**Documentation of AVATAR Technical Assistance Conversation**

Participants: Ravae Shaeffer, ECS Region 20, and Mary Harris, AVATAR

Date: Tues. Feb. 12, 2013 Time: 7:45-8 and 10-10:15 a.m.

Status of documentation:

1. Documentation had not been received for meetings held on Oct. 29, Dec. 4, or Jan. 16. Now caught up!

Topics discussed:

1. Ravae described a meeting of Harlandale administrators that took place in November. Two of the middle school leaders were uncertain about teacher participation in AVATAR because of lack of clarity about purposes and competition for attention from other projects. Hearing from other administrators about this work was helpful in getting all or board, Currently 2 high school and 4 middle school teachers are participating.
2. Jeff Goldman and Ravae presented about AVATAR at a meeting of the Harlandale superintendent’s cabinet. The leaders are depending on teachers to introduce ideas that will increase college readiness for student through curriculum alignment with post-secondary partners.
3. In the work of the VAT, Ravae described the low-hanging fruit as adjusting grading policies, exposing high school students to a college syllabus, and discussing what is a “course” in college. The team is finding that high school and college expectations for a course differ in terms of grading policies, use of calculators, expectations of study, how to get help from the instructor.
4. A longer term project for the group is studying the use of calculators in terms of developing students’ basic functional skills and arithmetic skills. Also of interest are how to get student buy-in by providing reasons for instruction and how to help teachers acquire understandings of applications for mathematics learning.
5. The next meeting is schedules for Thurs. Feb 21. This meeting will include side-by-side study of syllabi and consideration of developmental mathematics.
6. Ravae said that the math VAT plans to continue its work next year. As part of the developing action plan, leaders of partner institutions will be consulted about their vision. So far, there is every indication that this work is valued and especially session that unpack the standards, both the foundation of the TEKS and knowledge of the ACGM core standards.
7. Next year, Region 20 plans to add an ELA team. Some key teachers have been involved as advisors in the math VAT. Summer training is planned for both teams.

Follow-up actions:

We need to discuss details of possible financial report for summer training.