



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
AS A RESULT OF THE
SMALL GROUP WORK ACTIVITY
SESSION #2 • OCTOBER 2, 2014

TASK #1: MEASURING DISTRICT SUCCESS

What are the benefits and limitations of measuring student success in the way we're doing it?

BENEFITS

What are the benefits of measuring student success in the way we're doing it?

LIMITATIONS

What are the limitations of measuring student success in the way we're doing it?

TASK #2: REPRESENTED/UNDERREPRESENTED - WHOLE CHILD EDUCATION

What community values are represented or are underrepresented in the district's approach to educating the whole child?

REPRESENTED

What community values are represented in the District's approach to educating the whole child?

UNDERREPRESENTED

What community values are underrepresented in the district's approach to educating the whole child?

TASK #3: QUESTIONS – STUDENT SUCCESS

What questions do you have about student success in District 34?

An estimated group of 50 participants took part in the October 2, 2014 CES-2. However, as in the previous meeting, Facilitating Team members, Board of Education members and some District administrators were not asked to sign-in.

Participants worked in seven small groups (approximately 6-7 participants per group) to complete the three tasks listed above. Following is a summary of the responses from the groups.

TASK #1: MEASURING DISTRICT SUCCESS

BENEFITS

Participants at this 34Next community engagement session were asked to discuss the current practices of measuring student success and then list the benefits of these measurements. Groups identified positive measurement strategies they believe impact students.

Participants strongly identified **learning targets** as a benefit for District 34 students. They sighted targets, which are clearly identified and reviewed with students as enhancing learning.

Four of the seven groups indicated **measuring student needs and growth** and the **teaching of non-cognitive skills** as beneficial. One participant noted, "We like the quantitative aspect of the District Goals and recognize how this is the measure."

The participants also identified the **measurement of district's educators** as a benefit. They specifically targeted the test that measures the quality of teaching and the current practices that engage principals inside the classrooms.

LIMITATIONS

While all groups saw the benefit of measuring student success, the practice of **testing and the number of tests** was sighted as a limitation in five of the seven groups. Several groups voiced concern about stress, pressure and anxiety that builds while striving to achieve high standardized test scores. One group simply stated, "Still not exactly sure HOW it is really being measured."

TASK #2: REPRESENTED/UNDERREPRESENTED - WHOLE CHILD EDUCATION

REPRESENTED

One group summed up the overall shared beliefs of the participants by stating, "The District tends to hire excellent teachers that exemplify the characteristics and values we would like to pass on to our kids - **respect and kindness.**"

Other groups identified **service learning, embracing the whole child and focusing on diversity** as other important values.

UNDERREPRESENTED

Participants in Session #1 noted the expectation for the District to meet the **needs of the whole child** and this sentiment continued in Session #2. Participants indicated they would like to see the District continue to improve the means of identifying social and emotional needs of individual students.

Participants identified areas to better meet the needs of the whole child such as having teachers integrate strategies throughout the day (not just social workers) to target social and emotional needs of students; more civic involvement; improving the alignment with and transition to high school; and teaching of life skills such as organization, time management, handwriting, spelling and executive functioning skills.

TASK #3: QUESTIONS – STUDENT SUCCESS

When asked what questions they may have about student success in District 34, the majority of responses were related to methods for **academically challenging students** and having the **resources to meet the needs** of all students.

Two groups questioned methods to **measure non-cognitive skills** related to earlier discussions about the whole child while also asking about training to identify at-risk children.

One group asked about changing **demographics and the effects on standardized tests**. Another group took a proactive approach by inquiring, "How can parents contribute to the **constructive feedback on the teachers** at the end of the year?" Questions about a possible **service projects coordinator** and **preparing for high school** were also shared during Session #2.

For a complete listing of all responses see the October 2, 2014 – CES-2 Verbatim Response Document