in the district responded to the SDMC survey and nine DAC members responded to the survey for a 17.6 percent response rate.
- When describing the SDMC, 44.5 percent of respondents indicated that it operated as a decision-making entity for the campus and 30.1 percent indicated that the operated as an advisory committee to the principal.
- Responses to all questions relating to the overall planning of the SDMC were rated good and all questions received a majority of excellent and good responses.
- Fifty-eight percent of SDMC respondents rated their involvement in the development of the new teacher appraisal system as excellent or good and 36.0 percent rated their involvement as fair or poor.
- Over half the of DAC respondents judged the "overall quality" of DAC's involvement in providing input for curriculum issues as excellent or good.

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
Chief School Officers
School Improvement Officers
Mark Smith
Carla Stevens
Sidney Zullinger

RESEARCH

Educational Program Report



Shared Decision-Making Committee and District Advisory Committee Biennial Evaluation 2010–2011



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SHARED DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE AND DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE BIENNIAL EVALUATION: 2010–2011

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 2008–2009. 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 2010–2011 school year.

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-seven percent (or 1,234 members) of the estimated 2,628 SDMC committee members in the district responded to the SDMC survey, including 1,098 HISD employees and 136 non-HISD personnel. Among the HISD employees who returned the survey, 63.3 percent were classroom teachers and 10.0 percent were principals.
 - When describing the SDMC, 44.5 percent of respondents indicated that it operated as a decision-making entity for the campus and 30.1 percent indicated that the SDMC operated as an advisory committee to the principal. The largest percentage of respondents had served 1–2 years (39.5 percent), and a lower percentage of members had served more than two years (27.4 percent). The majority of respondents answered that their SDMC met 1–2 times a month (86.1 percent) and 85.1 percent of the respondents felt that the amount of meeting times was *Just Right*. In addition, 95.3 percent of the SDMC respondents indicated that they had received notice of meetings in a timely fashion.
 - The majority of responses to all fifteen questions relating to the overall planning of the SDMC were rated *Good* and all questions received a majority of *Excellent* and *Good* responses. The percentages of *Excellent* and *Good* ratings decreased for all 14 questions included in both the 2008–2009 and 2010–2011 surveys.
 - A new question relating to the development of the new teacher appraisal system was included in the 2010–2011 survey. Fifty-eight percent rated their involvement as *Excellent* or *Good*. This item received the highest percentage of *Fair* to *Poor* ratings at 35.5 percent.
 - For open-ended responses regarding the overall quality of the SDMC’s involvement in decisions made at their school, the largest percentage (37.0 percent) of respondents cited the active involvement and effectiveness of the SDMCs in the decision-making process within schools.
 - Between 46 and 50 percent of the respondents received at least *Some Training* on the role of the SDMC, developing school improvement plans, and team/consensus building. While 34 percent of respondents received at least *Some Training* in site-based budgeting, 28.7 percent had not received any training and training was needed.
 - Experiential items with the highest percentage of rated *Strongly Agree* or *Agree* were “our committee reached recommendations by consensus/majority” (89.9 percent), “felt comfortable to express my thoughts at SDMC meetings” (88.5 percent), and “Our SDMC was well organized and conducted itself in an effective manner” (88.3 percent).
 - Of the 1,234 survey participants, 701 (56.8 percent) responses were received for the item: “How has your school benefited from having a Shared Decision-Making Committee?” The response given most often was that the SDMC facilitated better communication

among school staff and other stakeholders (19.3 percent), followed by 17.8 percent of the respondents indicating that the SDMC facilitated more effective decision making and 15.1 percent indicating that the SDMC had helped 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?

- DAC surveys were distributed to 51 members of the 2010–2011 committee. Forty-four or 86.3 percent were HISD staff members including classroom teachers, and other school-based professional staff such as librarians, assistant principals, counselors, and district administrators. The remaining seven members were parents, business partners, and community members. Subsequently, nine DAC members responded to the survey for a 17.6 percent response rate. Respondents included three teachers, three other school-based professional staff members, two non school-based staff members and one respondent who did not indicate his/her position.
- Of the eight DAC survey participants responding to the question, six agreed that the number of times the DAC met during the 2010–2011 school year was *Just Right*. All of the respondents felt that they received notice of DAC meetings in a timely fashion. In addition, four indicated that the school nomination procedures for DAC members were *Very Fair*.
- Among the DAC respondents, 62.5 percent judged the “overall quality” of DAC’s involvement in providing input for curriculum issues as *Excellent or Good* and three indicated it was *Fair*. One-half of the respondents rated the overall quality of DAC’s involvement in providing input for district staff development waivers as *Good*. The overall quality of DAC’s involvement in providing input for budget development and recommendations was rated *Good* by 62.5 percent and 37.5 percent rated this item as *Poor*.
- Seven DAC respondents provided comments to the question: “How has HISD benefited from having a District Advisory Committee?” Three mentioned that the DAC has given teachers and other stakeholders a voice, two that the DAC facilitated better communication, one that the DAC benefits the district, and one that the DAC supports board decisions.
- In 2010–2011, the majority of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the items designed to assess DAC members’ perceptions and experiences with the DAC, the effectiveness of the DAC, and their role as DAC members

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. Renewed emphasis on the overall impact and quality of the SDMCs is needed to maintain the high quality of community involvement and to reverse the decline in favorable ratings of SDMC participants.
3. Increased feedback should be encouraged from DAC members to improve survey participation and provide a more representative reflection of the committee's perceptions.

SHARED DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE AND DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE BIENNIAL EVALUATION: 2010–2011

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;
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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 2008–2009. 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 2010–2011 school year. Surveys were administered in spring 2011 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 2010–2011 school year, surveys were administered in the spring 2011. 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 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. Three 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 2,628 SDMC members in the district, there were 1,234 SDMC members (47.0 percent) who responded to the survey, including: 67 parents, 52 community members and 17 business partners not employed by HISD. Among the 1,098 HISD employees responding, 63.3 percent were classroom teachers, 10.0 percent were principals, 18.5 percent were other school-based staff (e.g. librarians, assistant principals, and counselors), and 7.9 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** (see page 7).

Of the 51 DAC members invited to take the survey, nine responded, yielding a 17.6 percent response rate. Three respondents were classroom teachers, three were other school personnel, two were non-school based employees and one did not indicate his/her position.

In addition, Table 1 shows that respondents represented all instructional levels. SDMC survey respondents represented all school levels within HISD, with 74.3 percent of respondents representing HISD elementary schools, 6.6 percent representing middle schools, 16.5 percent representing high schools, and 2.6 percent combined-level schools. The nine DAC respondents did not provide their instructional level. (**Figure 1**, see page 7).

Table 1. Number of Surveys Returned by the SDMC and DAC Members, 2010–2011 and 2008–2009

	SDMC				DAC			
	N		%		N		%	
	2008-09	2010-11	2008-09	2010-11	2008-09	2010-11	2008-09	2010-11
HISD Employee Members								
Classroom Teacher	718	693	61.0	63.3	4	3	22.2	37.5
Other School Based Professional Staff	242	203	20.5	18.5	10	3	55.6	37.5
Principal	126	109	10.7	10.0	-	-	-	-
Non-Instructional Staff	92	86	7.8	7.9	-	-	-	-
Non-School Based Staff	-	7	-	.6	4	2	22.2	25.0
Not Applicable/Unknown	-	-				1		
Total HISD Employees	1,178	1,098	100.0	100.0	18*	9	100.0	100.0
Non-HISD Employee Members	-	-			-	-	-	-
Parent	53	67	54.1	49.3	-	-	-	-
Community Member	29	52	29.6	38.2	-	-	-	-
Business Partner	16	17	16.3	12.5	-	-	-	-
Total Non-HISD Employee Members	98	136	100.0	100.0			-	-
Total	1,276	1,234			18*	9		
Instructional Level								
Elementary Schools	862	903	68.6	74.3	-	-	-	-
Middle Schools	189	80	15.0	6.6	-	-	-	-
High Schools	166	200	13.2	16.5	-	-	-	-
Combined	40	32	3.2	2.6	-	-	-	-
Total Members by Level	1,257††	1,215††	100.0	100.0	-	-	-	-
Total Respondents	1,276	1,234			17	9		

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

†† Instructional level not identified by all respondents

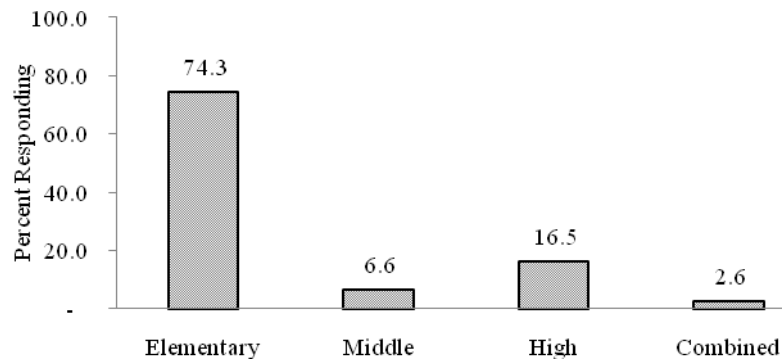


Figure 1. SDMC respondents by instructional level, 2010–2011, N=1,234.

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 2010–2011. 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 (**Table 2**, see page 9). 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 (39.5 percent) and a smaller proportion of respondents reported more than two years of membership on the SDMC (27.4 percent). The majority of respondents indicated that their SDMC met 1–2 times a month (86.1 percent) and felt that the amount of times their committee met was *Just Right* (85.1 percent). When meetings were scheduled, 95.3 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* (74.7 percent and 69.8 percent, respectively). Finally, respondents were asked in what capacity their school’s SDMC operates. The largest percentage of respondents (44.5 percent) felt that they were the decision-making entity for the campus, while 30.1 percent indicated that they were the advisory committee to the principal. These results were fairly consistent with findings from 2008–2009 (Houston Independent School District, 2009).

Table 2. Response Rates to General SDMC Procedures and Activities Questions, 2008–2009 and 2010–2011

	N				Percent					
			Less than a Year		1–2 Years		More than 2 Years			
	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11		
How long have you been a member of the SDMC?	1,248	1,200	22.0	33.1	49.9	39.5	28.0	27.4		
How often did your school’s SDMC meet during 2010–11?			1–2 times Per Month		3+ Per Month		Quarterly		Annually	
	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11
	1,247	1,201	83.2	86.1	2.2	2.3	12.8	9.8	1.8	1.7
The number of times your SDMC met was:			Too few		Just Right		Too Many		Not Sure	
	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11
	1,264	1,213	07.0	7.0	85.6	85.1	3.6	4.6	3.9	3.3
Notices of SDMC meetings received in a timely fashion?			Yes		No		Not Sure			
	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11		
	1,246	1,203	94.0	95.3	4.7	3.8	1.4	0.9		
The ten-day nomination period for elections to the SDMC is:			Too Short		Just Right		Too Long		Not Sure	
	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11
	1,261	1,215	2.0	2.2	73.8	74.7	12.8	11.5	11.4	11.6
How fair are the voting procedures in SDMC elections for committee members?			Very Fair		Somewhat Fair		Not Very Fair		Not Fair At All	
	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11
	1,264	1,214	72.2	69.8	16.7	16.0	2.4	2.0	0.9	1.3
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	
	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11	08–09	10–11
	1,262	1,218	30.3	30.1	42.4	44.5	17.6	11.8	9.7	13.5

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

Overall Quality of SDMCs

There were fifteen 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 (**Table 3**, see page 10). A new question pertaining to the development of the district’s new teacher appraisal system was added to the 2010–2011 survey. The largest percentage of responses to all of the questions were *Good*. All questions received a majority of *Excellent* and *Good* responses,

however the percentages of *Excellent* and *Good* ratings decreased for all 14 items included in both the 2008–2009 and 2010–2011 surveys. In 2008–2009, the most notable *Fair* to *Poor* responses were for questions relating to input on staffing patterns (23.0 percent), communication procedures (22.8 percent), use of discretionary campus funds (20.8 percent), student services (20.2 percent), and instructional support (20.1 percent). In 2010–2011, the most notable items with *Fair* to *Poor* responses were development of the new teacher appraisal system (35.5 percent), curriculum issues (25.9 percent), budget development (25.8 percent), modifications for special needs students (25.1 percent), and use of discretionary funds (24.9 percent).

Table 3. Response Rates to Overall Quality of SDMC's Involvement in Decision Making and School Planning Items, 2008–2009 and 2010–2011

		Percent											
N		Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't Know		Not Involved	
08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11
Student performance– TAKS scores, Texas Education Agency accountability ratings, etc.	1,225 1,183	30.9	19.1	40.2	38.0	13.9	18.4	3.0	5.7	2.5	3.7	9.6	15.0
Curriculum issues	1,221 1,182	29.6	17.3	40.1	40.5	14.7	19.1	4.4	6.8	1.6	3.0	9.5	13.3
Student grouping patterns	1,205 1,166	20.0	12.3	34.9	31.1	14.8	16.2	4.6	6.7	5.0	7.0	20.7	26.6
School waiver requests	1,207 1,175	34.9	18.4	34.6	32.0	9.2	13.5	2.2	4.0	6.4	9.5	12.8	22.6
Input on staffing patterns	1,197 1,161	21.6	12.0	33.0	31.1	15.1	14.5	7.9	8.4	4.0	6.3	18.5	27.8
Campus-based staff development	1,200 1,164	31.9	20.4	37.3	36.6	13.5	15.5	4.0	5.8	2.1	3.4	11.2	18.2
Communication procedures	1,201 1,161	32.7	25.1	36.7	39.7	17.2	15.9	5.6	5.8	1.6	2.7	6.2	10.9
Modifications for special needs students	1,219 1,175	22.0	12.7	32.4	28.5	14.1	18.0	4.9	7.1	4.3	5.5	22.2	28.3
Alternative assessment instruments and/or methods	1,206 1,169	21.0	12.1	35.4	32.7	12.4	15.4	3.7	6.2	6.2	7.8	21.3	25.8
Budget development and recommendations	1,208 1,170	30.0	19.0	36.7	35.4	13.2	19.0	6.2	6.8	3.4	3.8	10.6	16.1
Use of discretionary campus funds	1,208 1,166	26.7	16.4	33.1	30.7	13.8	17.9	7.0	7.0	6.0	6.6	13.3	21.4
Organization of departments or teaching teams	1,208 1,164	24.5	16.6	32.7	31.3	13.6	13.2	5.5	6.3	2.5	3.8	21.3	28.9
Instructional Support – library, media, technology, etc.	1,204 1,164	32.1	23.1	36.0	36.1	15.5	14.6	4.6	5.2	1.9	3.4	9.8	17.7
Student Services – counseling, nursing, nutrition, etc.	1,217 1,176	25.9	18.5	33.0	31.0	14.8	16.5	5.4	7.4	3.5	4.3	17.4	22.4
Development of the district's new teacher appraisal system*	NA 1,188	NA	20.1	NA	37.9	NA	24.6	NA	10.9	NA	6.5	NA	-

*New Question, 2010–2011

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

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 69 responses received, the largest percentage (37.0 percent) of respondents cited the involvement of the SDMCs in the development of the new teacher appraisal system. The general tone of these comments was negative and focused on the amount of time dedicated to this topic and that the SDMC had little actual input. In regard to the effectiveness of the SDMC, 16.0 percent of respondents commented that the SDMC was not effective and 4.0 percent said that it was effective. Finally, 10.0 percent mentioned that the principal needed to be more supportive.

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 (49.6 percent) received either *Training* or *Some Training* on the role of SDMC. Just under half (49.4 percent) of the respondents also received *Training* or *Some Training* in developing School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and 46.2 percent had some level of training in Team/Consensus Building. While more than a third (33.9 percent) of respondents received *Training* or *Some Training* in site-based budgeting, 28.7 percent had not received any training and were in need of training. These findings mirrored those observed in the 2008–2009 survey with the most notable exceptions being a lower percentage of respondents reporting that they had received training on the role of the SDMC in 2010–2011 (31.4 percent versus 39.8 percent), and a corresponding higher percentage in 2010–2011 reporting that they needed training on the role of the SDMC (16.1 percent versus 9.1 percent).

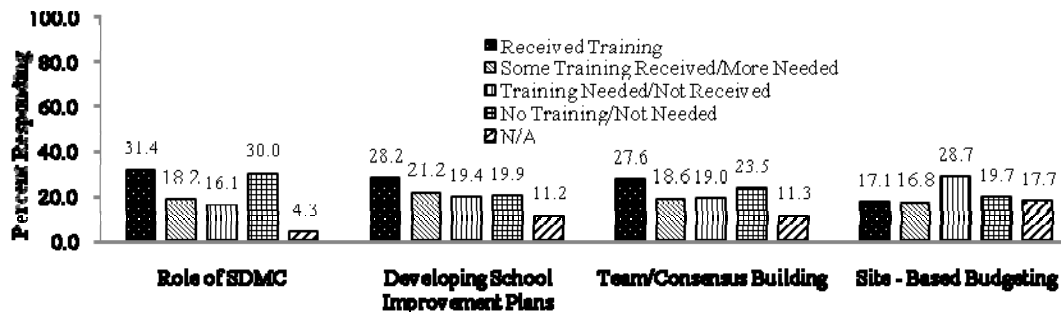


Figure 2. SDMC response rates to training and technical assistance items, 2010–2011.

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, 113 respondents answered this question. Thirty (30.0) percent of the respondents indicated that they did not need further training. Among those who indicated that they would like to receive further SDMC training, 19.0 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.

Two (2.0) percent indicated a need for on-site budgeting, and 3.0 percent requested training on how to run an effective meeting.

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**, (see page 13). 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 descending order:

- "Our committee reached most recommendations by consensus/majority," 89.9 percent;
- "I felt very comfortable and free to express my thoughts at our SDMC meetings," 88.5 percent;
- "Our SDMC was well organized and conducted itself an effective manner" 88.3 percent;
- "My role on the SDMC was clear" 87.7 percent;
- "Our principal supported most of the recommendations of our SDMC," 86.5 percent;
- "SDMC meeting minutes were provided in a timely fashion," 83.4 percent
- "It seemed that everyone on the SDMC was clear about his or her role," 82.0 percent;
- "SDMC meeting minutes were readily available to staff members, parents, and community members." 80.5 percent.

Taken as a group, these top rated items revealed that the relationship between SDMCs and their schools were strong and operated in a collaborative manner. The following items were rated as *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree* by more than 20 percent of respondents and are listed in descending order:

- "During the school year the SDMC schedule was regularly changed" 62.5 percent;
- "The SDMC played an important role in campus-based professional development" 28.7 percent;
- "The level of involvement of business partners on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right" 26.4 percent
- "Other non-SDMC faculty members and parents participated through subcommittees" 25.9 percent;
- "The level of involvement of parents on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right" 24.0 percent;
- "The level of involvement of community members on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right" 23.8 percent;
- "The SDMC subcommittees met regularly" 20.9 percent.

An examination of the aforementioned statements indicated less SDMC involvement among members who were not HISD employees. On a positive note, 62.5 percent of respondents disagreed with the statement regarding the regular changing of the SDMC schedule; thus supporting another statement where 78.8 percent of the respondents indicated that the schedule was set at the beginning of the year

Overall trends in responses were similar to those observed in the 2008–2009 survey with the following items showing the greatest differences in *Agree* and *Strongly Agree* responses.

- "The SDMC played an important role in campus-based professional development" down 9.7 percentage points in 2010–2011;
- "Other non-SDMC faculty members and parents participated through subcommittees" down 9.1 percentage points in 2010–2011;

- “The SDMC meeting schedule was set at the beginning of the school year” down 8.3 percentage points in 2010–2011;
- “During the school year, the SDMC schedule was regularly changed” up 7.9 percentage points in 2010–2011.

Table 4. Response Rates to Experiential/Perceptual Items for the SDMC Members, 2008–2009 and 2010–2011

	N		Percent									
			Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Not Sure	
	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11
Our committee reached most recommendations by consensus/majority.	1,165	1,147	39.0	41.2	49.5	48.7	5.2	3.7	2.0	2.0	4.4	4.3
I felt very comfortable and free to express my thoughts at our SDMC meetings.	1,213	1,147	41.3	43.5	45.9	45.0	7.2	6.2	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.6
Our SDMC was well organized and conducted itself an effective manner.	1,169	1,149	36.0	39.0	50.1	49.3	7.2	5.7	2.0	2.3	4.7	3.8
My role on the SDMC was clear.	1,169	1,146	35.8	35.0	50.9	52.7	7.2	6.5	2.0	2.2	4.1	3.6
Our principal supported the recommendations of our SDMC.	1,188	1,158	37.9	41.5	47.1	45.0	5.3	4.3	2.6	1.6	7.2	7.6
SDMC meeting minutes were provided in a timely fashion.	1,173	1,148	39.0	37.8	46.5	45.6	6.9	7.3	1.2	2.1	6.4	7.1
It seemed that everyone on the SDMC was clear about his or her role.	1,164	1,131	31.4	29.4	49.1	52.6	8.6	7.2	1.5	1.9	9.4	8.9
SDMC meeting minutes were readily available to staff members, parents, and community members.	1,173	1,145	38.1	36.3	45.1	44.2	4.9	5.9	1.8	2.7	10.1	10.8
Our SDMC was open to new ideas from non-SDMC members.	1,176	1,143	31.0	29.9	51.5	49.5	5.4	5.0	1.4	2.3	10.5	13.3
The SDMC meeting schedule was set at the beginning of the school year.	1,151	1,147	38.4	33.6	48.7	45.2	5.6	9.2	1.1	3.7	6.1	8.4
Teachers at our school supported the recommendations of our SDMC.	1,182	1,154	26.8	25.7	55.3	52.3	4.0	2.9	0.9	1.3	12.9	17.8
Our SDMC accomplished a great deal in the past year.	1,189	1,161	24.7	24.1	53.2	51.9	11.0	10.1	3.1	4.5	7.9	9.4

Table 4. Response Rates to Experiential/Perceptual Items for the SDMC Members, 2008–2009 And 2010–2011 (continued)

	Percent											
	N		Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Not Sure	
	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11
The principal implemented the majority of the SDMC recommendations.	1,172	1,147	28.2	29.1	49.1	45.8	9.1	8.7	2.2	2.9	11.3	13.5
In general, all of the members of the SDMC were satisfied with the committee's work.	1,191	1,161	23.2	23.6	51.1	49.4	9.2	7.1	2.2	3.4	14.4	16.5
Our SDMC operated in the way described in our School Improvement Plan.	1,179	1,150	25.5	25.2	50.6	46.4	3.5	4.2	1.6	2.3	18.7	21.9
The parents at our school supported the recommendations of our SDMC.	1,181	1,145	21.5	20.9	49.5	45.8	2.8	1.7	0.8	1.3	25.3	30.3
The level of involvement of parents on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right.	1,153	1,133	19.0	18.4	45.4	46.4	18.2	17.5	5.8	6.5	11.5	11.1
Other staff members and parents were aware of the process for submitting items to the SDMC for consideration.	1,174	1,141	19.9	19.1	47.8	43.9	9.5	9.3	2.8	5.3	20.0	22.3
Community members in our area supported our school plan.	1,164	1,133	21.5	20.0	45.5	42.5	2.0	2.0	0.8	1.5	30.2	33.9
The level of involvement of community members on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right.	1,161	1,115	17.2	17.4	42.6	44.1	18.5	17.6	5.6	6.2	16.0	14.7
The SDMC played an important role in campus-based professional development.	1,158	1,131	23.2	17.3	43.8	40.0	15.5	21.8	4.1	6.9	13.5	14.0
Businesses in our community supported our school plan.	1,168	1,137	19.2	16.3	40.5	38.7	2.3	1.9	0.6	1.7	37.4	41.4
The level of involvement of business partners on the SDMC in planning and decision-making was about right.	1,167	1,146	15.1	14.7	36.0	37.3	20.5	18.9	6.3	7.5	22.2	21.6

Table 4. Response Rates to Experiential/Perceptual Items for the SDMC Members, 2008–2009 And 2010–2011 (continued)

Percent												
N		Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Not Sure		
	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11
The SDMC subcommittees met regularly.	1,180	1,148	17.0	16.2	36.9	35.8	15.0	14.7	4.8	6.2	26.3	27.1
Other non-SDMC faculty members and parents participated through subcommittees.	1,160	1,141	10.3	9.5	37.1	28.8	15.2	18.4	5.8	7.5	31.7	35.8
During the school year, the SDMC schedule was regularly changed.	1,158	1,135	5.5	6.1	17.8	25.1	51.4	47.0	19.3	15.5	6.0	6.3
Note: Items may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding												

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 701 (56.8 percent) SDMC members providing responses to the question "How has your school benefited from having a Shared Decision Making-Committee?" **Table 5** (see page 16) presents the number and percent of respondents for the eight emerging categories. The highest category of response was that the SDMC facilitated better communication among school staff and other stakeholders (19.3 percent); followed by 17.8 percent indicating that the SDMC facilitated more effective decision making; and, 15.1 percent of the respondents indicating that the SDMC has helped the school. In comparison to 2008–2009, the greatest disparities were noted for two categories, with a *higher* percentage of respondents indicating that the SDMC facilitated more effective decision making in 2010–2011 (17.8 percent versus 13.6 percent) and a *lower* percentage indicating that the SDMC allowed for greater participation by school staff and other stakeholders (9.7 percent versus 14.0 percent).

Table 5. Numbers and Percentages of Responses Describing the Benefits of SDMCs, 2008–2009 and 2010–2011

Emergent Response Category	N		Percent	
	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11
SDMC has facilitated better communication among school staff and other stakeholders.	152	135	21.5	19.3
SDMC facilitated more effective decision-making.	96	125	13.6	17.8
SDMC helped the school.	109	106	15.4	15.1
SDMC has given teachers and other stakeholders a voice.	99	75	14.0	10.7
SDMC allowed for greater participation by school staff and other stakeholders.	99	68	14.0	9.7
SDMC has not benefited the school.	47	66	6.6	9.4
SDMC brought cohesion among school staff and other stakeholders.	50	59	7.1	8.4
SDMC has given the feeling of ownership and leadership to the SDMC members.	10	29	1.4	4.1
Other	46	38	6.5	5.4
Total	708	701	101.1*	99.9*

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

How the Shared Decision-Making process could be more effective and Additional Comments

Respondents provided 803 additional comments regarding the SDMC process and seven specific categories emerged. **Table 6** (see page 17) presents the number and percent of respondents for the seven emerging categories.

Among those responding, 25.3 percent indicated their SDMC is “highly efficient and productive” or does not need to be changed and 17.8 percent of the respondents indicated that the SDMC needed to be more open to staff and the community and improve communication. The third highest response, 12.6 percent, was that the committee needed more community/parental support. Other categories included more training on the role of SDMC members (9.5 percent); improve the scheduling of meetings (8.1 percent); the SDMC is not effective/productive (5.2 percent); and the principal was not supportive (2.4 percent).

Table 6. Numbers and Percentages of Responses with Additional Comments, 2010–2011

Emergent Response Category	N	Percent
SDMC is highly efficient and productive	203	25.3
SDMC needs to be more open and increase communication	143	17.8
SDMC needs more community/parental support	101	12.6
More training on role of SDMC members	76	9.5
Improve scheduling of meetings	65	8.1
SDMC is not effective/productive	42	5.2
Principal was supportive	19	2.4
Other	154	19.2
Total	803	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?

The following analysis is based on the responses of nine individuals and should be reviewed

with caution regarding any generalizations to DAC members as a whole.

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 eight respondents to this question, six agreed that the number of times the DAC met during the 2010–2011 school year was *Just Right* and two felt that there were *Too Many* meetings. All of the DAC members responding indicated that notification of meetings was received in a timely fashion. In addition, four respondents indicated that the school nomination procedures for DAC members were *Very Fair*, two indicated that they were *Somewhat Fair*, one respondent indicated that the procedures were *Not at all Fair*, and one was *Not Sure*.

Overall Quality of DAC

Table 7 (see page 18) 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, Don't Know*). Of the eight respondents, 62.5 percent of the respondents judged the overall quality of DAC's involvement in providing input for curriculum issues as *Excellent* or *Good*, while 37.5 percent indicated it was *Fair*. The majority of the respondents (50.0 percent) rated the overall quality of DAC's involvement in providing input for district staff development waivers as *Good* and 25.0 percent rated it as *Poor*. The majority of the respondents (62.5 percent) indicated that the overall quality of DAC's involvement in providing input for budget development and recommendations was *Good*, while 37.5 percent indicated that the DAC's involvement was *Poor*. Finally, the majority of respondents (87.5 percent) indicated that the DAC's involvement in the development of the new teacher appraisal system was *Excellent* or *Good*.

Table 7. Response Rates to the Overall Quality of the DAC's Involvement, 2008–2009 and 2010–2011

Survey Items (N=8 for 2010–2011)	Percent									
	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't Know	
	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11
To provide input for curriculum issues.	41.2	25.0	11.8	37.5	29.4	37.5	11.8	0.0	5.9	0.0
To provide input for district staff development waivers.	35.3	0.0	29.4	50.0	11.8	0.0	23.5	25.0	0.0	25.0
To provide input for budget development and recommendations.	35.3	0.0	23.5	62.5	5.9	0.0	23.5	37.5	11.8	0.0
Development of the district's new teacher appraisal system*	NA	37.5	NA	50.0	NA	0.0	NA	12.5	NA	0.0

* New question 2010–2011

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

DAC Experiential/Perceptual Items

Table 8 (see page 18) 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 2010–2011, the majority of respondents (50 percent plus) either strongly agreed or agreed with all the items and 100 percent agreed that the DAC had accomplished a great deal in the past year, that the DAC was

well organized and conducted in an effective manner, and that their role as a DAC member was clear. Of the nine items, seven had increases in the percentage agreement from 2008–2009 to 2010–2011. The only decreases noted were “I felt very comfortable and free to express my thoughts at our DAC meetings,” decreasing from 93.8 to 87.5 percent and “The DAC meeting schedule was set at the beginning of the school year,” decreasing from 81.3 to 77.7 percent.

Table 8. Response Rates to Experiential/Perceptual Items for DAC Members, 2008–2009 and 2010–2011

	N		Percent									
			Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Not Sure	
	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11
Our DAC accomplished a great deal in the past year.	17	9	29.4	55.6	23.5	44.4	17.6	0.0	5.9	0.0	23.5	0.0
Our DAC was well organized and conducted in an effective manner.	17	9	47.1	33.3	35.3	66.7	5.9	0.0	5.9	0.0	5.9	0.0
My role on the DAC was clear.	17	9	29.4	33.3	52.9	66.7	11.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.9	0.0
I felt very comfortable and free to express my thoughts at our DAC meetings.	16	8	62.5	50.0	31.3	37.5	6.3	0.0	0.0	12.5	0.0	0.0
Our committee reached most recommendations by consensus.	17	9	41.2	44.4	29.4	44.4	11.8	11.1	11.8	0.0	5.9	0.0
The DAC meeting schedule was set at the beginning of the school year	16	9	31.3	33.3	50.0	44.4	6.3	11.1	0.0	0.0	12.5	11.1
The DAC played an important role in district-based staff development.	17	8	23.5	25.0	23.5	25.0	29.4	25.0	11.8	25.0	11.8	0.0
DAC meeting minutes were readily available to staff members and parents.	17	9	41.2	66.7	17.6	11.1	17.6	0.0	0.0	11.1	23.5	11.1
DAC meeting minutes were provided in a timely fashion.	17	9	29.4	66.7	23.5	22.2	23.5	11.1	5.9	0.0	17.6	0.0

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.

In response to the question: “How has HISD benefited from having a District Advisory Committee?” only seven members provided responses. The results are presented in **Table 9** (see page 19). Three indicated that the DAC has increased stakeholder voice and involvement; two felt that the DAC has facilitated better communication and information sharing; one cited the fact that the DAC facilitated greater involvement of teachers; one mentioned that the DAC input supports school board decisions; and, one felt that the DAC has benefited the district (no specific reason cited).

Table 9: Numbers and Percentages of Responses Describing the Benefits of the DAC, 2008–2009 and 2010–2011

	N		Percent	
	08-09	10-11	08-09	10-11
DAC has given teachers and other stakeholders a voice.	2	3	14.3	42.9
DAC has facilitated better communication among school staff and other stakeholders.	7	2	50.0	28.6
DAC has not benefited the district	3	0	21.4	0.0
DAC input supports board decisions	0	1	0.0	14.3
DAC has benefited the district	0	1	0.0	0.0
Other	2	0	14.3	14.3
Total	14	7	100.0	100.1

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

How the DAC Process Could Be More Effective

There were six responses to this item. Three of the respondents commented that the DAC process was very effective; two mentioned a need for broader representation; and, one indicated that the DAC should have a more active role in decision making.

Additional Comments Regarding the DAC

Only two respondents provided additional comments on the DAC process. One mentioned that meetings ran too late in the evening and one felt that participating members should be compensated for attending meetings.

Discussion

The Shared Decision-Making and the District Advisory Committees at HISD were created to meet the individual and special needs of each school in the district by giving stakeholders the opportunity to participate in the decision making process. Consequently, this biennial 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 2010–2011 school year and is required by state laws. The surveys were designed to allow committee members to voice 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. Over 50 percent of survey respondents indicated that they had excellent to good involvement in providing input on communication procedures, development of the new teacher appraisal system, curriculum issues, student performance, campus based staff development, instructional support, school waivers, and budget development. Although the quality-related ratings were positive, decreases were evident compared to the 2008–2009 survey. While 58 percent rated their involvement in the development of the new teacher appraisal system as *good* or *excellent*, 36 percent rated their involvement on this topic as *fair* or *poor*. Two items, modifications for special needs students and student performance were rated as *fair* or *poor* by at least 25 percent of the respondents.

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 (86.5 percent) of respondents indicated that the principal supported most of the recommendations of the SDMC committee. The level of agreement increased from 2008–2009 to 2010–2011 for 11 of 28 items.

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. Additionally, all new members should receive training in the role and functions of SDMCs.

This report also presents the sixth biennial 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. Only nine members responded to the survey. 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 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 was made up of district staff and employees and non-district members. However, survey responses were only received from district staff and employees and this was not the case in 2005 (Houston Independent School District, 2005). As a result, it appears 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. Renewed emphasis on the overall impact and quality of the SDMCs is needed to maintain the high quality of community involvement and to reverse the decline in favorable ratings of SDMC participants.
3. Increased feedback should be encouraged from DAC members to improve survey participation and provide a more representative reflection of the committee's perceptions.

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

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)
- ☐ Non-School Based HISD Employee
- ☐ 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. For what school level are you serving on this SDMC?

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

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

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

5. How often has your school's SDMC met during 2010–2011?

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

6. The number of times your SDMC met during the 2010–2011 school year was:

- ☐ Too few
- ☐ Too many
- ☐ Just right
- ☐ Not sure

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

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

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

- ☐ Too short ☐ Too long
☐ Just right ☐ Not sure

9. 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

10. 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

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:

11. Development of the district's new teacher appraisal system

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Excellent | <input type="radio"/> Fair | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="radio"/> Good | <input type="radio"/> Poor | |

12. Curriculum issues

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Excellent | <input type="radio"/> Fair | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="radio"/> Good | <input type="radio"/> Poor | <input type="radio"/> Not involved in this topic |

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

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Excellent | <input type="radio"/> Fair | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="radio"/> Good | <input type="radio"/> Poor | <input type="radio"/> Not involved in this topic |

14. Modifications for special needs students

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Excellent | <input type="radio"/> Fair | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="radio"/> Good | <input type="radio"/> Poor | <input type="radio"/> Not involved in this topic |

15. Student grouping patterns

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Excellent | <input type="radio"/> Fair | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="radio"/> Good | <input type="radio"/> Poor | <input type="radio"/> Not involved in this topic |

16. School waiver requests

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Excellent | <input type="radio"/> Fair | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="radio"/> Good | <input type="radio"/> Poor | <input type="radio"/> Not involved in this topic |

17. Alternative assessment instruments and/or methods

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Excellent | <input type="radio"/> Fair | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="radio"/> Good | <input type="radio"/> Poor | <input type="radio"/> Not involved in this topic |

18. Budget development and recommendations

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Excellent | <input type="radio"/> Fair | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="radio"/> Good | <input type="radio"/> Poor | <input type="radio"/> Not involved in this topic |

19. Use of discretionary campus funds

☐ Excellent

☐ Fair

☐ Don't Know

☐ Good

☐ Poor

☐ Not involved in this topic

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:

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

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Received Training | <input type="radio"/> No Training Received/Not Needed |
| <input type="radio"/> Some Training Received/More Needed | <input type="radio"/> Not Applicable |
| <input type="radio"/> No Training Received/Training Needed | |

28. Developing School Improvement Plans

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Received Training | <input type="radio"/> No Training Received/Not Needed |
| <input type="radio"/> Some Training Received/More Needed | <input type="radio"/> Not Applicable |
| <input type="radio"/> No Training Received/Training Needed | |

29. Team-building skills/Consensus-building

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Received Training | <input type="radio"/> No Training Received/Not Needed |
| <input type="radio"/> Some Training Received/More Needed | <input type="radio"/> Not Applicable |
| <input type="radio"/> No Training Received/Training Needed | |

30. Site-based budgeting

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Received Training | <input type="radio"/> No Training Received/Not Needed |
| <input type="radio"/> Some Training Received/More Needed | <input type="radio"/> Not Applicable |
| <input type="radio"/> No Training Received/Training Needed | |

31. What further SDMC training would you like?

4. Section IV: Organization

Considering the current school year (2010–2011), 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.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

34. Our principal supported the recommendations of our SDMC.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

38. Businesses in our community supported our school plan.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> 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

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

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

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

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, what is your position?

- ☐ Classroom Teacher
- ☐ Other School Based Professional Staff (e.g. Librarian, Assistant Principal, Counselor)
- ☐ Non-School Based

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

- ☐ Parent ☐ Community Member ☐ Business Partner

3. The number of times your DAC met during the 2010-2011 school year was:

- ☐ Too few ☐ Just right
- ☐ Too many ☐ Not sure

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

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

5. 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

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

6. Development of the district's new teacher appraisal system

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Excellent | <input type="radio"/> Fair | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="radio"/> Good | <input type="radio"/> Poor | |

7. Curriculum issues

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Excellent | <input type="radio"/> Fair | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="radio"/> Good | <input type="radio"/> Poor | |

8. District staff development waivers

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Excellent | <input type="radio"/> Fair | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="radio"/> Good | <input type="radio"/> Poor | |

9. Budget development and recommendations

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Excellent | <input type="radio"/> Fair | <input type="radio"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="radio"/> Good | <input type="radio"/> Poor | |

10. Other

Considering the current school year (2010–2011), 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.

- | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | |

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

13. My role on the DAC was clear.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree | <input type="radio"/> Disagree | <input type="radio"/> Not Sure |
| <input type="radio"/> Agree | <input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree | |

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

☐ Strongly Agree

☐ Disagree

☐ Not Sure

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly Disagree