

Minutes for Hope Online School Accountability Committee Meeting

January 12, 2009 6:30 pm

Conference Call # 1-866-476-8702, participant code 765421#

The meeting convened at 6:30 pm on January 12 via conference call. Attendees included:

Steve Boston

Margo Branscomb

Joyce Gietl

Paula Arduini

General Business:

The minutes of the October 13 SAC meeting were unanimously approved.

A draft of the Hope Online SAC Bylaws was distributed to the committee prior to the meeting. The committee discussed the proposed bylaws and Steve moved to adopt the bylaws as presented and Paula seconded the motion with the following comments:

“We (the SAC) hereby adopt the Douglas County proposed bylaws for the Hope Online Learning Academy Co-Op School Advisory Council as currently defined, with the understanding that the bylaws as written are representative of a fixed site, single-building location and do not necessarily represent the unique, unprecedented operating procedures of an online, multi-site Learning Center operation such as Hope Online. It is our intent to make every reasonable effort and accommodation to abide by the bylaws for the 2008-2009 school year and document operational variances on a clause by clause basis for review and possible modifications to the bylaws in the 2009-2010 school year, as making recommendations at this juncture is premature and untimely.”

The complications of parent member elections were discussed and the determined that this compliance with the bylaws would be appropriate beginning the 2009-2010 school year. The methods utilized to conduct parent elections will be discussed by the group through email between now and the March meeting.

The consensus of the group was that Paula Arduini, now a Douglas County employee on the Hope Online Special Education Team, a purchased service from DCSD, could legitimately continue the position as a member elected by the Hope teachers. Paula was a special education teacher employed by Hope Online last year and was elected by the team of teachers at that time for a two-year term. We will follow-up with general counsel to confirm this assumption.

Reminders were given to the group concerning the website postings and meeting dates.

Election of officers was scheduled for the upcoming March meeting. Steve suggested that anyone interested in the positions should email that interest to the committee prior to the March meeting.

Joyce gave a brief explanation of the impact of the DCSD bond failure and the CDE Online Division Annual Report submission. Very deep cuts are anticipated in the DCSD budget for next year. Many of those changes have already been announced and include reorganization as DCSD moves to a decentralized business model and reorganization of employees, including lateral moves, demotions and lay-offs. Hope Online faced the typical struggle of fitting a round peg into a square hole as they responded to the Online Division's Annual Report inquiry. Not only does Hope face the dilemma that all online schools face regarding seat time vs. mastery, but the Hope Online model of individualized instruction and mastery do not match the model put forth by the Online Division as it defines course completion. Hopefully these challenges will diminish as the Online Division seasons.

Joyce explained the SAR (School Accountability Report) and the Parent Annual Report that will be mailed to all Hope Online parents sometime in February. Discussions included the disaggregation of data by Learning Center which is not currently done and MAP data. The consensus was that we should invite Sherida Peterson (Chief Academic Officer) to a meeting to give a status on both of these academic measures.

CSAP results from 2007-2008 were discussed on a high level. Hope Online did not score well—much of that due to invalidations which are a result of students not taking the tests or only taking partial tests. The onus is on the Learning Centers to insure student attendance during the CSAP testing period, as well as the proper administration of the testing to insure a small number of invalidations. CSAP training is February 6 for Learning Center mentors and directors.

The group agreed that they would like to have Gigi Hill, attendance and discipline coordinator, report regularly to the group. She last reported in October. They suggested May 11 for her next report, then quarterly going forward. Steve talked to the Commander of the Lone Tree police to request information regarding an SRO (Security Resource Officer). It was recommended that each Learning Center speak with their local police to secure this relationship.

Joyce announced the closing of four Learning Centers so far this year: Park Hill merging with Hillcrest, Urban League of Denver, City Center (Colorado Springs), and MERC.

A request was made for any information regarding appropriate grants for Hope Online.

Joyce shared an update on Free and Reduced Lunch at Hope. To date, four Learning Centers have launched the program: Harrison Street, IBG, Cherry Creek Online and Center of Hope. The program requires training and rigorous administrative support which is a challenge to the resources available, but so far is moving in the right direction.

Learning Center Certification status was reported by Joyce. About 1/3 of the Learning Centers will be visited and evaluated by Douglas County this year. In addition, Hope rates each of the Learning Centers on a scorecard which includes

1. Discuss SAC Bylaws \*, responsibilities of committee and voting members
2. Parent members—election
3. Potential teacher election
4. Open meeting laws: postings ([www.hopeonline.org](http://www.hopeonline.org))
5. Meeting Dates reminder (3/16, 5/11)
6. Election of officers

#### District and State

7. DCSD Bond Failure
8. CDE Online Division Annual Report

#### I. Students

9. Reporting: SAR and Parent Annual Report
10. Student Achievement
11. Student Safety
12. Grants

#### II. Learning Centers

13. Free and reduced lunch update
14. Status of Learning Center Certification Process
15. Learning Center Recruitment

#### III. Fiscal

16. Final October Count for 2008/09