

Community Assistance Plan for the Davenport Community Schools Comprehensive School Improvement Plan

The Davenport Community Education Advisory Council, representing parents, community members and nearly forty youth service organizations, serves as an advisory council to the Davenport Community Schools on matters related to community education, including:

- Promoting positive communications between the community and the school district
- Promoting meaningful involvement of the total community in the identification and resolution of school and community needs
- Mobilizing resources of the community to meet the needs and wants of all ages and groups in the community
- Developing networks to involve all sectors, resources, and organizations of the community in ongoing support of public education
- Promoting effective coordination among agencies, organizations and the school district in serving the needs of youth and families

In the 2006-2007 school year, the council completed a strategic plan to guide their work and new member outreach. Through this process the council adopted a new goal based on three factors:

- 1) The designation of the Davenport Community Schools as a District in Need of Assistance (DINA) under the federal legislation
- 2) The district's work toward a corrective action plan for the DINA status and the new Comprehensive School Improvement Plan in process over the spring and summer; and
- 3) The council's strong belief in the role to be played by families and community partners in affecting student achievement and academic success by providing "assistance" to local schools

With these driving influences, the council determined that this year's focus for their work would be to "act as a resource and leader in aligning community youth development activities and Comprehensive School Improvement Planning," essentially to develop a Community Assistance Plan to this "district in need of assistance."

On Thursday, September 27th the Davenport Community Education Advisory Council sponsored two community sessions to engage parents and community partners in the new Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) for the Davenport Community Schools. The district's Director of Curriculum and Staff Development, Juli Staszewski, presented the framework of the CSIP which includes specific school improvement activities in six categories: Curriculum, Assessment, Instruction, Student Engagement, Parent and Family Engagement and Leadership.

Participants were asked to comment on specific strategies or add new ideas and concerns in each of these categories, to identify strategies that would have the greatest impact on students that they could best influence. Once the lists were compiled, each member received three "votes" to award to the individual strategies in order to assist in prioritizing the suggested activities. Three concepts emerged as focus areas for the development of a Community Assistance Plan to support the district's efforts toward school improvement.

Goal 1: Increase familiarity of students, families and community partners with district standards and benchmarks through promotion/awareness activities i.e curriculum nights, resource materials, district website and community outreach.

Action Plan:

Create grade-level guides for standards and benchmarks to provide to students, parents and community partners

Provide activities for families and partners to support achievement in benchmark areas

Shift reporting on student achievement to reflect benchmark areas

Tie process to more intensive resource coordination among community partners and for summer time and after school programs to assure continuity and consistency

Create a feedback process to receive input from the community about what is important to be taught in school

Goal 2: Expand partnership with community organizations and families through communication, resource coordination, collaborative committees and program alignment with student support services in and out of school.

Action Plan:

Work with Learning Supports Committee to create systemic Pyramid of Intervention

Host Learning Supports Forum for community partners to communicate process for service delivery and to coordinate services

Create menu of services and criteria for student and family referrals

Communicate Learning Support services and process to teachers, administrators, counselors, partners, parents, students and the general public

Goal 3: Create friendly, welcoming environments for families and community at every school and district facility with clearly understood expectations and safety protocols.

Action Plan:

Identify signage and mapping needs at school buildings

Participate in Welcoming Environment walk-throughs proposed by School Administrators of Iowa

Support professional development for school staff

Orientation for families as part of registration process

More communication with partners on facilities usage policy and process

Publicize current community usage of school facilities