

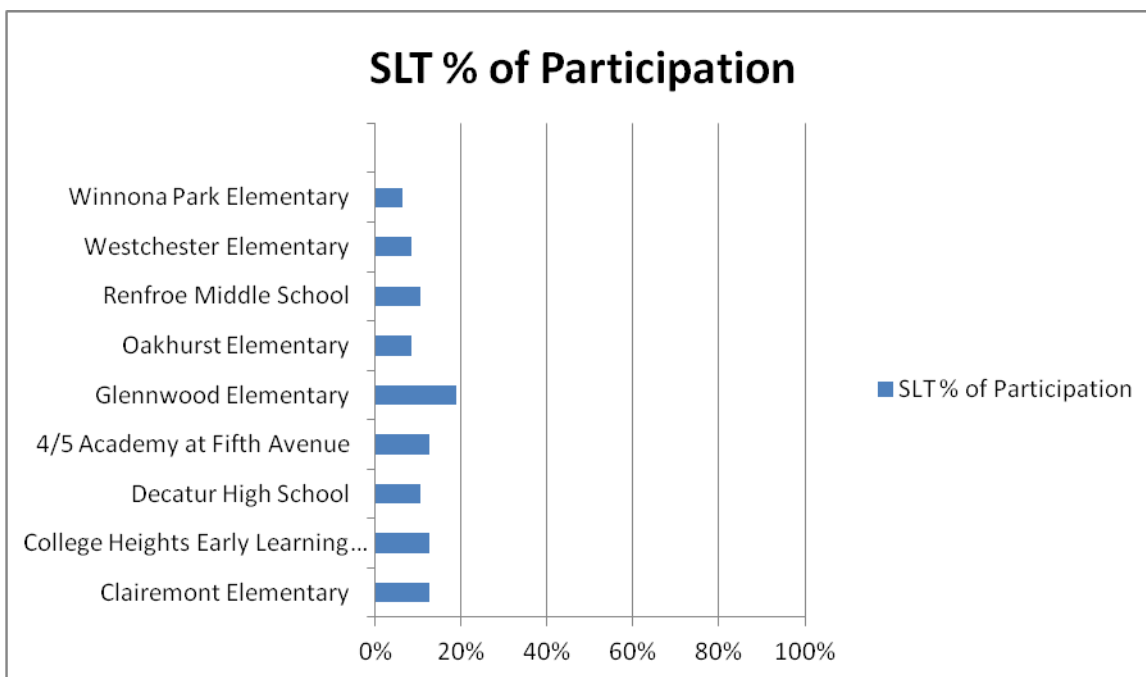


City Schools of Decatur School Leadership Team Survey January 2015

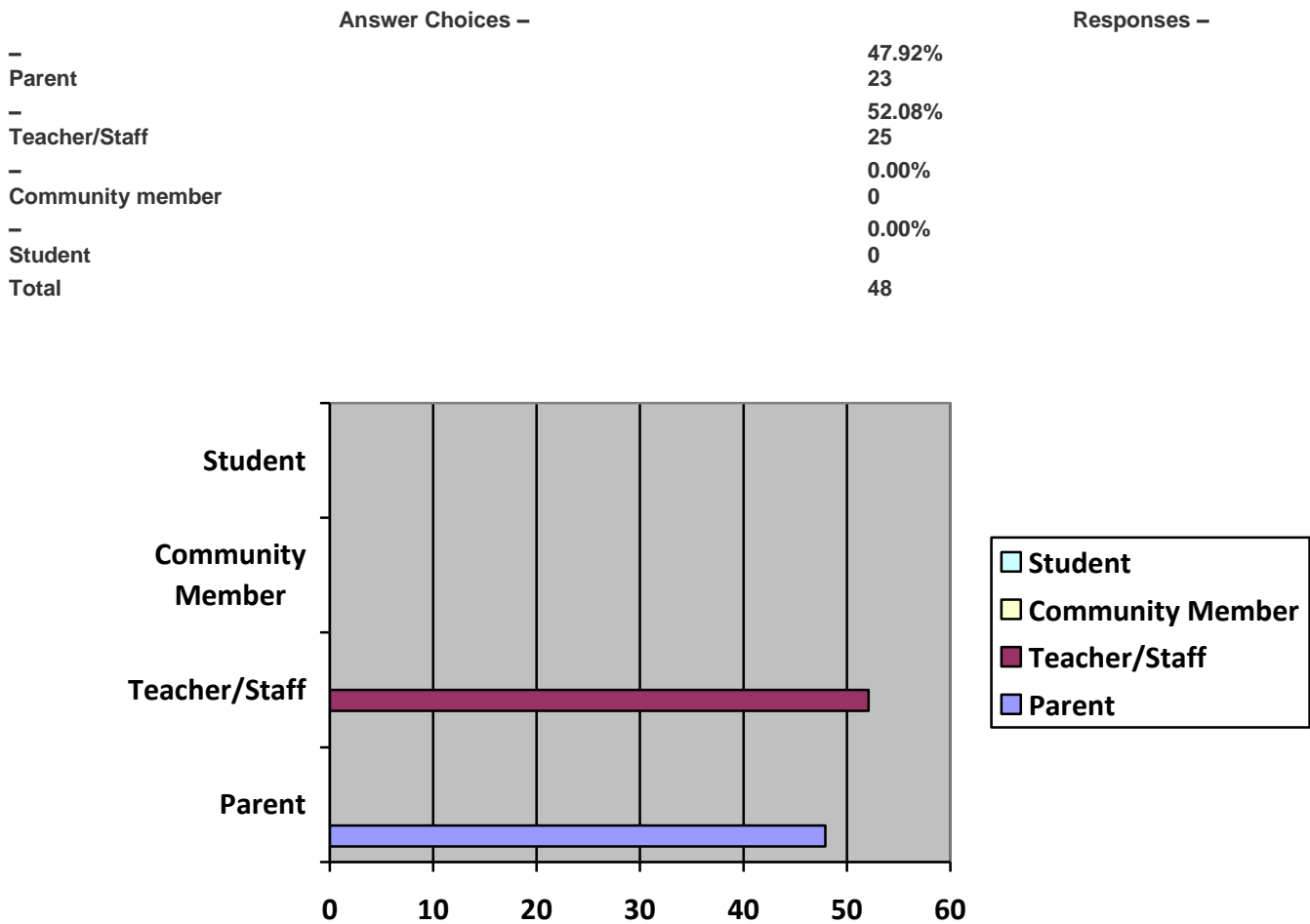
SLT Survey Results

What School do you represent?

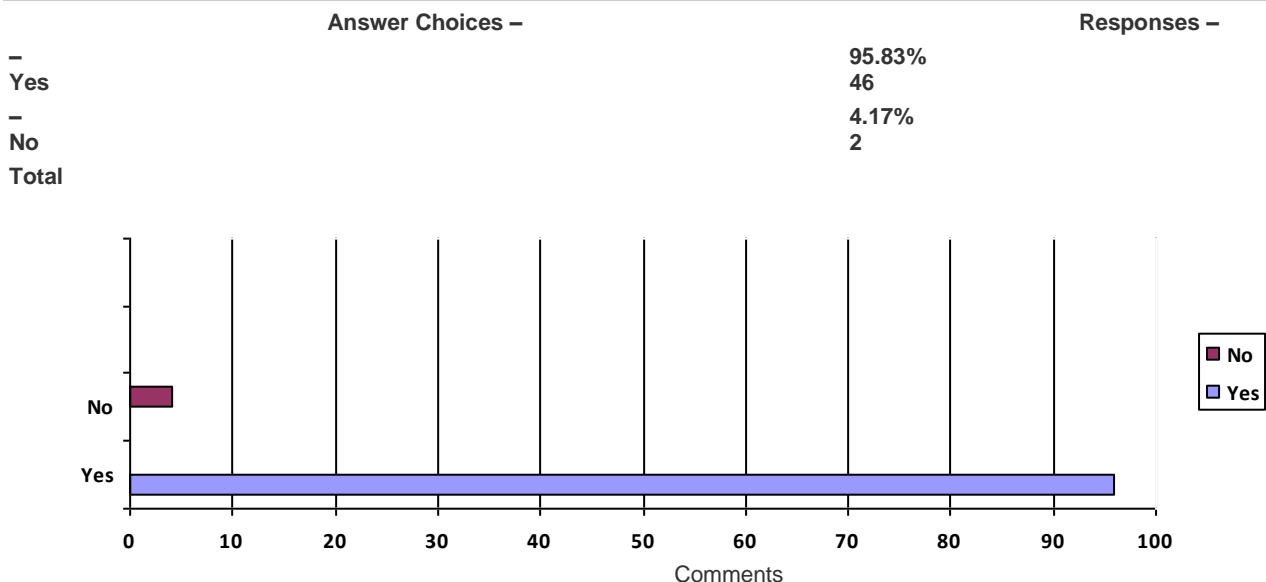
| Answer Choices – | Responses – |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| – | 12.50% |
| Clairemont Elementary School | 6 |
| – | 12.50% |
| College Heights Early Learning Center | 6 |
| – | 10.42% |
| Decatur High School | 5 |
| – | 12.50% |
| 4/5 Academy at Fifth Avenue | 6 |
| – | 18.75% |
| Glennwood Elementary School | 9 |
| – | 8.33% |
| Oakhurst Elementary School | 4 |
| – | 10.42% |
| Renfroe Middle School | 5 |
| – | 8.33% |
| Westchester Elementary School | 4 |
| – | 6.25% |
| Winnona Park Elementary School | 3 |
| Total | 48 |



What role do you serve on your School's Leadership Team/Advisory Council?



Do you feel comfortable with your role as a School Leadership Team member/Advisory Council Member?



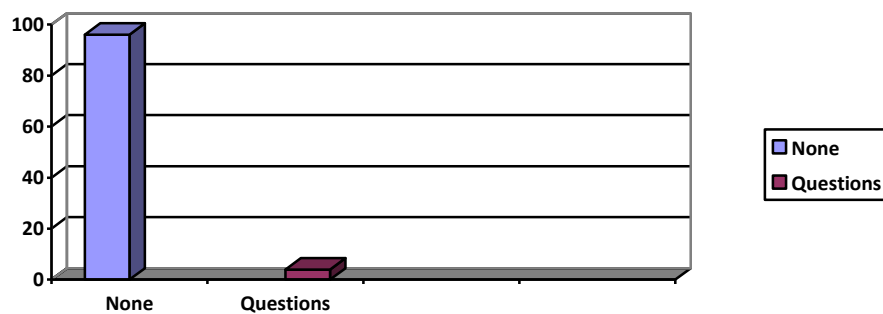
1. Still unsure of all the contours of official duties, limitations, expectations, and even district resources (e.g., email addresses, website or other official online "work areas," etc.). However, I do feel comfortable in my core

knowledge because of the amount of research I did on my own when considering to run (read CSD's charter contract, read FAVE's School Improvement Plan, researched other charter school board best practices, etc.) combined with my own years of experience on a different governing board. Some better way of communicating institutional memory and a "common vision" for how SLTs work in CSD would still be extremely helpful.

2. I am comfortable as chair of the F.AVE SLT, but wish very much there would have been a manual or documentation for me to study/learn from during my early tenure.
3. Sometimes. I am comfortable in my general role on SLT, but sometimes my role as Chair is uncomfortable and unclear. It is sometimes unclear to me how the role of the Principal differs from the role of the Chair. It seems like communication from Central Office should go directly to Chairs, as leaders of the SLT's, not to Principals, that Principals have the distinct role of running the school, not the SLT. I am more and more of the opinion that the role of Principal and the role of SLT Chair should be held by 2 separate people. I know this is more common at FAVE, RMS and DHS, not so much in the elem schools, except for GL? I think the Principal has a specific viewpoint that should be represented and advocated for, whereas a Chair is a more unbiased moderator, communicator and task-driver. This is particularly important if the SLT reaches sticky situations that involve parents and administration (as seen at GL last spring during our outdoor space/turnaround issue). The Principal, if not the Chair, is then free to advocate a position based on his or her expertise and the Chair is free to oversee the process and spend efforts consensus-building.
4. I'm the secretary and am happy to take minutes, but was never trained on e-board, so I don't know how to post anything.
5. I feel comfortable with my role as an SLT member, and have encouraged other parents to attend our work sessions and to present regarding topics/issues that concerned them, or suggestions. It has been very productive. But, I think we can do better about educating the parents what the SLT does, and how we serve the school. I don't think most parents really understand the role of the SLT very well.
6. I don't know what is meant by the word "comfortable" in this question. I would say that I am "uncomfortable" because I believe that the SLT's could be much more effective than they actually are.

What questions do you have about your role as a SLT Member/Advisory Council Member?

| Answer Choices – | Responses – |
|------------------|-------------|
| None | 96.00% |
| Questions | 4.00% |
| Total | 48 |



Comments

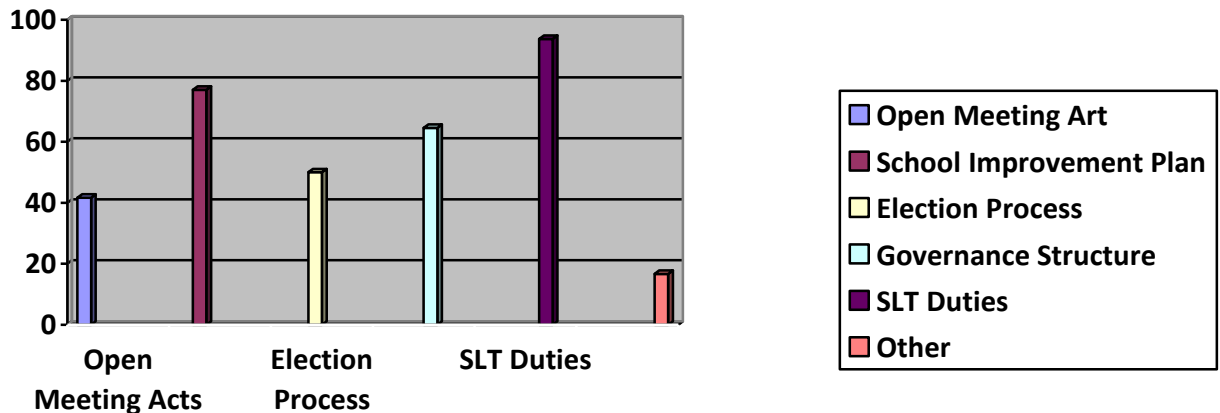
1. What are the boundaries of communication among SLT members between meetings as we try to get work done? What would constitute an official meeting? What sort of normal working conversations are allowed? 2. What role do standing committees typically play? 3. How is the institutional memory of our SLT preserved (other than via minutes)? 4. Our election process seemed to be different from the process laid out in the system charter document as far as timing and confusion about how many votes each family got (I thought it was one per *child*, but it seemed to be executed as one per *family*).
2. Could the Central office have a training for Chairs at the start of the term that ensures all Chairs can attend? (I work on weekends and have never made an important general training.) I think specific guidance from central on what is expected of my SLT and who I report to is important. I am never quite sure who to go to with my questions at central office as the leader of the SLT. I think the 2-year-term is a hindrance in some cases. It de-incentivizes parents in their final year at a school from

running for SLT, especially at FAVE where children are only there for 2 years. I assume this is a charter requirement, but explanation would be helpful I have similar feelings about the October-September term year. We have 3rd grade parents at GL who have made it clear that they are not attending in August/September to finish their term b/c their children will be gone to 4/5. This is a set-back for starting up the year that actually starts in August. Can these dates be changed? I am guessing not.

3. Am I supposed to just take minutes?
4. I feel comfortable with my role now, but at first, it was very helpful to attend the training session that was held in the fall because it helped explain the role. When I first ran for the SLT position I only had a very high-level understanding of the role.
5. What is the appropriate way to ask for an issue to be brought up in SLT? I would love to have an agenda prior to the meeting so that I can ask teachers and represent them accurately.

Which topics would you like to see in the School Leadership Team Manual?

| Answer Choices – | Responses – |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| – | 41.67% |
| Open Meetings (Act) | 20 |
| – | 77.08% |
| School Improvement Planning | 37 |
| – | 50.00% |
| Elections Process | 24 |
| – | 64.58% |
| School System Governance Structure | 31 |
| – | 93.75% |
| SLT Duties | 45 |
| – | 16.67% |
| Other | 8 |



Comments

1. Some sort of basic typical legislative calendar/agenda framework that's probably pretty standard across all schools that could then be customizable at each school: E.g., in December the budget process is typically started; in February we start to discuss hiring; etc. 2. Best practices for building teamwork and improving the functioning of the SLT as a board (board development). 3. How to log on to CSD email account and access website features (this could be start with a "welcome email" that includes a temporary password that then unlocks an online section that would provide the rest of the training). With some sort of electronic signature required to acknowledge that you've completed the training. 4. I would like to see as much of this manual online as a living document as possible. (Many other school systems do this; it increases transparency and allows parents to get basic questions answered as they decide to run for a seat or not.) 5. Strongly suggest looking at other school systems and the topics they cover and how they organize their manuals online. We don't need to re-invent the wheel! Only customize it for our particular situation. 6. I think School Improvement Planning and SLT Duties should be the

largest sections of the manual; I would imagine the Open Meetings Act, Elections Process, and School System Governance Structure to be rather perfunctory in comparison.

2. Modified Roberts rules and other procedural documents 2. I would like to see specific information on how SLT members can acquire/access school-level data from MAP, CCRPI, and other indicators so we are able to competently weigh in on SIPs with evidence in hand. 3. Procedures for emergencies, and the SLTs role in emergencies and emergency preparedness.
3. None
4. I have had many questions over the years that I think a manual can help with. Off the top of my head here are a few important topics/questions: Whose role is it to create the SIP: Principal or SLT as a whole with leadership from the Chair? How elections work, who oversees them, how many spaces are on each SLT and what can be filled minimum/maximum, who counts votes, does someone watch the counter? The structure of SLT's in general, what power SLT's have/don't have, who is the general system-wide head of the SLT/who oversees problems/issues within SLT's if Chairs need assistance? Duties--why do SLT's approve budgets if we have no say in the content of them? Where is the line between principals creating school policies vs. SLT creating policies? When is it appropriate for SLT's to participate in those conversations? What are our legal responsibilities as an organization? This could be a topic during a Chairs' training. What about minutes, quorum, posting of agendas, etc.? I feel mostly comfortable Chairing the SLT b/c I have prior experience running a non-profit Board of Directors and am familiar with protocol. Not all organizations have the same requirements. I at least know which questions to ask, but often feel like there is no set answer, so I am looking forward to a manual and feel it will be very helpful. I think I would feel completely lost without that prior experience, as I feel I have not been trained or really supported on how to run an SLT, i.e., how to coordinate with a Secretary, how to set an agenda, requirements for giving notice of meetings, how to run a meeting, how to oversee Committees and tasks, how to vote online, how to count quorum and report minutes. I know these things based on my prior role, not because CSD has trained or supported me as Chair in this. I think training Chairs on these tasks/expectations would be exceedingly helpful and allowing Chairs to rely on Central Office and a generalized manual would be beneficial. This could really benefit consistency and communication.
5. Include a copy of both the system charter and the school charter.
6. It might be helpful to illustrate the role of the SLT member by giving some examples of things that an SLT member should do, and possible responsibilities. Also, possibly provide some examples of what an SLT member is not expected or supposed to do.
7. Elections process is covered very clearly by the bylaws. A manual on the other topics would be helpful.
8. suggested developing, monitoring, reporting SIP schedule -How to post meetings and policies for doing so -communication policies (for schools communicating with parents and community) -contact list (telephone/email) for school and CSD --Best Practices for Monitoring SIP -IB program monitoring schedule (when does it come up for renewal etc.)
9. eBoard
10. At the annual trainings for SLT members, there is great emphasis placed on what we cannot or should not do. So the manual should really represent what we SHOULD do, how we SHOULD embrace our roles.
11. I am not sure what the Open Meetings (Act) is

How can City Schools of Decatur support you as a School Leadership Team Member/Advisory Council Member?

Open Text Responses

1. Email: It would really help if, near the beginning of the year, a mass email could be sent out requesting an explicit response from all recipients to confirm that the email addresses that you all have down for us are working properly. I know SLT members have missed really valuable events and opportunities to provide feedback because of the email issue. Or we could input/confirm our email addresses online. Regardless, the way it's done now seems like it's both time-consuming to administer and unfortunately too prone to error. Point person: Ms. Moore has been amazing. I realize that Dr. Kennedy has official responsibility over all the SLTs (and she has been very supportive), but she is very busy. Is it best we contact Ms. Moore first with an SLT issues? Training: Not sure the district's current training schedule of beginning of October works well with the relatively new election schedule? At FAVE new members weren't elected yet when the training happened and so they missed the training. This could be solved, of course, by moving the elections to an earlier date (allowing training to continue at the October date) and then just not swearing in the new members till sometime in October. Nametags: Would love to have name tags for all SLT members so we could be more visible and recognizable at school and district-wide events.
2. Develop a training that encompasses the materials in the manual.
3. 1. Communicate with SLT members directly, not through the principal. 2. Use an email address we provide; do not assume we're all using the csdecatur email system. 3. Provide a POC who touches base with us on occasion. 4. Create a more sensible approach for SLT involvement on SIPs, including timeframes for completion that make sense. 5. Invite all SLT members to a mid-year check-in session, in which we can discuss issues, have peer-to-peer learning, etc. 6. Provide materials prior to the start of a school year, including manual, tip sheets, contact info, resources/templates, etc. 7. SLT new member orientation unfortunately occurred this year before new members were elected (at least at F.AVE). Timing of elections, new member orientation, and the SIP needs to be more sensible and doable. Presently, SLT elections take a long time to hold and then

confirm the new members; by then they've missed orientation and the SIP is mostly done, if not already completed. Surely there can be a more efficient approach... maybe hold elections before the end of the (prior) school year for the term beginning in the upcoming school year; confirm the members by the start of the school year; attend new member orientation in the first month of the school year, and complete the SIP by end of month 2. All this requires data to be in hand prior to settling on the SIP. Tall order!!

4. Continue as the system has done
5. Continue the great open communication and work of both parents and staff members.
6. As SLT continues to grow and develop I believe their role will be better defined. Right now I think everyone is still trying to figure out exactly what the SLT has a say in.
7. second round on SLT, so i have experience. best to get advice from newbies.
8. Set reasonable boundaries for parents.
9. I am not sure of the role of our Central Office rep. I have never met her. I guess that person can be more visible and provide support, but I am not sure of her role. CSD can be more supportive by holding meetings of the Chairs, so Chairs can meet other schools' Chair and discuss what other SLT's are doing and collaborate more. They can also have a central office rep. present at these meetings to answer questions about the general running of the SLT that may be pertinent to all schools. Not many meetings--maybe a training t the start of the year and one second semester. Please feel free to contact me: Julie Vazquez 404-492-5193 if anyone has any questions regarding my answers in this survey. I hope my thoughts will help guide the CSD SLT's in a positive direction of growth. Thanks for putting it out there!
10. Better explanation of expectations.
11. More district support
12. Continue on having parents and community members involved in school decision making that is in a separate forum from PTO.
13. No problems
14. I feel comfortable with the process overall as I've been on the committee since it began, but feel that some of the overall structure (formerly Robert's Rules) could be more clear. I think an updated manual is a great idea.
15. I feel supported.
16. I would like to see a webpage or regular communication about the districts main initiatives.
17. I am a system rep for WE and I understand my role and SLT.
18. Clear direction with procedures and policies. Also continued training with technology used.
19. Initial training was great. More assistance with onboarding new members, support and communication with chair and members (not just through principal).
20. School based training or smaller groups, perhaps K-5, 6-12. Large groups were not as effective.
21. The development of a manual that discusses the role and duties of SLT would offer more clarification for new members as well as prospective members
22. Provide various opportunities for e-board training.
23. I think Mr. Thomas and his SLT chair did a good job of introducing the role of the SLT at Renfro's curriculum night this year. SLT needs to be as recognizable as PTA.
24. I feel supported at this time.
25. I appreciated the training session in the fall. The training this year (fall 2014) was more helpful and specific regarding our roles as SLT members than the previous year (fall 2013). The majority of the direction we have as SLT members is our connection with the principal. Ms. Fountain has done a great job of involving the SLT in important discussions about school climate, and other topics we decided were of highest priority to our school, and to help us to set goals for the school year. It might be helpful to have the SLTs from different elementary schools meet at least once during the fall to collaborate so that we can learn from each other.
26. Keep us engage with the opportunity to provide feedback. Thanks!
27. City Schools can support our work in several ways: 1.Ensuring that we are informed of any changes in policy/structure that may be under consideration 2 Conveying to parents the structure of the academic support system that includes the SLT and our purpose 3. Provide district-wide goals that each SLT can assist in supporting/bringing to fruition 4. Continue to offer annual/semiannual training sessions to ensure compliance, effectiveness and best-practices.
28. The training is very helpful.
29. I feel like we are supported on the leadership team.
30. have a set policy for how to post open meetings (and communicate it)
31. Providing a handbook would be helpful so I am very glad to see this happening. I also think it is important to explain duties. I have now served on SLT at 3 different schools and the time commitment and duties have varied at each.
32. Have a manual with system-wide expectations.
33. Empower us. I believe that CSD views the SLTs as something that they have to tolerate because we are mentioned in the charter and because, historically, parents have been a source of anger and confrontation, rather than a source of solutions. So I think CSD could work harder to forge relationships with parent members while holding us accountable for being part of the solution rather than part of the problem.
34. More clarification on duties and responsibilities and role.
35. School Leadership Manual will be helpful.
36. Provide some background on the mission of the SLT/Advisory Council.

37. Our SLT is running just fine.
38. N/A
39. Schedule SLT events during the work day - not in evenings or on weekends
40. The handbook will be a useful tool. Please keep it simple with as little text as possible: economy of the word.
41. I would like to have the meeting schedule planned out at the beginning of the year as opposed to finding out each month.
42. Our SLT is functioning very well. Since we are new, we definitely need a manual to reference.
43. This School Leadership Team Manual will be a big help!
44. Specific examples of SLT member effective practices.
45. I get fantastic support from my principal.
46. Continue to provide guidelines and district info that supports our work