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Board of Education  
Littleton Public Schools  
5776 South Crocker Street  
Littleton, Colorado 80120

Dear Board Members:

At the September 13, 2007 LPS Board of Education meeting during the "Citizens' Requests to Speak to the Board" I spoke about LPS student academic achievement progress and provided a four-page handout. Some of my information related to school improvement plans (SIPs).

One of my statements was the following: "There were no significant total LPS gains in school-selected SIP subjects, as indicated by the asterisks for the subject category results (institutional inertia?)." I have enclosed my September 19, 2007 letter to the Board of Education for your reference.

One year later, that statement is now reinforced by the attached tabulation of "LPS CSAP District and Schools Proficiency (% P + A) and Changes" (CSAPRankLPSSIP8.pdf), which shows a small (-0.1%) decrease (from 70.8% Proficient plus Advanced in 2007 to 70.6% in 2008) for the total LPS district for the 27 CSAP tests in each year. I also have attached the comparable tabulation (CSAPRankLPSSIP7.pdf) for 2006 and 2007.

The total LPS loss in school-selected SIP subjects was -1.4% (from 69.4% in 2007 to 68.0% in 2008). If both charter schools are omitted from that data, then the total LPS loss in school-selected SIP subjects was about -0.6% (from 67.4% in 2007 to 66.8% in 2008). Also without charter schools, elementary schools loss was -1.1% (from 66.8% in 2007 to 65.7% in 2008), middle schools gain was +0.1% (from 69.9% in 2007 to 70.0% in 2008), and high schools gain was +0.9% (from 66.9% in 2007 to 67.8% in 2008).

Most of the individual not-charter schools had less than 5% proficiency change (gain or loss from 2007 to 2008) in school-selected SIP subjects. Only one school had a large gain: Whitman ES (+15.0%), which nearly matched its large loss (-15.3%) in 2007. Two schools had large losses: Runyon ES (-15.0%) and Peabody ES (-12.3%). I have attached scatterplots (with no-change reference line) of the data for elementary schools (CSAPLPSSIPES8.pdf), middle schools (CSAPLPSSIPMS8.pdf), and high schools (CSAPLPSSIPHS8.pdf).

For two years I have stated that effects of the Board-approved strategic plan (core beliefs and focus areas) upon the buildings-implemented school improvement plans (using the districtwide SIP template) are uncertain. A lot depends upon the levels of understanding of, agreement with, and commitment to the SIPs in each of the buildings. I also have stated that the CSAP results were not encouraging. My September 13, 2007 letter (SDL-BoE-070919A.pdf) included the following paragraph:

I believe that improvements are needed with regard to these “understanding of, agreement with, and commitment to” (UAC) concerns:

- Board and superintendent public commitment to DAG results.
- Central administration management of SIP preparation and evaluation.
- Building principals and teachers UAC to DAG, SIPs, and PLCs.
  - Very few schools even mention the DAG on their school websites.
  - Very few schools have posted the SIPs on their school websites.
  - Most schools have been using some PLC concepts for years with little or no effect.
- Use of inaccurate statements and avoidance of “bad news” disclosures.
- Prompt transparency of DAG detailed results for credible public accountability.

Again this year I have some similar questions for your consideration and response:

- What do you believe are the main causes for the disappointing 2008 CSAP results in total LPS gain in school-selected SIP subjects (about -0.6 % loss in proficiency if both charter schools are omitted from that data)?
- What are the main causes for those results within the three grade-level groups: elementary schools (-1.1%), middle schools (+0.1%), and high schools (+0.9%)?
- What are the most-effective corrective actions for those groups to accomplish the District Achievement Goal (DAG)?
- What 2009 CSAP results do you expect for those groups?

What questions and/or comments do you have about this letter, including the attachments?

Sincerely,



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Attachments  
 Enclosure

cc: Scott Murphy