

CAPSS UPDATE NO. 3

Collaboration and Problem Solving Sessions

Teams begin discussion of building budgets

At this week's meeting the CAPSS group took up the issue of budgets for schools and classrooms. Some of the anecdotes shared involved inadequate funding for classroom supplies, how teachers spend their own money, a greater need for funds in hands-on classes such as science and art, the great value of field trip experiences, the timing of when teachers receive their share of building budgets, and a lack of understanding in how disbursement decisions are made.

The group listed interests related to the topic, including:

- Having enough to run programs effectively
- Ensuring funds support common curricular objectives and student needs
- Increasing staff control over building budgets
- Administrative discretion in managing funds

- Increasing transparency in what building budgets support
- Distributing funds to ensure opportunities are equitable

Finally, the group listed potential solutions to explore together. The ideas included:

- Increasing building budgets
- Developing a formula for how much a class gets
- Allowing for staff input through leadership teams
- Helping each building staff understand how and why funds are allocated
- Providing classroom grants beyond the standard allocation

NEXT MEETINGS

January 17, 4-6 PM
February 21, 4-6 PM

District Office training room. Open to all staff.

CEA TEAM LEADERS

BRUCE TWITCHELL

SCOTT TRAVERSE

DISTRICT TEAM LEADERS

TRINA CAUDLE

KATIE EBNER

Class sizes and caseloads

The teams also began to explore the issue of class sizes and caseloads this week, again starting off by sharing anecdotes to help illustrate the concerns.

The examples included: a lack of a caseload cap for speech-language pathologists and psychologists deters potential hires; hard-to-fill positions are becoming almost impossible to fill; efforts to reduce class sizes a few years ago didn't last; larger class sizes translate to more work for teachers and higher costs; larger classes can compromise safety; greater reliance on para-pros is a short-term fix; inequality of class sizes within a school; a lack of equity in IEPs, ALPs, 504s and Title; favoritism by schedulers; teacher burnout; solutions seem reactive, not proactive.

The group will proceed to listing interests and potential solutions at its next meeting.

The Coeur d'Alene Education Association and administration met Dec. 20 for the third meeting of the Collaboration and Problem Solving Sessions. CAPSS is used to address priorities, problems and concerns that might become contract-related.

NEXT TIME: On Jan. 17 the teams will continue discussing class sizes and caseloads; hear a report on work done outside of contract time; and take a look at all building budgets and how they are established.