

# **APPENDIX IV – 3**

#### IV. K.1.k. Superintendent Focus Groups' Findings SY2018-19

At the direction of the Superintendent, Superintendent Focus Groups were held monthly as an avenue for gathering district input and feedback from teachers across the district. Information gathering included feedback on FAST Services, school and district level Professional Development, as well as TUSD's Code of Conduct. These focus groups provided opportunities for the District to engage with teachers and hear their perspectives on areas of concern to them. Feedback is tabulated and results shared with each corresponding department to help inform ways each department can enhance their services. Following are examples of key findings from the Focus Groups' feedback.

##### **FAST Services:**

FAST Services, which was a new district initiative this year, was a promise to our students, families, teachers, employees, and our community that district services would be Flexible, Accessible, Service Oriented and Transparent. Focus Group participants were asked to share what their service experiences had been.

An overall improvement was noted for HR with customer service and politeness of staff. The Help Desk is viewed as very positive. However emails and phone calls are often not addressed in a timely manner. There was some feeling that new employees need more of their questions answered and would like to see a decrease in time from their date of hire to actual date of employment.

With Technology Services, their website is user friendly, Track-It use results in quick fixes, and they are generally responsive. Though technicians are viewed favorably, some teachers feel there is an insufficient number to service all our schools efficiently. Some teachers commented on wanting to see more differentiated training based on skill level.

Transportation services have improved over the past couple of years, especially at the beginning of the school year. Fields trips were a topic that generated a lot of discussion as to who should be responsible for the paperwork as well as making the paperwork less cumbersome.

The Focus Groups were also asked to suggest effective behaviors they identified with excellent customer service. The following are examples of those behaviors:

- "I statements" to reassure customers
- People before rules
- Two-way listening

- Consistency within departments
- Focused on Solutions
- Quick turnarounds
- Willing to find answers

### **Professional Development:**

The Superintendent's Focus Groups were also tasked to address the changes they felt were needed to be made at the school- and district-level to ensure that professional development time at schools is well organized, relevant and meaningful. Their feedback resulted in one set of ideas for site-level PD and another set of ideas for district-level PD and the third set of ideas could be applied to both site-level and district-level.

Site-level suggestions include:

- All day PLC with sub coverage (once per quarter)
- Vertical PLCs
- Content based on school need
- Teacher generated PD topics
- Site-related culturally diverse PD
- Utilize teacher expertise on site

District-level

- Keep it limited (fewer topics and focused)
- New teacher vs. veteran teacher trainings
- Subject matter experts to share at sites
- More summer PD options
- Add after-school PD options
- PDs need to be relevant to everyone (specialists and Ex Ed included)
- Show "how to" not "here is"

Site-Level & District Level

- MTSS support
- Schools collaborating together
- Menu-based PD (sites within region)
- Student focused, not just compliance
- Teacher-led PD
- Model effective technology use
- More engaging and interactive

## **Student Code of Conduct:**

TUSD created and implemented a new District Code of Conduct for the 2018-19 school year. It is a comprehensive guide that outlines the behavior expectations, rights, and responsibilities of students and staff (previously called the “Guidelines for Student Rights and Responsibilities” or “GSRR”). Since this was the first year of implementation, the Superintendent’s Focus Groups were asked to provide feedback on the quality of the site training that schools received on the Code of Conduct and what their experiences were with the reduction in required classroom level interventions.

On-site training was provided throughout the district. The overall feeling was that “ample training” was provided to all staff but questions still remain. It was felt that the manual was easy to read and understand. Some suggested adding an index would be helpful. Another suggestion was to provide “what if “ guidance. A refresher training was also viewed as being helpful and it could even be done through an online course. The timeline for processing can be fuzzy for some so another reason to continue refresher training.

Some teachers referenced this year as a growing year in using the new Code of Conduct. When sharing their views on the strengths and challenges with the reduction in required classroom level interventions, they shared the following”:

### **Strengths**

- Took liability issues from teachers
- In-class interventions
- A move in the right direction of giving students/teachers quicker support
- More coherent and more support
- Referral process is streamlining
- Staff like reduction of staff
- Gives younger students
- Kids see consequences

### **Challenges**

- Restorative circles aren’t always the answer
- No time to document at time of incident
- Multiple infractions seemingly not addressed
- Learning Clarity
- Most behaviors happen outside of the classroom (recess, lunch, before or after school)