



## School Board Meeting July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010

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### *Issue Brief*

During the School Board Retreat on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010, School Board members and Division leaders identified priority areas for the “next generation” innovations to support our graduates of 2023. Participants engaged in brainstorming and visioning exercises resulting in five key “change challenge” categories as follows:

- *Change Challenge Category 1: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teaching and Learning*
- *Change Challenge Category 2: Redefining Learning Spaces*
- *Change Challenge Category 3: Human Capital Management*
- *Change Challenge Category 4: Funding and Resources*
- *Change Challenge Category 5: Continuous Improvement*

At the School Board Work Session on June 24<sup>th</sup>, Board members were scheduled to participate in three breakout sessions aligned with the five change challenge categories identified during the School Board Retreat. Following severe storm conditions in the Charlottesville area, the Board work sessions on June 24<sup>th</sup> were cancelled due to power outages in the County Office Building and difficult driving conditions in the surrounding areas. In order to capture input from stakeholders prior to July 8<sup>th</sup>, the Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Systems Planning hosted three conference calls to capture input from those originally scheduled to participate in the work sessions.

Following is a summary of stakeholder feedback the three conference calls as well as key recommendations for School Board consideration in the Strategic Planning process.

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### *Summary of Feedback*

#### **Conference Call 1 (Goal 1 & Goal 2)**

*Change Challenge Category 1: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teaching and Learning*

*Change Challenge Category 2: Redefining Learning Spaces*

**Participants:** Debbie Collins, Kim Cousins, Becky Fisher, Billy Haun, Lin Hill

**Input from Participants:**

- Pedagogical, Technical and Content knowledge (TPACK) - Overlapping Circles – Focus used to be on Pedagogy and Content Knowledge was secondary. Highly qualified is on content knowledge. Need to add third circle (Can you use technology as an accelerator?). Research about what is flipping schools are the *hybrid* models. Not just one or the other, but classes meeting both virtually and in regular buildings. May have more of a college type schedule. In classrooms some, virtual some. Would Blackboard or Moodle be a potential learning space?
- Some teachers participated in “e-teacher” series. The experience, although done online, was pedagogically so far in the past, it was unreal. It was a mess. Thinks a hybrid would have been better. Good practice is good practice whether online or not. We need to jump on the boat and say that at least all kids take one online class. This will prepare them for what they will experience. Need to get them ready to learn as adults online. They need practice to do this.
- What if we don't learn that way?
- That's where hybrid comes in to play.
- If teacher develops an FQL unit and posts to SchoolNet, are they in a better place in meeting needs than they would be otherwise?
- Posting it does not make it better. Need professional development. We need to beat the bushes until we find good online professional development as a model for what works.
- How would we know if we were making progress towards this?
- Still struggling with what it would look like in high school.
- Some have a "testing center" where kids can do their online work.
- Before we move forward, should stop to evaluate our needs. How many courses, kids, etc? Big part of schooling is socialization. Are we getting at Lifelong Learner skills if we move to virtual learning? *Blended* learning. Fit the virtual part into what is going on.
- 2 examples – One has a model and it is working. The other was a disaster. Bad instructor.
- Would like us to use our own teachers to do some R&D. There is an expense associated with it.
- Does this affect our funding?
- Look at policy and redefine what it means to be “present.” Governor pushing for us to work on some of this. Teachers report they work harder in an online environment other than face to face.
- There would need to be a lot of scaffolding at the lower levels. With 4 X 4 coming in, could we experiment in electives/exploratories with an online component?
- We are piloting a few things (ex. geometry class). Hope to do more with APEX next year. We have teachers who can create some content. Could we use this to help middle school students get a high school credit before they get to high school? What if we did an elective online so 8th grade students could earn a HS credit before they get to high school?
- Would the middle school stuff still be done "at school"?

- Could be some of both. Maybe need to evaluate "do kids need geometry every single day"? Would this open up an offering for them to do this? Meet the needs of other students.
- Could this be the way to go for home bound instruction?
- Have done some of this through APEX.
- Could we build a model to attract home-schooled students? We could get partial ADM for them.
- Have to pay attention to athletic eligibility. NCAA has put some information out about this.
- We are in a good place in VA. Supportive of charter and virtual schools
- Math Emporium at VA Tech with Pods of Computers. Some of their math students are taught that way. Have to have people at the help desk for people to assist. They also get scheduled into a weekly session with a grad assistant and other students. Sometimes, though, need direct access to the instructor.
- Creates a huge adaptive challenge for our teachers.
- This would teachers more into a facilitator role.
- ACPS has several teachers teaching courses partially online.
- There have been discussions with librarians about creating Information Literacy Skills unit to teach research skills. They would deliver this online. We hope teachers are building this in, but we leave it to chance.
- Would this be a good 1 semester elective for everyone? Could our teachers develop virtual courses about Civil War given all of the history in this location?
- We have teachers ready to get their feet wet.
- The Information Literacy Skills unit may be a good place to start.
- Would like to have all teachers have some type of virtual experience.
- Where does elementary fit into this? What do they need to help support?
- We have teachers who have incorporated social media into work at the elementary level.
- In the two year goal, add something related to this. Add something related to R&D into the goal.
- Developing student skill set and teacher models around the information literacy concept.
- What should the measure be?
- Could media specialists become leaders in this work?
- Media Center is changing every day.
- Look at Media Center Specialists as a Vertical Team?
- As we talk about TPA model, could this be the stretch piece?
- Just be thoughtful about how the younger kids fit into this. They have talked about doing some training at elementary level with Rosetta Stone.
- How would we know if we are doing well?

#### **Key Takeaways:**

- 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning will involve the interplay of pedagogical, technological, and content knowledge.

- Consider a move towards piloting hybrid models of teaching and learning that involve both virtual and classroom experiences.
- Involve the Media Center Specialists in building an online unit on Information Literacy Skills.
- Consider how to scaffold learning at the elementary level to prepare for students for virtual learning at secondary levels.
- Continue to support Research and Development efforts.

### **Conference Call 2 (Goal 3)**

*Change Challenge Category 3: Human Capital Management*

**Participants:** Mitsuko Clemmons-Nazeer, Greg Domecq, Chris Gilman, Rosaura Gonzalez-Muniz, Matt Haas, Larry Lawwill, Jennifer Sublette-Williamson, Kimberly Suyes

#### **Input from Participants:**

- For recruitment of minorities, need to partner with other members of the community. Bigger issue than the schools. Community issue...not just about schools, but partnering with other entities like 100 Black Men.
- For diversity, would like to look at clear and defined goals within the Division and commitment to support these goals. Don't just write down because it sounds good, but get commitment to doing the work and believing in it. Not sure it is clear to all of the employees.
- What have we done to show building level principals WHY this is the right thing?
- Professional Development about why diversity is important was provided, but there has not been a lot of follow-up work. People are still working in silos and separate groups.
- Diversity makes a big difference for the kids at the teacher level. Students will say "they don't understand where I am coming from" if teachers do not look like them OR students will gravitate to someone that **does** look like them. It is important for students.
- Goes beyond the achievement gap. Need to create role models for all children.
- What are the breakdown points? Where do we need to focus?
- At every point, there is room for improvement. Start out with the goals. Do we have commitment and buy-in from the Division? If not, we are wasting time and money. Do we have the cultural competency as a Division? We need professional development to become culturally competent.
- Would it be good to identify local minority candidates...people from our own community?
- We used incentives several years ago – offered help paying tuition for those from Albemarle County and other contiguous counties.
- Have been working with minority TAs. They are referred to AATF (African American Teaching Fellows). Working with Principals to support them once they are in the system.
- If people have had a successful student teaching experience, principals are more likely to hire them.
- We lose as many minority candidates as we attract. Lengthy process.
- The lengthy time to bring people in has hindered ability to hire quicker.

- Support at building level is not as strong as it should be. Sometimes among peers OR administration. There is a lack of understanding each other, understanding the culture. Relationships are important. If administrators could help with building the culture in the school, it would help with retention.
- Diversity is a core value. Not sure all of the players in the organization have a value for this initiative. How do you attract and place them, integrate them, support them, provide PD to them to support their growth?
- What have other school divisions done to be successful in this area?
- We have spoken to Henrico. They commented that everyone is facing this challenge. For organizations to get in front of it, we have to make ourselves more attractive and work faster.
- Cherry Hill, NJ is one example, but they are right outside of Philadelphia. Their leader coordinated with principals. They are dealing with a different community.
- It is important that they are working with principals.
- We are attracting candidates, but we are losing them to other districts because our process is too slow.
- If three people interview someone, may have three different opinions. Don't have something "universal" so that regardless of who is involved, people are scored using the same standards.
- Need process for identifying high-performing teachers (any candidate).
- Why would people come to Cville if they are offered a job elsewhere? It has to be an investment process.
- We are not moving fast enough. We lose people. We could attract a much larger pool if we had more support. Would like to invest more with the African American Fellows.
- What about Human Capital Management on a bigger picture?
- We measure by student success which is directly related to teacher success and principals who are supervising. It is a combination of factors. We can hire great teachers, but if they don't have support in their buildings... Started with the TPA, starting to hold teachers more accountable to things, trying to hold administrators more accountable.
- We should really have the same goal for teachers and staff that we have for students. "Own their learning". Need system for teachers to record what they do so we can also track it and have a great snapshot of EACH person. Record-keeping of professional development would be important. This would help people "own" it rather than just "recertifying". Maybe we just need to be more bureaucratic. At other districts, teachers are hired at Central Office then placed somewhere. Big picture, need management system. One good example of "owning" your self-care is the County's Open Enrollment system.
- The research contained in the brief was a nice setup of human capital and social capital. It is also important to focus on content expertise, not just the large picture. Add a layer of content expertise **reward**. Will also see more impact in student learning. Not just general highly qualified. Right now experts act as "independent contractors." If we could break this down, we could be more effective and it would be a means for low-cost professional development. Regarding the hiring process, in another district, they had "open contracts" - knew you had a job, but didn't know where you would be placed.

- Agrees we need online access to professional development records. Also consider hire centrally and place.
- 3 areas are important - Pedagogical, Content Expertise, Technology Integration.
- We have gotten used to site-based management. We value school culture.
- But this creates silos...not in best interest of our students.
- "Deep Smarts" article -Technical experts do often become independent operators. PLCs are helping them to share knowledge. Got to be a way to capture and make more systemic.
- We can look at ways to create some connections. If teachers own the professional development, they will value it more.
- At elementary it is different than high. You are teaching every area.
- Generalists can still benefit from content expertise.

#### **Key Takeaways:**

- Focus on leveraging community partnerships and resources to build and retain a diverse workforce.
- Examine ways to refine the hiring and placement processes.
- Keep continued focus on the value of content expertise and utilize PLCs to share knowledge.
- Implement a system that would allow people to access and manage their professional development needs to support ownership of individual growth and to inform Division-wide planning.

#### **Conference Call 3 (Goal 4 & Goal 5)**

*Change Challenge Category 4: Funding and Resources*

*Change Challenge Category 5: Continuous Improvement*

**Participants:** Betsy Agee, Clare Keiser, Darah Bonham, Gwedette Crummie, Robert Rejonis

#### **Input from Participants:**

- See all of the change challenges as interrelated. CI & Funding impact 21st Century, etc.
- Could we invite the Board of Supervisors to come and visit the schools? They need to have a clearer picture about what we are trying to accomplish.
- How do you leverage PDSA and CI so that you get everyone involved? It is a business decision at some point. Have to be efficient. Transportation has done a good job. Get everyone actively involved in making things more efficient whether it is through incentives or other method. Should we look at increasing revenue instead of just reducing expenses? How do you do this within a public school system? At some point, you are about as efficient as you can get.
- Kudos to Transportation and their efficiencies! Like the use of technology by the bus drivers. This empowers the Transportation employees and helps them feel valued.
- In general, over the years, some of the funding sources to keep major infrastructure up and running may be in jeopardy. People need to realize if those disappear, we will no longer have

support. As an example, E-Rate is a primary funding source for the data center. This does not currently have a CIP item. Have a lot of areas that may be in jeopardy.

- Could we market virtual online courses, sponsor labs, etc. Put people together to come up with “out-of-the-box” ideas.
- Are we using grant opportunities?
- Could do more in this area, but need to make sure you do not create a funding cliff.
- School level balanced scorecards would be a great idea. Already do this, to some extent, at the school. They tie it to the school climate and individual improvement.
- Like this idea. It forces everyone to look at the metrics along the way.
- Like the transparency.
- At a continuous improvement forum, heard about how other district laid out their division level metrics at the end of the year and schools had to post their data to see if they were supporting the goals or not. There are disconnects right now school-to-school, school-to-district, school-to-board
- Learning walk data is watered down. Need tighter common focus. After hearing John speak, want to collect data on level of Blooms and engagement. Rest of the data might not be especially meaningful.
- Others focused on just a few elements of learning walk data this year. Individual school data is better than school division as a whole.
- Focus on evidence of FQL. Mid to high level of Blooms and engaging qualities.
- Just like anything else, what type of assessments do you want to have? End of year does not tell them anything along the way. Short cycle assessments **do** help. Keeps data in front of them rather than just using an end-of-the-year report. When John was talking about KPIs, people did not know what they were. How does everyone get informed? All the way from top. Connections are there.
- They talked about them, but all of them had forgotten. Maybe it should be included continually in conversations. Maybe should do quarterly checkpoints at the leadership level, as well. Maybe KPIs need to be discussed consistently if that is what the Board is doing.
- Doesn't hurt to have some training in that. We have snapshots at the beginning of the year, but not ongoing. Need ongoing PD. Need continuous and active engagement so it stays in front of them.
- Need to come together with a general plan to cover our needs, especially in the technology area. Have not put a whole lot of planning into being sure that the Data Center is in a budget cycles that can be replaced. It is something that everyone relies upon.
- Need appreciation for the behind the curtain.
- "General plan to cover our needs."

#### **Key Takeaways:**

- Assemble a team or establish a system to gather input on how the Division can generate revenue to offset funding challenges rather than just trying to reduce expenses (ex. Sponsored labs).

- Consider displaying school-level performance indicators in the Balanced Scorecard to make the data more useful and actionable in supporting Division goals.
- Develop a plan to cover and sustain the Division's infrastructure needs including core technology systems critical to Division work (ex. Central Data Center and WAN)
- Involve stakeholders at all levels of the Division in continuous improvement efforts and provide ongoing professional development to support them in this area.
- Work towards aligning goals throughout all levels of the Division.
- Explore ways to increase strategic collaboration with Board of Supervisors.