ACCREDITATION 2011
ACCJC RECOMMENDATION #3

Communications Process
on Key Issues of District-Wide Concern

MINUTES

Sub-Committee Meeting
April 21, 2011
4:00 – 5:00pm • Chancellor's Conference Room

Subcommittee Members Present: David Bugay, Tere Fluegeman, Claire Cesario-Silva, Russ Hamilton, Randy Peebles, Jennie McCue, Diane Oaks, Gwen Plano, Susan Sweet, Don Busche, Bob Cosgrove, Bev Johnson

Not Attending: Bob Bramucci, Stephen Rochford

1. *Review ACCJC Recommendation #3.*
   "The teams recommend that the college, district administrators, faculty and staff develop a communications process among the entities on key issues of district-wide concern including academic calendar, planning, (ATEP) Advanced Technology Education Park, technology and building priorities (Standards IV.A.2., IV.B.3)."
   The committee reviewed the recommendation. Members of this subcommittee were nominated by the colleges. It was discussed that the development of a strategic plan, Recommendation #1) will help this subcommittee define the duties of the District related to communication on key issues.

2. *Review the Colleges' Self Study Reports on Standards IV.A2 and IV.B.3 for information that led to ACCJC Recommendation #3.*
   Discussion included:
   We want to establish a communications process on key issues that will not interfere with the colleges. Standard IV.B.3.a. states, "The district/system clearly delineates and communicates the operational responsibilities and functions of the district/system from those of the colleges and consistently adheres to this delineation in practice." The committee also discussed that the further development of the delineation of function mapping for the district (task for Accreditation Subcommittee Rec. # 6) to the colleges would also further clarify communications.

3. *Discuss Current District Office Communication Processes*
   Discussion included:
   Current communication process relies on President's to carry information to college administrators for dissemination to all faculty and staff. Some messages may not be communicated to all staff due to multiple time demands. Recently additional mailboxes have been set up for communications from the office of the Chancellor and Vice Chancellors to allow for greater distribution of information on key issues. Board meeting highlights are emailed to all employees. The colleges have representatives on many committees whose charge it is to take back messages to their constituencies – perhaps this is not effectively

happening. As an example, there are district-wide committees with very good shared-governance and collegiate representation and attendance from the colleges and district services staff. It was discussed that these members are not able to effectively communicate the committee discussions and activities with their constituent groups for a number of reasons. More discussion needed here.

A wiki provides instant access to accurate and timely information. Plans are for the wiki to be expanded to include forms from all of district services. Is email an effective communication tool or is it passé? Would SharePoint or RSS feed be better? Some employees would use mobile devices to access SOCCCD links. Various sources of information are available online, but tools are not being used. Use of the HR wiki increased after a workshop for administrative assistants.

4. *Identify Issues/Define Problem(s)*
Administrators discuss key topics on an ongoing basis and may assume that the staff at large has an understanding of issues, which is not the case. Some employees desire an online tool that fully explains options and decisions made by the Board on ATEP, along with an opportunity to make comments or suggestions. The development of ATEP is a good example how difficult it is to provide timely updates – things change and evolve rapidly. Classified staff needs access to latest information in order to work effectively.

5. *Brainstorm Ideas for Communications Process*
   - Focus first on specific areas to be addressed per recommendation #3
     o academic calendar
     o planning
     o (ATEP) Advanced Technology Education Park,
     o technology priorities
     o building priorities
   - Are there other areas where communication be improved besides the areas listed in recommendation #3?
   - It would be beneficial to establish and implement a process for CET to provide updates on issues under discussion/development.
   - Develop wiki online "manual" to define processes. How would a manual be developed?
   - Communications process needs to differentiate between the ATEP campus and ATEP development.
   - Create an umbrella strategy for communication that requires follow-through by all levels of administration and management to ensure information is provided to all employee levels.
   - Communicate the reasons for deadlines associated with purchasing and accounting processes. Is there another way to accommodate accounting and purchasing needs and lessen the impact on other workgroups?
   - Training and two-way communication are necessary to ensure communication tools are effective. Workshops that were provided by District Services in the past were much appreciated by staff. Training needs to be on a regular basis. Some training can be online. Two-way communication needed. We need to solicit, listen and be responsive to feedback. Let others benefit from questions; save and share feedback

and responses.
- Manager and supervisor interactions with subordinates to train and provide guidance can have a significant and positive effect.
- Idea for online video: Brandye D'Lena explains purchasing deadlines.
- Need communications process that considers different preferences – some like videos, some like clicking on a topic for detailed information.
- Include search option in online reference.
- Provide access to regularly updated "Hot Topics" via wiki, SharePoint or district intranet.
- Consider RSS feeds
- Use Skype for regular communications. For example: 20 minutes once or twice-a-week, or once a month as a vehicle to answer questions from faculty and staff.
- Uniform, instantaneous training, when it is needed.
- Create matrix with basic guidelines to determine: Is it a college or district communication?

6. *Determine Next Steps*
The committee acknowledged the need for IT expertise to design the communications process. Add appropriate representative from IT.

Agenda for next meeting:
- Develop plan and methods for the "Big Five" identified in the recommendation
- Address issue of competition/money concerns between colleges
- Technology related solutions
- Update on wiki plans (David)
- Information on District website (Tere)

7. *Adjourn*