

## **Report of the Board's Delegate to the Title I District Advisory Council (DAC)**

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May 25, 2017

*Submitted by Director Wendell J. Harris, Sr.*

### **Call to Order and Roll Call**

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The District Advisory Council's Executive Committee convened on April 6, 2017.

- Present ..... Larry McAdoo, Chairperson;  
                              Maria Ortiz, Vice Chairperson;  
                              Terry Longo, Parliamentarian;  
                              Wendy Baker, Sergeant at Arms;  
                              Valerie Lambrecht, Member at Large;  
                              Carianna Johnson, Member at Large;  
                              Robin Cianciola, Member at Large;  
                              Danielle Costello, MPS Family and Community Engagement Specialist;  
                              Kevin Curley, MPS Family and Community Engagement Associate
- Absent ..... Carmen Mills, Recording Secretary;  
                              Carl Porter, Corresponding Secretary.

### **MPS Family Engagement Report**

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Danielle Costello presented the MPS Family Engagement report.

- (1) Ms Costello reminded the Committee that they could sign up for reminder texts by texting *text@dac1617* to 81010.
- (2) She also announced that a Bilingual & ESL Forum was to be held at Pulaski High School from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. on May 6, 2017. English, Arabic, Spanish, and Hmong Interpreters would be present. There would be a raffle for laptops.
- (3) She reminded the Committee that, as a Safe Haven School District, MPS is committed to protecting our students, regardless of country of origin. We do not need to know or ever ask about a student's immigration status.

### **Unfinished Business**

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#### **Small-group Discussions — Summary**

- (1) What do Parent-Teacher Conferences look like at our school? Do we like them, or do we wish they were different?
  - (a) In general parents shared that most of the PTAs happen between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m., and parents have two nights to choose from. When they get to a meeting, they are able to meet with their children's teachers and administrators. For the most part, it is unstructured and it is first-come-first-served.
  - (b) For some schools, there are other parental-engagement events planned around the night, such as dinners, fundraisers and book sales. These are welcomed. Parents in one group appreciated having the parent coordinator there to help.
- (2) What should Parent-Teacher Conferences look like in MPS?

- (a) Many of the parents suggested that the conferences should be more organized and that there isn't enough time to meet with all of the teachers. Parents in several groups stressed that there should be both daytime and nighttime conferences. Some parents mentioned that principals should be more involved.
  - (b) Parents in many groups wanted to see more opportunities for parents to help lead and run the conferences — perhaps volunteer, fundraise, etc. On a similar note, the parents wished to see students also getting involved and helping to run the night.
- (3) How do we ensure that all parents have an opportunity to meet with their children's teachers each year?
- (a) An idea that came up frequently was that the conferences use online scheduling so that parents can sign up for time slots for teachers whom they know that they need to see. Another idea was that teachers should contact parents before the conference date to invite them if there is something specific that the teacher needs to discuss with them.
  - (b) Also mentioned frequently was that schools should have more options for nights on which to host conferences. Often parents feel forced to choose between which conferences to go to because they have children in multiple MPS schools. Perhaps conferences could be scheduled by grade level, with 2-3 grade levels per night across the district for a week.
  - (c) Organizing transportation, food, and childcare also would eliminate barriers for parents' participation. There should also be more of an effort to allow parents to participate digitally through the use of such technology as video conferencing.
- (4) What can we, as parents, do to help other parents take advantage of this opportunity to meet with their children's teachers?
- (a) The group discussion yielded a number of ideas to answer this question. One common thread was one of "transportation for parents" to the conferences. That could be transport provided by the district, carpooling, or even teachers offering to meet the parent closer to their homes, perhaps at a local restaurant or business. Beyond that, another suggestion is that teachers offer digital conferences for parents who can't be there in person. In addition to transportation, the provision of childcare was also discussed.
  - (b) Another a common thread was to have parents who are successfully engaged could mentor or partner with new parents. Parents could have meetings to share suggestions, could answer questionnaires about what would make conferences more appealing to them, and also could be offered trainings in order to feel more comfortable with interacting with school staff.
  - (c) The final common thread in this discussion was to make the conferences more social and community-oriented. Potlucks, children's activities, performances, and multicultural activities would be more inviting and engaging and would perhaps create more of a draw to the event.

## **New Business**

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### **Family Action and Training Committee**

Maria Ortiz explained that the Family Action and Training Committee plans and decides the topics of Family Forums. She asked members of the Executive Committee consider joining the Family Action and Training Committee for next year.

### **Positive Notes**

(1) Sara, a Parent Coordinator from Carver, reported on the March Family Event, at which parents and staff had gone skating. 192 people participated. Carver staff has noticed that parents participate more outside of the school.

(2) Rachel from McDowell reported that family movie night had been very well attended. McDowell is hoping to repeat this event.

(3) Maria from Fratney report that the school hosted a fundraiser that is growing with community contributions and is getting bigger and bigger. The community is donating time and resources.

(4) Tracy Dent from Pierce reported that April is Autism Awareness and Sexual Assault Awareness Month and that October will be anti-bullying month.

### **Student Assessments**

(1) Theresa Morateck presented the Assessment Inventory Project, in which school districts take inventory of assessments to determine if there are redundancies or gaps in the assessment process and that assessments are being used for their intended purposes.

(2) School feedback forms were included in the DAC's packets. DAC representatives were asked to seek feedback from school families and return the form at the DAC's meeting in May.

### **Equity Policy**

Dr. Latish Reed discussed the equity policy.

(1) She stated that stakeholders must understand MPS's definition of equity — *Equality* is giving everyone the same thing; *equity* is giving everyone what he or she needs.

(2) The Equity Commission convened in Spring 2016 to conduct a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis of other districts. It reviewed other districts' equity policies and produced a working-group draft.

(3) In Summer 2016, the PELP (Public Education Leadership Project) conducted a review of the District's equity policy.

(4) Stakeholders will review MPS equity policy and provide feedback.

(a) A motion was made by Tracy Dent from Pierce, and seconded from representative from 53<sup>rd</sup> Street, that this discussion held off until May, because there is too much information to digest and to discuss.

(b) A motion was made by Charles Manning from MFIS that, In order to receive feedback from DAC, the Equity Committee work on amending the policy for three week, stopping in the week prior to the DAC's May meeting (April 27), at which time the document would be distributed to DAC's members via email so that information can be digested. The motion was seconded by Tracy Dent. An amendment to the motion was made that this document be referred to the DAC's Executive Committee and representatives for

further review and consultation with Dr. Reed to provide feedback and that an *ad hoc* committee be formed to meet with Dr. Reed to present the findings to the DAC. Dmitria Anderson and Jacqueline from 53 Street seconded. Voice approval.

### Adjournment

Joyce from Hamilton motioned to adjourn and was seconded by Rachel from McDowell. Larry McAdoo adjourned the meeting at 7:47.

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