



**THES Thunderboard Minutes**  
**Summary of Regular Meeting 05/22/2014 in THES Library**

**Member Attendance:** Britt A., Isidora H., Colin C., Camille C., Dina M, Brittany K., Lisa R., Alex M., Edith R., Ramiro L., Raymond S., Betty W., Melanie G., Kellie M., Ken Z.

**Others in Attendance:**

**Proceedings**

Called to order: 4:00PM

I. Approval of minutes

No amendments to minutes, approved as is

II. Community communication

None

III. Dual Language update

Raymond: updates on Austin Interfaith ed action team meeting last week; need for strengthening 3rd-5th grade dual language: how to be creative to keep the program rich; ideas include transferring students from nearby schools, looking at school boundaries/attendance zones, looking at schools with under-enrollment/over-crowding; at the meeting Blake shared with AISD board member the successes at THES through the first year as an in-district charter school - blended learning, grant victories, etc.; also at the meeting, addressing assessments and district-mandates

Ken/Ed Austin is in conversations with district & Austin Interfaith

Melanie says we need to keep that (assessments & dual language) on the radar as we move forward.

Edith: said dual language teachers met; discussion around increasing Spanish for early grades according to the G & G model

Lisa R.: students that are advanced in BOY L1 kinder may begin receiving language arts in spanish; criteria for a continuum of academic achievement within grade levels, what are all the different combinations of spanish/english mastery

Kellie: dual language needs to create foundation documents for parents/staff with mission/vision for dual language team; lays it out/makes it clear, holds us accountable, how can we inform others about implementation (what, how, why, etc.)

Ramiro: asks if from our contact at UT can we get a breakdown of how Gomez & Gomez compares to other dual-language models & how it works here

Kellie: Would it be useful for dual-language team to visit other schools for the model; would a 90%/10 language work for THES dual language team?

Melanie: are we implementing Gomez & Gomez?

Lisa R.: yes, but we're juggling bilingual research centers with SEL, writing; 3rd grade spent a LOT of time on vocabulary in science

Edith: other schools are struggling with this also;

Lisa R.: attrition (because of charters, housing) in upper grades is making things challenging; DL teachers are going to meet this summer

Kellie proposes a THES commitment by August 1

Lisa R.: 50/50 in upper grades

Ken suggests talking to Villanueva, Dr. Palmer, Dr. Dow to address our flexibility; will work with Edith & DL team to schedule

Melanie: do we have all DL teachers set?

Lisa R.: no; we are still looking for two teachers and it is hard to find teachers that want to do two-way dual-language; also trying to hire for special ed team

Teachers said they need all kinds of library books for dual language instruction

IV. Financial update

Melanie: still no word on the grant; we sent info in the second week of May, but the grant period began on May 1.

Ramiro: what was the price tag for library books?

General answer: \$20,000 but other money can be moved around

Melanie: the grant will pay for dyslexic reading materials in Spanish

Kellie: Kent & Best Buy are starting a conversation about buying/expanding materials

Lisa R.: dual language classrooms in kinder are not going to split, other kindergarten rooms are going to team up for implementation of blended learning; first grade is pushing for iPads because right now Dreambox is only on iPads, which is critical for implementation of the program

Lisa R.: computers in the conferences room are awaiting approval from the district; would be great for prek or kinder if we can have

them updated

Kellie: if Kent needs manpower to install software, that's a great parent volunteer opportunity

Raymond: PTA meeting next week we can plan what needs to be done this summer

#### V. Expeditionary Learning update

Lisa R.: in a new phase of evolution; EL has gotten chosen for a new project about common core; EL program can now predominantly providing support & training for THES

Kellie: ILT (instructional leadership team) made a pro/con list about staying with EL - climate and culture was on the pro list; decided if we can use the money from the grant that was allocated to EL for training in another program, then we'd like to do that; or EL staff can come to THES and we can accept trainings from EL, which include: climate & culture training, service learning/rigor of student work;

Lisa R.: teachers assessing blended learning, dual language and service learning; what we've done, what we need to move on and where we want to go

Kellie: what is EL - it's project-based learning; school in Manor is doing PBL, they have a summer training institute; organization is Think Forward

Ken mentions our history with New Tech and that it's a great option

Dina reminds we need to look at what the grant says about how that money can be spent;

Lisa R.: we need guidance on moving forward, what does CAC think?

It's suggested to have a conference call with John from EL to filter through concern and see if we are or are not an EL school - decide next steps from there

Raymond says we need to make a clear decision of whether to carry on after that next meet: clarify the expectations & follow through or end the relationship and move on; have a one-on-one conversation first that lays out concerns of process/relationship so far, second conversation involving teacher regarding next steps; is there another point-person on that end?

Betty suggests approaching the issue from a business perspective; in talking to EL we be clear about what we're going to get, how much, and also give them an evaluation about how we feel about what we got for the money we've already spent - we will be explicit in our expectations and we will make references/reviews accordingly

CAC: exploration with Manor Think Forward will continue; next steps will be decided on EL after conference call (questions: if we do x, y, z what will be the outcome? New MOU? How much money?) - decision to be made by the end of school year

#### VI. AISD staff survey results

Each grade level met with Lisa after survey; adjusted some leadership after conversations; ILT met and went over survey - leadership piece is reflected on ILT, problem solving in process to put things in place to prevent problems and complaints in the future (earlier survey, feedback earlier in the year, how to mitigate); proposed a November? Check-in

Melanie talked about implementation dip, excitement at start but obstacles and time create a morale lull, natural but there are steps in place to address

Kellie: PTA exec board can look at and see about any way they can help address

#### VII. STAAR testing results & TELPAS reports

Lisa R. reports:

STAAR: 5th grade reading 80% math, 70% reading passing

TELPAS points will be looked at and see will report after she looks at it

Melanie asks about STAAR testing discussion at last meeting; problem solving conversations with folks that came out of last meeting - Beth, Allison, Raymond;

Raymond: parents could meet as community over the summer, meet back with teachers in the fall

#### VIII. Campus Improvement Plan needs assessment

#### IX. Planning for next year

See back of agenda

#### **Adjournment**

Melanie G. adjourned the meeting at 5:41PM