

District Accountability Handbook Excerpts

District Accountability Committees

Composition of Committees

Each local school board is responsible for either appointing or creating a process for electing the members of a district accountability committee (DAC). These committees must consist of the following:

- At least three parents of students enrolled in the district¹;
- At least one teacher employed by the district;
- At least one school administrator employed by the district; and
- At least one person involved in business in the community within the district boundaries.

A person may not be appointed or elected to fill more than one of these required member positions in a single term. If the local school board chooses to increase the number of persons on the DAC, it must ensure that the number of parents appointed or elected exceeds the number of representatives from the group with the next highest representation.

To the extent practicable, the local school board must ensure that the parents who are appointed reflect the student populations that are significantly represented within the district. Such student populations might include, for example, students who are members of non-Caucasian races, students who are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch, students whose dominant language is not English, students who are migrant children, students who are identified as children with disabilities and students who are identified as gifted children.

If a local school board *appoints* the members of a DAC, the board should, to the extent practicable, ensure that at least one of the parents appointed to the committee is the parent of a student enrolled in a charter school authorized by the board (if the board has authorized any charter schools) and ensure that at least one of the persons appointed to the committee has demonstrated knowledge of charter schools.

DACs must select one of their parent representatives to serve as chair or co-chair of the committee. Local school boards will establish the length of the term for the committee chair or co-chairs.

If a vacancy arises on a DAC because of a member's resignation or for any other reason, the remaining members of the DAC will fill the vacancy by majority action.

¹ Note: Generally, a parent who is an employee of the district or who is a spouse, son, daughter, sister, brother, mother or father of a person who is an employee of the district is not eligible to serve on a DAC. However, such an individual may serve as a parent on the DAC if the district makes a good faith effort but is unable to identify a sufficient number of eligible parents who are willing to serve on the DAC.

Committee Responsibilities

Each DAC is responsible for the following:

- Recommending to its local school board priorities for spending school district moneys;
- Submitting recommendations to the local school board concerning preparation of the district's Performance, Improvement, Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan (whichever is applicable);
- Reviewing any charter school applications received by the local school board and, if the local school board receives a charter school renewal application and upon request of the district and at the DAC's option, reviewing any renewal application prior to consideration by the local school board;
- At least annually, cooperatively determining, with the local school board, the areas and issues, in addition to budget issues, that the DAC shall study and make recommendations upon;
- At its option, meeting at least quarterly to discuss whether district leadership, personnel, and infrastructure are advancing or impeding implementation of the district's performance, improvement, priority improvement, or turnaround plan, whichever is applicable and
- Providing input and recommendations to principals, on an advisory basis, concerning the development and use of assessment tools to measure and evaluate student academic growth as it relates to teacher evaluations.
- For districts receiving ESEA funds, consulting with all required stakeholders with regard to federally funded activities.

Whenever the DAC recommends spending priorities, it must make reasonable efforts to consult in a substantive manner with the School Accountability Committees (SACs) in the district. Likewise, in preparing recommendations for and advising on the district plan, the DAC must make reasonable efforts to consult in a substantive manner with the SACs in the district and must submit to the local school board the *school* performance, improvement, priority improvement and turnaround plans submitted by the SACs.

The Educator Evaluation and Support Act (S.B. 10-191) added the authority for DACs to make recommendations concerning the assessment tools used in the district to measure and evaluate academic growth, as they relate to teacher evaluations. This should not in any way interfere with a district's compliance with the statutory requirements of the Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act.

(2) Turnaround or Priority Improvement plan type with either (or both) (a) low-achieving disaggregated student groups (i.e., minority, ELL, IEP and FRL) or (b) low disaggregated graduation rate. This is a three-year designation.

The "focus" school list will be run once the 2011-12 assessment and accountability data are available. Districts will be notified in September 2012 of any focus schools within their district. Districts with "focus" schools will have a CDE performance manager assigned to help them support their schools and work through the Unified Improvement Plan process. In order for the 2013-14 Title IA funds to be released to the district, the school will need to have an approved Unified Improvement Plan in place.

In the waiver, "priority" schools are defined as a school that is implementing a Tiered Intervention Grant (TIG). The TIG is a competitive grant (funded from 1003g of ESEA) for schools identified as 5% of lowest performing Title I or Title I eligible schools to implement one of four reform models as defined by the USDE.

To be removed from "focus" school or "priority" school status, a school must receive an Improvement or Performance Plan type assignment for two consecutive years.

School Accountability Committees

Composition of Committees

Each school is responsible for establishing a School Accountability Committee (SAC), which should consist of at least the following seven members:

- The principal of the school or the principal's designee;
- At least one teacher who provides instruction in the school;
- At least three parents of students enrolled in the school³;
- At least one adult member of an organization of parents, teachers, and students recognized by the school; and
- At least one person from the community.

The local school board will determine the actual number of persons on the SAC and the method for selecting members. If the local school board chooses to increase the number of persons on the SAC, it

³ Note: Generally, a parent who is an employee of the school or who is a spouse, son, daughter, sister, brother, mother or father of a person who is an employee of the school is not eligible to serve on a SAC. However, if, after making good-faith efforts, a principal or organization of parents, teachers and students is unable to find a sufficient number of persons who are willing to serve on the SAC, the principal, with advice from the organization of parents, teachers and students, may establish an alternative membership plan for the SAC that reflects the membership specified above as much as possible.

must ensure that the number of parents appointed or elected exceeds the number of representatives from the group with the next highest representation. A person may not be appointed or elected to fill more than one of these required member positions in a single term.

If the local school board determines that members are to be appointed, the appointing authority must, to the extent practicable, ensure that the parents who are appointed reflect the student populations that are significantly represented within the school. If the local school board determines that the members are to be elected, the school principal must encourage persons who reflect the student populations that are significantly represented within the school to seek election. Such student populations might include, for example, students who are members of non-Caucasian races, students who are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch, students whose dominant language is not English, students who are migrant children, students who are identified as children with disabilities and students who are identified as gifted children.

SACs must select one of their parent representatives to serve as chair or co-chair of the committee. If a vacancy arises on a SAC because of a member's resignation or for any other reason, the remaining members of the SAC will fill the vacancy by majority action.

The members of the governing board of a charter school may serve as members of the SAC. In a district with 500 or fewer enrolled students, members of the local school board may serve on a SAC, and the DAC may serve as a SAC.

Committee Responsibilities

Each SAC is responsible for the following:

- Making Recommendations to the principal on the school priorities for spending school moneys, including federal funds, where applicable;
- Making recommendations to the principal of the school and the superintendent concerning preparation of a school Performance or Improvement plan, if either type of plan is required;
- Making recommendations to the local school board concerning preparation of a school Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan, if either type of plan is required;
- Meeting at least quarterly to discuss whether school leadership, personnel, and infrastructure are advancing or impeding implementation of the school's Performance, Improvement, Priority Improvement, or Turnaround plan, whichever is applicable, and other progress pertinent to the school's accreditation contract; and
- Providing input and recommendations to the DAC and district administration, on an advisory basis, concerning principal development plans and principal evaluations. (Note that this should not in any way interfere with a district's compliance with the statutory requirements of the Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act.)