

Yuma County Schools Joint-Board Meeting

Wednesday, August 17, 2005 -- 6:00 p.m.

Yuma School District

450 West Sixth Street, Yuma, Arizona

In Attendance	C. R. Waters	Maureen Irr	Pat Riley
	Bob Klee	Sally Doyle	Duane Sheppard
	Mary Garcia	Terre Allen	Brenna Paulin
	Chris Weigel	Sharon Taylor	Alfredo H. Luna
	Mike Jarvis	Robbie Woodhouse	Marvin Marlatt
	Jane Peters	Victoria Morgia	Luis Heredia
	Cathy Nicewander	Mary Melchionne	Doug Rutan
	Tim Foist	Cindy Didway	Judith Bobbitt
	Richard Rundhaug	Martha Yardley-Jones	Darwin Stiffler
	Greg Wilkinson	Charlene Fernandez	Sheila Psoika
	Toni Badone	Lynn Thompson	Tom Rushin
	Darwin Stiffler	Pat Koury	Rose Arévalo

1. Call to Order

Judith Bobbitt

Mrs. Bobbitt, Superintendent of Somerton District, called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Judith Bobbitt

Mrs. Bobbitt led the Pledge.

3. Welcome and Introductions

Judith Bobbitt

Superintendents introduced those attending from their districts.

4. History of The Yuma PLAN

Lynn Thompson

Mrs. Thompson explained that a few years ago, she and Maureen Irr, District One Board Member and Somerton District employee, met and discussed accountability and what could be done to move area schools forward. The community had good education, good teachers, effective teaching, and a good working relationship with other County districts. They began formalizing the partnerships.

When Huck Fitterer began working with District One, other district superintendents began a collaborative effort toward a more effective job in guidance of teachers. Superintendents took down barriers by having everyone focus on the same tasks. Now all teachers understand each other. This is a historic event. Superintendents set goals to plan practices they would focus on in the classroom.

5. Goals of The Yuma PLAN

Toni Badone

Mrs. Badone knew the high school would be the hardest to improve. Goals were set with specific objectives for teachers to maximize instructional time. At first, goals were not met because teachers did not like having their classroom's invaded by strangers. All four districts had excellent teachers from the beginning but expectations were different. After the first year, principals were leaders and protocol training readied observers. They knew what they were looking for and they were more selective and better at completing observation sheets.

This evening's meeting is to prepare everyone to extend beyond what is being done. Observers were amazed at the progress seen at the high school and believe it can happen anywhere, now. Due largely to relationship building, goals were hit where no expected them to be hit.

Mrs. Badone introduced Huck Fitterer, as an excellent representative of WestEd. He tailored the program specific to Yuma's needs, shares legislative information, and his energy and enthusiasm.

6 . A Look At Our Data and Where We Are Today Huck Fitterer

Mr. Fitterer agreed that the Yuma PLAN Network System is not seen anywhere else across the nation. Earlier, he worked with Gwenyth Ham School introducing writing to their program. Their site will serve as a training ground for other county districts. Superintendents can share the Teach for Success protocol.

Mr. Fitterer explained Kofa's tremendous changes proved Mrs. Badone's comment to be true, any area can be changed, if high school changes. He added that it's important that everyone is aware of student engagement. If student's minds aren't engaged, they self-engage and go elsewhere. Engagement needs to remain constant. 2004-05 showed a significant 11% increase in student engagement.

Everyone was encouraged to review the data and discuss the impact the Yuma PLAN has made on student achievement at various districts and discuss their concerns or the impact this program has on your particular district. A few minutes were given for discussion at each table.

In addition, Somerton and Crane Districts' third grades show an increase in DIBELS. If increases are not evident, transferability is not happening. Gwenyth Ham will be working on this in reading. The community will be able to learn from them. Other grades have increases. Everyone knows that upper-grade students need to write, but that's forgotten at the lower levels. If students do well on DIBELS they should do well on state assessments. All schools need to work hard to see bigger gains.

Mr. Fitterer thanked Superintendents, Governing Boards and principals for helping in moving all students forward!

7 . 2005-06 School Year Activities Huck Fitterer

Last year there were 200 observers and only 10 were West Ed staff. Your observers were observing your people. WestEd only contributed data and compiled information. He commended all involved and noted that they should be very proud, because they're building capacity within the county.

Mr. Fitterer will continue to work with the Superintendents as noted on his Activities Schedule under Task 1.

Task 2 will be completed in March when the weather is cooler, because you get better results when it's cool.

Task 3 involves each school having a half day to go in and out of classes with coaches and department chairs to see what's going on in the schools. They will learn how to give feedback to teachers by observing representatives sent as models and then they would give specific feedback from district personnel.

Task 4 eight staff members will workshops as Yuma County Professional Development on February 17.

Task 5 West Ed will continue to provide professional development and focus on Bloom's Taxonomy.

Task 6 Will work on Bloom's Taxonomy at four half-day workshops with no more than 50 participants per session.

Task 7 A general review of protocol will be completed and the form may be slightly revised. A better look will be taken at instruction in the classroom.

Task 8 A full day workshop will be conducted by a West Ed consultant.

Task 9 A West Ed Project Manager will facilitate an inter-rater reliability assessment for anyone who will be the lead for observation teams.

Task 10 This Joint Meeting was to be held. He added that if these things don't happy, classroom teachers will not improve. The PLAN emphasizes the need for coaches and observers WestEd provides the professional development, so the teachers can continue to do what they were hired for. There was no further discussion.

8 . Board Member Questions and Comments

Huck Fitterer

There were no questions or comments. Mr. Fitterer thanked everyone for the growth and commitment that is apparent in Yuma County.

9 . The Long Term Commitment and Closing

Tim Foist

Mr. Foist concluded the meeting noting the impact Mr. Fitterer has had on Yuma County's instructional leaders. There are over 30,000 students and 2,500 teachers. As we continue our collaboration, we continuously see that we are the only one's in the state meeting like this. Everyone else is surprised.

He said that he witnessed teachers asking to be part of this process because they want to be part of the progress in this positive environment. Students have richer learning environments because teachers maximize instruction. In the future the number of participants will be greater. Discussions continue with Gadsden, in hopes they will collaborate, as their children feed in to the YUHS District system. In this way, if teachers move between districts, they will all be trained and focused on student achievement.

Mr. Foist said we are not lone rangers in Yuma County, because principals and teachers are taking over in the classroom. As a proud partner in this relationship, Mr. Foist said that data is input and shared in order for everyone to do better next year.

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.