Principal Ad Hoc Meeting Minutes
December 5, 2012
7:30-9:00 a.m.

Welcome
Dr. Grier greeted the principals and thanked them for their work. Dr. Grier then informed the principals that he would be going to the board to ask for approximately four million dollars to fund the purchasing of additional laptop carts. The district has already purchased and distributed 159 laptops carts. The new laptop carts will be geared towards schools with large numbers of Tier II and Tier III students.

Update: On Thursday, December 13, 2012, the HISD Board of Education approved the request to fund $5,708,860.50 to procure an additional 122 carts on wheels of 30 laptops each and 30 carts on wheels of 15 laptops each to selected schools based on the number of Tier 2 and Tier 3 students identified in each school based on student performance on the i-Station Reading Universal Screener.

Agenda Items Presented:
1. Proposed Model Lesson Design
Dr. Julie Baker shared examples of the new exemplary units to be created by the Curriculum Department. Curriculum will work with a team of teachers to create the exemplar Units of Instruction for identified skills that are difficult to teach or challenging for students to learn. The team, led by the curriculum managers, will be comprised of highly qualified teachers.

The units will be based on the HISD curriculum planning guides and scope & sequence documents. The team will also be building out the curriculum to other subject areas. In all, there will be 160 exemplar units. Eighty units will be rolled out in February for the coming spring semester and the other eighty units will follow in May or June.

Attachments:
- PPT Exemplar Unit Presentation for Principals AdHoc Meeting
- List of Teachers Writers who have been identified to work on and/or are currently working on the Curriculum units/lessons
- List of Exemplar Units to be developed

2. Professional Development
The Professional Development department will offer trainings during the Winter Break. Teachers that attend will be compensated.

January 3 & 4, 2013
- ***"Just in Time Curriculum Training: Getting Ahead and Starting 2013 Strong!"***
  - ○ 8:30 -3:30 p.m. at the Ryan Professional Development Center.
- Secondary Reading Initiative Holiday Trainings
  - ○ 8:00-3:30 p.m. *Text Complexity* at Neuhaus Education Center
  - ○ 8:00-3:30 p.m*. Advanced LANGUAGE! Training* at Hattie Mae White

3. Leadership Development Focus
Josephine Rice presented the focus for the Leadership Development Department.

In September 2010, the Superintendent of Schools tasked the Leadership Development Department with developing a grow-our-own model for leadership development. In taking on the challenge to develop an internal program, the department researched grow-your-own models from the across the country. Additionally, members of the district leadership spent two days in Maryland studying the Montgomery County Public School model. Montgomery County runs a successful grow-your-own program that has been existence for over 20 years. This year, approximately 88% of new principals hired this year were internal candidates.

Since the initial year of implementation, the department has:
- Created a long-term, high-quality induction program for new administrators. The model includes cohort learning, job embedded learning and mentoring.
- Developed a Leadership Development Team (LDT) model which relies on Central Office personnel to support and develop new administrators. The LDT model ensures new administrators are focused on student achievement.
- Established high-quality partnerships with external providers who assist with principal leadership development. The partners include Rice University, The University of Texas and the University of Saint Thomas. A new partnership with the University of Houston will launch in June, 2013.
- Designed and implemented a school-based leadership fast-track model and an intensive four-week induction model for new administrators. New and aspiring administrators received over 100 hours of professional development.
- Developed and implemented a School Leadership Academy designed to prepare teacher leaders who are already certified and aspire to become campus administrators.

Present
- Currently the department supports approximately 284 district employees who are enrolled in various development programs. These include 38 first-time principals, 79 first-time assistant principals, 78 aspiring administrators who are enrolled in principal preparation programs, 25 teacher leaders and over 80 Central Office employees who participate in the LDT process.
- Additional targeted training on Lessons from File Review will be offered in December, 2012 and January, 2013. The courses are designed specifically for new principals who have never experienced File Review, School Chiefs, School Support Officers and principals.
- Over 20 new workforce development courses will be offered in the spring, 2013. These courses include topics like: Project Management, Lead Like a Champion, The Special Education Administrator, Intervention Assistance Teams that Succeed, Meetings that Matter, Effective Meetings, and Improving Communication Skills.

Future
Leadership Development will have a new, broader focus on workforce development. Traditionally, Leadership Development has targeted its efforts on academic leadership. The leadership development focus will expand to include non-academic strands. Human Resources/Leadership Development is also leading a planning effort to conduct workforce planning designed to identify with the greatest precision possible what the district's workforce should look like in the future. The workforce focus groups have been meeting. The immediate charge for the Human Resources Department is to identify the competencies, knowledge and

skills needed by current employees to be successful in their jobs and to design training and development opportunities that will meet their needs.

Dr. Grier opened the floor for principal concerns:

1. Why do computers orders take two or more months?

Response: Arnie Viramontes, Chief Technology Officer, explained that the vendor is going through a model change now as oppose to the summer. The computers must be reimaged and software loaded before they are sent to the schools.

2. What latitude does the principal have when parents, who habitually come to school to check out their children early, call HISD police to state the school will not release their child?

Response: Dr. Grier stated that principals are in control of their school and their students. He recommended that all principals work with their school parents, guardians, stakeholders, etc. so that they may understand the potential learning that is lost when students are picked up early. Dr. Grier gave examples of how one of his schools changed what was taught at critical times during the day to make it unappealing for students to be checked out early.

Additionally, the police department has provided the following response:

- After consulting with the Harris County District Attorney's Office, Juvenile Division, they have reported that there is no legal reason for a principal not to release child unless there is a criminal investigation or Children's Protective Services has been called concerning the welfare of the child.
- HISD Legal has reported there are no known mandates or instructions from TEA that advocate principals not releasing a child to a parent.

The HISD Police Department fully supports and understands the need for students to remain in school for a proper education. When a principal refuses to release a child to an authorized parent or guardian and the parent calls the police department for recourse, it places the officer in a potential confrontational situation. When faced with this circumstance, a police officer cannot agree with the principal about not releasing the child. If the officer sides with the principal in this situation, the officer is placed in a position to face potential Official Oppression Charges. This occurs when an officer acts under their authority as a police officer to enforce an issue that is not a crime or is in actuality a "House Rule". The Police Department is available to meet with all parties concerned to discuss options to help control these situations.

Ad Hoc Concerns for the December Meeting

1. **Conflicts in schedules-** Every year, principals are promised not to be pulled so much from our buildings. Departments are not talking to each other in terms of scheduling training (Testing, Vanguard, Magnet, etc.).

Response: Central Office will continue to work on ensuring that meetings, trainings, activities, etc. are kept to a minimum and only what is critical and pertinent to all school staff. Calendars

will be synchronized in order to avoid duplication of events and double booking days and/or staff members.

2. **Initiatives:** We were told there would be no new initiatives this year. We've been overwhelmed (and our teachers) with iStation and other new things this year.

Response: The purpose of the Formative Assessment Initiative (Istation, Think Through Math, and EdPlan) is to give teachers the tools they need to be more effective in their instructional delivery. Istation and Think Through Math allow teachers to progress monitor and differentiate instruction. EdPlan offers teachers standard-based assessment items that will help them gauge student progress. Teacher feedback indicates that teachers are embracing these tools and consider them timesavers.

3. **2013-2014 School Calendar**: The District should request a waiver from TEA to begin the 2013-2014 school year one week earlier (August 19).

Response: The calendar committee has received input from various groups including teachers, principals, parents, community members, and other stakeholders. Based on the input and feedback received, the calendar committee will bring to the Board a proposed 2013-2014 school calendar which would allow for the teachers to come back to school one week earlier thus allowing the district one week for district wide training and one week for campus-based training, activities, etc.

- Will schools be able to request a waiver for an Alternate School Week (weekly early dismissals) to meet with PLCs?

Response: The administration plans to secure approval for schools to request an Altered School Day waiver. This waiver would allow schools to extend their school hours four days and release the students early one day a week thus allowing schools to conduct professional development and/or PLC activities once a week.

4. **I-Station Technology.** How were schools selected to receive additional laptop carts to help support the implementation for I-Station and other technology initiatives?

Response: Schools were selected based on the number of Tier 2 and Tier 3 students identified in each school based on student performance on the i-Station Reading Universal Screener.

5. **Technology:** Orders for new computers are not being filled by the vendors.

Response: The district was going through a desktop and laptop model transition in October which normal occurs in August before school starts. All outstanding orders that were placed in October will be delivered by the end of next week. If there is one you would like for us to follow up on we would love to help here. UPDATE: Netsync has confirmed that the installations will be completed by Friday of this week.

6. **Test Materials:**
   1. The district's test materials distribution is a major problem. Testing was delayed because school did not receive the additional three test booklets.

Response: The order shortages were the result of a shipping error that occurred at Pearson and was compounded when Pearson's commitments to state programs slowed down their response time. The TMC was attempting to fill what orders it could with supplies on-hand, but they, too, had to rely on the vendor to get additional materials.

The department took the following steps if late orders impacted a campus:
- Offered campuses with late orders additional test days, if more time was needed (with the two week window, this did not affect everyone equally); and
- Advised campuses to administer the tests to students for which they had materials and test the others as make-ups.

The department will get clearance from Advanced Academics Dept. to extend the two week K window to three weeks; however, this may not be feasible if we move testing into January.

2. There is no real security the way the Stanford and Aprenda materials were delivered to schools.

Response: The security protocols are the same protocols as in previous years. Because the vendor ships materials directly to campuses *via* a commercial carrier, it is not possible to require drivers to deliver to specific people (principals or CTC's). If we were to require this, it would cause major delivery rescheduling problems. At training, the department does recommend to campuses that they notify their staffs of the procedures to follow when materials are expected from a commercial delivery service.

The only alternatives would be to (a) deliver all materials to the TMC and have campuses pick up their shipments or (b) receive the materials at the TMC and have them shipped *via* HISD delivery services directly to the identified staff. Both options have been used in the past and had mixed success, but we will explore them as options.

3. EOC testing for December has been unorganized and no leadership shown by the district – especially testing.

Response: The department can and will do everything it can to accommodate the needs of campuses, so the department respectfully requests some specific examples of our shortcoming in this regard. Unfortunately, if it is an issue related to our state-program shipping schedules, the department must comply with TEA directives. The department can and does work with individual campuses to try and accommodate special circumstances. Please let us know what specific issues there are and we will address those promptly.

7. Principal Contracts: What rubric was used to give principals a 2 or 3 year contract?

Response: Principal contracts were determined by the Chief School Officers using current and historical student performance data.

8. Principal appraisal instrument: There is concern about the Principal appraisal instrument and the lack of consistent communication going out to Principals.

Response: Board policy AE(LOCAL), *Educational Philosophy,* serves as the district's mission statement and outlines the comprehensive goals for the District commonly referred to as the "Board Monitoring System." At the December 2012 Board of Education (BOE) meeting, revisions were proposed to this policy with second reading anticipated to be at the upcoming January 17, 2013 meeting. The principal appraisal instrument will reflect the metrics contained within on the new Board Monitoring System. Once the Board Monitoring System is approved, the final principal appraisal instrument will be released.

9. **EVAAS**: An explanation is needed for teachers who score 90th percentile on Stanford and yet show negative growth by the magic EVAAS formula that converts 2nd grade Stanford to 3rd grade STAAR.

Response: Students' percentiles as determined by their actual test scores on the Stanford test are a measure of student achievement. While this is a useful and important benchmark for comparing how HISD's students' actual test scores rank compared to students across the nation, value-added analysis is measuring a different concept in student growth. It is entirely possible for high achieving students to continue to have high academic achievement and yet not have made much growth in a given year; conversely, it is possible for students with low prior achievement to continue to not meet standards, yet make more growth than the average student in the district.

Student growth or progress is estimated by comparing a student group's current performance (NCE current year) to their performance last year (updated mean NCE prior year). State test data from TAKS, STAAR, Stanford, and Aprenda scores are all converted to Normal Curve Equivalents (NCE) and anchored to the current state test distribution for each year. This enables value added scores to be tied to a stable and consistent scale. All of the 3rd grade students' progress in reading and math is being measured based on the Stanford in 1st and 2nd grade to the STAAR test in 3rd grade, with all of their test data informing each student's academic starting point in the analysis and therefore, each student's expected growth. So all 3rd grade teachers are being measured on the same scale of growth with the same standardized tests and the same chance to demonstrate progress with their students in their same grade and subject.

10. **Measures and Goals Worksheet:** How can we see if the Measures and Goals worksheets have been set up correctly?

Response: The measures worksheet has been set up so that the system doesn't allow for misalignment of measures (although this is a work in progress and we are fixing issues as they come to our attention). A review of the measures assignment worksheet can be made in comparison to the guidance document attached here which is posted on the ETI website (*Student Performance Measures by Core Subject* document under the Student Performance resources section). If either the measures assignment or goals worksheet is not completed with the right kind of information or has blanks, the system will not let it go forward. However, as for the accuracy of the data entered, it would be up to the appraiser and the principal to review or spot check the worksheets to make sure that the rosters seem correct, and the starting points and targets seem appropriate. Since this is a subjective process, there are not "right" answers, only appropriate ones for the students and the teacher. Attached is the Supplemental Guidance

for Students' Progress document that was created to assist appraisers and teachers in setting the starting points and goals for some of the students' progress measures. Principals have access to the worksheets for review.

Attachments:
- Supplemental Guidance for Students' Progress Final
- Measures by Grade Level Revised 10-4-12

11. EdPlan: EdPlan, the new testing system, is not as effective as Campus Online. There are many problems with the benchmarks and there was no support from the curriculum department. For example 3rd grade math test.

Response: The Curriculum Department always stands ready to address any campus concerns about benchmarks or any other curriculum issues. The reliability and predicative value of the benchmark assessments have been documented by psychometrics and reviewed by the Curriculum Dept. The third-grade math assessment was aligned to STAAR and reflects the rigor of the assessment. Dana Enriquez, the elementary math manager, received one email regarding the amount of reading on the third-grade math assessment. She responded promptly. To further support campuses, on December 3, Dana Enriquez and TDS offered a professional training to review the grade 3 math assessment. Over 100 schools were represented. Teachers deconstructed the assessment items and developed new items to use to support and develop students' conceptual understandings.

Presently, EdPlan has not been fully implemented. We are in the middle of the second of three phases. Many district users are not yet trained on the system. However, we have not received any feedback from the campuses that have attended training that EdPlan is not effective and that they prefer Campus Online.

12. NNAT: Five year olds are not ready for Stanford and NNAT in December. Students need the extra time for their maturity to increase in order for them to sit still long enough to take the tests. Additionally, the tests should not be given at the same time.

Response: The department appreciates this concern and has tried to find the best window that meets the needs of campuses and Advanced Academics for GT identification. Please note that:

o **Before this year and for the last 12 years, the NNAT for K and 5 had been administered in October/November.** Both departments, Student Assessment and Advanced Academics, thought that a moving the NNAT to December would help address the K age concerns. Student Assessment will continue to address the scheduling with Advanced Academics to see if it is feasible to move it into the spring. However, it should be noted, that this will have an impact on any decision to move the Kindergarten Stanford window into that same period.

o **Kindergarten Stanford/Aprenda testing windows have even greater time constraints**. Campus had raised concerns previously about testing too early in January, so district tried testing in mid-to late January which would also meet the GT identification March deadlines. However, the vendor was frequently challenged to get results back in time. Nevertheless, the department will review the option of moving K testing back into January.

o The department requests and gets approval from Advanced Academics before any GT testing window is scheduled, and both departments mistakenly thought that combining the windows would make it easier for campuses. This was a mistake, and we will solicit options from campuses to find a more workable schedule next year.

13. Professional Development: What is the policy for PD trips for school personnel?

Response: Policy states that travel needs to go through SAP and that "The administrator with budget authority has the responsibility of approving all requests via Travel Workflow." The Travel Workflow automatically routes certain travel forms for approval at the SIO/Chief level. Administration has added the requirement for further approval levels as a added safeguard. Any travel outside Texas comes for approval to the School Offices and any travel by a principal comes for approval by the SIO and the School Chief. All travel procedures are currently under review; however the process stated above is now in place.

14. Central Office Contacts: Can we get a sheet of the managers of all the departments?

Response: On the homepage, click on Departments -- when that page pops up, there is a graphic to the right that says "Who does what?" When you click on it, it takes you to the departments and the names and phone numbers of those in charge. An Academic Service Memo was sent out on November 12th to principals. Principals have the option of printing it out as well.
        http://dept.houstonisd.org/connect/Department_Directory%2011%205%2012.pdf

15. Magnet: We spent all last year telling the parents that the STAAR test would not count; now, the middle schools are using them to qualify for Magnet.

Response:
All of our middle school magnet programs qualify students based on one of the following four matrices: the Middle School Fine Arts matrix, the Middle School STEM matrix, the Middle School Language Matrix, or the Vanguard Matrix. The following details how the STAAR is used on each matrix:
- **MS Fine Arts Matrix**: STAAR scores are not used at all to qualify
- **MS STEM Matrix**: A student's STAAR scores _or_ Stanford scores will be used, whichever advantages the   student the most
- **MS Language Matrix**: A student's STAAR scores _or_ Stanford scores will be used, whichever advantages the student the most
- **MS Vanguard Matrix**: STAAR Scores are not used to qualify

As you can see, the inclusion of students' STAAR scores can only help students qualify. It cannot hurt them. In fact, not including STAAR scores on magnet matrices would disadvantage all students who performed better on the STAAR than they did on the Stanford. It would limit their opportunities to fulfill the promise of school choice in HISD.

16. Food Services: How are the balances from food services being handled?

Response: Federal regulations require Food Services to process Free/Reduced meal applications within 10 days of receipt. As a result of specific efforts to improve the process, Food Services have been able to process applications faster than the required timeframe. As of the week of October 8, all new applications were being processed within 24 hours of receipt. Following is a timeline of efforts to continually improve the processing time:

Timeline
- Week of Sept. 17
  - Added 10 additional temporary employees to speed up application processing
- Week of Sept. 24
  - Extended application processing shifts to 7 a.m. - 11 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and also added a four-hour shift on Sunday.
  - Developed a "daily productivity report" to track processing by individual employee against established daily goals
  - Hand-delivered reports to every school indicating "students without an application" and "students dropping at end of grace period"
  - Daily staff member visits to Central Warehouse to retrieve applications sent via interoffice mail
- Week of October 1
  - All HISD households received a School Messenger phone reminder to complete a meal application; this call occurred weekly in October
  - Principals received template letters/phone scripts to help encourage households to apply
- Week of October 8 - Present
  - Any new applications are typically processed within one day of receipt.

Regarding outstanding balances, HISD published guidance in 2011 to address the collection of unpaid student meal balances.

Attachment:
- *"HISD Guidance on Unpaid Student Meal Balances"*