



Arizona Department of Education
Native American Dropout Prevention Workgroup Meeting (NADPI)

November 13, 2008

2005 North Central Avenue, 7th Floor Conference Room (700)

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Welcome/Introductions – Bonnie Talakte

In attendance: Bonnie Talakte (NADPI Director ADE), Leon Oosahwe (Indian Education ADE), Bob Coccagna (Dropout Prevention ADE), Lenny Dempsey (Pascua Yaqui Education Community Liaison), Catherine Steele (San Carlos USD Education Department), Gary Loutzenheiser (Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation Education Director), Fred Hubbard (Education Director ACOLHC), Jana Narcia (Ak-Chin Indian Community Education Director), Debora Norris (only for first half hour) (Indian Education ADE), Stephen Purkiss (Ha:sañ Preparatory & Leadership School), Jessica Estrada (Ha:sañ Preparatory & Leadership School), Jasper Kinsley Jr. (Ha:sañ Preparatory & Leadership School), Laurie Larson (NADPI ADE)

Bonnie Talakte: The purpose of the NADPI Workgroup has been to search for “Best Practices” like the Ha:sañ Preparatory & Leadership School. Of the many requirements of the NADPI grant, we looked at research priorities, Native student trends, tribal commitment to truancy codes, or in some cases even acquiring truancy codes, what priority education plays in the tribe, and the degree of community involvement. I want to personally thank each and everyone of you for attending this meeting and for all of your input and support throughout the project. Our last meeting will be at our final conference in April 2009.

NADPI Video Project / National Dropout Prevention Conference Update/Final Grant Projects – Bonnie Talakte: I will be producing this film, writing and directing it with the help of the Film School at Scottsdale Community College. Our “Lessons Learned” from NADPI will be the focus. It will be shown at our April conference and included in the registration packets. We will also have a link to it from the ADE Dropout Prevention Toolkit created by Bob Coccagna.

Leon Oosahwe: Will the students’ suggestions be included?

Bonnie Talakte: Yes we will definitely look at their responses. It will be geared towards administrators, so they can continue to build upon it, and can glean information from the “Best Practices” models. The 15-20 minute film project will feature conversations with the project director, grant staff, grant evaluator, parents, and tribal leaders on their experiences with the project and their insights into Native American dropout prevention. State Superintendent Tom Horne will provide introductory remarks. The film will explore the successes and challenges of the grant project within the participating high schools and tribal communities. It is designed to be a “Lessons Learned” approach to developing and implementing a dropout prevention program. The film will also focus on school, community and family factors that contribute to successful student retention and high school completion. The project will serve as a required dropout prevention dissemination piece for the NADPI project to tribes and tribal schools statewide and nationally.

Subjects: Project Director
State Superintendent Tom Horne
Project Evaluator
6 NADPI grant staff members
4 Tribal Leaders
4 Parents

Location: Arizona Department of Education, White Mountain Apache reservation and Alchesay High School, San Carlos Apache Reservation and San Carlos High School

Timeframe: December 2008 – February 2009



Catherine Steele: The two schools that were funded with the NADPI grant, San Carlos High School and Alchesay High School are both the same people. We speak the same language. But it's the old U.S. divide and conquer mentality. I'm considered ½ San Carlos & ½ White Mountain Apache, but I'm a full blood Apache. Most people here have relatives in both the San Carlos and White Mountain tribes.

Jana Narcia: I have been here in tribal Education for 30 years, I am impressed with ADE's effort at the local level! I've been at Gila River for 17 years and Ak-Chin for 13 years. The areas you've touched on are key: proximity to the metro areas, isolation, boredom, latch-key kids, the household value of education is important, what percentage of staff is Native, cultural importance, networking, getting to know the community, coping skills, self esteem, language and more. Tribal leaders have to be involved, being visible at tribal events is important. I've know Catherine Steele since high school, we could both be considered success stories.

Bonnie Talakte: Last week we had a meeting with the superintendents and principals of both SCUDS and WUSD, we talked about sustainability and the plan for another year even if funding can not be secured.

National Forum on Dropout Prevention strategies for Native and Tribal Communities: *Reconnecting Youth to Education* UPDATE:

- ✓ Conference date selected: April 19 – 21, 2009
- ✓ Conference site selected: Sheraton Crescent Hotel, Phoenix, AZ
- ✓ Conference partners committed: ADE, national Dropout Prevention Center (NDPC-Clemson University, National Indian Education Association (NIEA)
- ✓ Planning team selected: ADE, NDPC & NIEA
- ✓ Sponsorships / donation packet developed and mailed to Arizona Tribes, Tribal casinos, corporations, businesses, etc.
- ✓ Keynote speakers selected: Original NIEA organizer, Dr. William Demmert, Billy Mills and Dr. Greg Sarris, author and leader of the Pomo Tribe.
- ✓ April 19th Pre-Forum workshop presenters identified: Committed: Dr. Laura Scandling, Assistant Superintendent, Juneau USD, Yaakoosge Daakahidi Alternative High School for Alaska Native Students
- ✓ Pending: McCellan "Mac" Hall, Executive Director, National Indian Youth Project, "Project venture"; Dr. Carrie Johnson, "Resilience in the Face of Historical Trauma"; Kerry Venegas, NIEA, "Campaign for High School Equity Project"
- ✓ "Save the Date" flyers posted on NADPI website, NDPC website, NIEA website, sent to Indian Education Directors / JOM Directors in Arizona School Districts.

Conference registration will be handled by NDCP and will begin in late November or early December.

Bonnie is visiting selected reservation public and charter Junior and High Schools who have demonstrated "Best Practices". Selected schools will present and be recognized at the conference.

Workgroup Assignment: Solicit raffle items:

- 2-Pendleton blankets from the White Mountain Apache and San Carlos Apache Tribes



- 2-Casino resort weekends
- 2-Paid conference registrations to: National Dropout Prevention Conference and the National Indian Education Conference
- 4-NADPI polo shirts and caps (provided by NADPI)

BEST PRACTICES/SUCCESS STORIES

Ft. McDowell Education Department & Fountain Hills USD –Gary Loutzenheiser, Ft. McDowell Education Director: The key to community buy in would be a social service program, youth council leaders and having treatment available. I came into the district as an elementary school principal, currently I am the acting Education Director. The Tribal Council is actively involved in education and a strong cultural component is also integrated. We also impose a strict set of fees for truancy, if the child is under 14, the parents pay \$100 per day. If the child is over 14, both the parent and child are fined \$100 a day. But we also did positive rewards for good students, bicycles for perfect attendance, \$50 gift certificates. In 2002 before we implemented the program, only one child had perfect attendance, now in 2008 we have a 95.4% attendance rate in the 103 different schools our students are in. We have 435 students to account for. We are looking to increase pre-K, also we need more early childhood development, we need to get to the kids earlier. We do our best to remove negative / biased teachers. 60% of tribal members have never been fined, 20% only fined a few times... it's that last 20% that give us most of the problems. Most of the problems are family related, foster care, JV detention, and the conflicting cultural – outside world balance.

Jana Narcia: We use a “Release of Information” form, our tribal court is also involved, networking is improved, we provide many incentives like our end of the year banquet, parent workshops, we have many counselors and we are using a proactive approach. Having enough money is definitely leverage.

Fred Hubbard: The lack of intervention, turnover, the lack of counsel, and lack of funding controls and dictates the outcome of these programs. You both have unique situations, proximity to the metro area and you are adequately funded. Most reservation schools aren't as lucky, it's very different, communication is lacking and progress is stopped.

Gary Loutzenheiser: Our Education Board reports directly to the tribal council, many Tribal council members graduated from college and truly value education, we are lucky. We do have leverage, for example 38% of our students are in Special Education, and we are demanding resources.

Bonnie Talakte: Bad teachers and bad principals are often “recycled” into Reservation Schools.

Gary Loutzenheiser: We had many teachers with a bias against native students, we had to confront them, hold workshops on cultural sensitivity. We've also had workshops on the importance of respect and how to stop bullying. It's the way the “middle group of about 80% - which way they will lean – is what makes the climate of your school. Will they stand up to the bullies, will they treat fellow students with respect or not? At the end of one of the bullying workshops, a student confessed that he had bullied another student and that now he is truly sorry, the whole auditorium erupted with applause!

Truancy Ordinance – Keys to Implementation:

- Communication with schools
- Communication with parents
- On-going contact with the Legal Department
- On-going monitoring and timely action
- Recognition of the children with perfect or outstanding attendance throughout the school year



The Tribal Council mandates the standards, expectations and enforcement powers. Focusing on outcomes: All Tribal and community members will graduate from high school in four years after entering 9th grade.

Assessment of Current Status:

- We know where we want to be. Where are we now?

Internal / External Analysis

- Resource application and allocations now and in the past
- Individual resource application and allocation assessment
- Identification of obstacles and detractors from success

Reorganization / Reallocation of Resources

- Commitment to goals and objectives
- Redefining of roles and responsibilities
- Action / Assessment / Adjustment

Comprehensive Approach

Standards and Excellence (stick)

- Attendance
- Academic

Learning Interventions (support)

- Academic Strategies Program (Tribally funded, school-based educational support program specifically designed to ensure the success of tribal and community member students in public schools)
- Homework labs
- Summer programs
- Family Learning program
- Special Education advocacy
- Counseling
- Public school grants
- Transportation

Awards and Recognition (carrot)

- Short-term
- Long-term

Relationships and Communication

- Administration
- Guidance Staff
- Faculty
- Support Staff
- Parents
- Students

Goals of Relationship Building

- Establish trust
- Establish common goals
- Create proactive orientation
- Demonstrate commitment (a willingness to do whatever it takes to help students be successful)
- ENSURE THAT ALL STUDENTS PASS ALL CLASSES



Setting Up the Program

- Planning as a team
- Designing classroom set-up
- Securing supplies and materials
- Obtaining teacher edition textbooks
- Scheduling student
- Planning class periods
- Managing student and subject caseloads
- Monitoring grades in all subjects
- Reviewing day planners / agenda books
- Grading in Academic Strategies

Ha:sañ Preparatory & Leadership School, Tucson, Arizona – Jessica Estrada, Special Education Teacher/Director, Senior Class Academic Advisor, & Charter Holder - Jasper Kinsley, Math/Art Teacher, 6th grade Academic Advisor, & Charter Holder - Steve Purkiss, Science Teacher, Senior Class Academic Advisor, & Governing Board member:

Mission

A bicultural public high school designed for Tohono O'odham youth and Native students interested in a college prep curriculum sponsored through the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

Ha:sañ Preparatory & Leadership School is designed to serve as an academically rigorous, bicultural, and community-based high school for Native youth. By infusing all aspects of the educational experience with elements of O'odham language and Native history, the school will nurture individual students, helping them become strong and responsible contributors to their communities.

* College Prep Curriculum

Courses at Ha:sañ School meet all Arizona State Standards. The curriculum is especially designed for college bound students providing for Arizona State University requirements. We believe all students benefit from high teacher and staff expectations. In order to insure academic success for all students, tutoring and after school programs are offered.

* Knowledge of Tohono O'odham Language & Native History

Ha:sañ School is committed to helping students develop healthy self-worth and a strong sense of identity through promoting O'odham language and Native history. While meeting all state standards, Ha:sañ infuses O'odham and Native content and materials throughout the curriculum. In addition to this integral role in the curriculum, Ha:sañ is committed to providing a rich climate of O'odham and Native scholarship.

* Individualized Study Plans

We believe that each student has unique educational needs and desires. All students deserve individual attention in order to make choices about their future and have the skills to bring these dreams into reality. Each student at Ha:sañ School has an individualized study plan designed to meet his or her own goals and maximize their potential.

* Sponsor Leadership

It is the philosophy of Ha:sañ School that family involvement is vital to the success of a student. Parents are of the utmost importance in the education of their children. As Sponsors, family members are invited and expected to provide leadership in the development of individualized study plans and college/vocational



planning as well as volunteering at the school in meaningful ways.

*** Hands-On Learning**

We believe that learning is more meaningful when the emphasis is placed on real world projects which build upon connections between the classroom content areas. In order to maximize the value of what is taught in the classroom, students spend a considerable amount of time studying outside of the classroom through field trips and projects.

*** College Counseling, Admission, & Support**

We believe that all students can be successful in college. Each student has an opportunity to be adequately prepared for admission to the college of his or her choice. Each student has full staff support in the process of applying for and receiving admission and scholarships to college. Students will receive extensive preparation for the ACT and/or SAT. Additionally, it is a primary goal of Ha:sañ School to establish support systems for Ha:sañ graduates once they are in college

Charter Goals:

- Integration of language and culture in all curriculum areas
- Interdisciplinary
- Project based education
- College Prep curriculum

Student Capacity = 160 (40 per grade)

Currently enrolled = 142 (42 Freshmen, 30 Sophomores, 35 Juniors, 35 Seniors) (138 Native American)

17 out of 20 teachers are Native American, Annual leadership & Unity Camps are held that focuses on Native culture and practices, the school was founded in the 1997-1998 school year. 38% of students are in Special Education.

Attendance rate: 92%, Graduation rate 80%, Arizona Learns High School Achievement Profile: Performing, federal Rating NCLB: Met

Other Accomplishments:

- Ranked in Top 40 (17th out of 468) in 2002 in the Grand Ranking for all Charter Schools) for 2 consecutive years for overall parent Satisfaction in the area of Overall Quality of Education as measured by the state sponsored Survey and Report.
- HPLS curriculum described as "1st model curriculum that incorporates alignment to state standards" by the Arizona Board for Charter Schools.
- Ha:sañ students received the Presidential Scholarship at the University of Arizona in 2002, 2003, 2004 & 2007.
- Received the "Good neighbor" award from the mayor of Tucson for outstanding contributions to the Rincon Heights Neighborhood, 2001.
- Three students from our senior classes have had featured articles in the "Senior Achievers" section of the Arizona Daily Star and Tucson citizen.
- HPLS named as one of the strengths of the Tohono O'odham educational system in the Comprehensive Education Survey 2004.
- HPLS was invited to do a special presentation to the Nutritional Network Grant Recipient Community due to its outstanding program in Nutrition and Ethnobotany.



- HPLS has demonstrated outstanding Special Education Services by passing its State of Arizona 5 year audit with exemplary ratings and no areas needing substantial improvement.
- Ha:sañ Girls Basketball has made it to the League Championship for the last 4 out of 6 years.
- Ha:sañ Girls Volleyball has made it to the League Championship for the last 6 out of 6 years. Teams won their State League Championship three times.

Challenges:

- Student academic deficiencies from previous institutions
- Consistent excessive trancies and inconsistent attendance
- Staff and administrative retention
- Finance (budgeting and funding)
- Student substance abuse
- Transportation upkeep (over an hour commute from Sells, Arizona)
- Low parental involvement

Strategies (Attendance and Trancies)

- Provide transportation & city bus passes
- Daily monitoring of absences and contact with home if student is absent / truant
- Weekly staff and teacher attendance / truancy discussions
- Multiple extra curricular activities
- Small, closed campus & class sizes (27 students the largest)
- Counseling and academic advising
- Bi-annual attendance awards and incentives

Strategies (Dropouts)

- Annual Leadership and Unity Camp
- Transportation and city bus passes
- Individualized Study Plans for graduation
- "Novel Stars" (online credit retrieval) and Summer School
- Counseling
- Extra curricular activities / student sponsored events
- Ha:sañ Community Learning Center (after school program) tutoring
- AIMS tutoring
- Personal and familial knowledge of students and their challenges

Strategies (Retention / Promotion & Graduation)

- Students remain in their grade level cohort
- Weekly "Student Concerns" and updates from staff / teachers
- UA Mentorship Program
- UA Native student presentations
- College Prep & Senior Capstone classes
- College admission recruiters
- Community service projects
- Curriculum aligned with AZ State Graduation Requirements
- Senior Academic Achievement (new this year, approved by School Board)



Strategies (Other)

- Special Education Program
- Staff & teachers required to fulfill student sponsorship / volunteer hours, attend community events
- Staff & teachers required to attend O'odham language & culture lessons, and weekly teacher professional development
- Student driven class fundraising (teacher bonus for this)
- Close campus proximity to the University of Arizona, Professional Development opportunities at the UA Native American Student Affairs, American Indian Studies Programs
- American Indian Language Development Institute at the University of Arizona
- Participant in the University of Arizona Language Shift Project

Contact:

Ha:sañ Preparatory & Leadership School, 1333 E. 10th St., Tucson, AZ 85719, (520)882-8826

Date and Time of Next Meeting: April 19-22, 2009, *National Forum on Native American Dropout Prevention Conference*, Sheraton Crescent Hotel, Phoenix, AZ