

EEE Committee Meeting | Tuesday, April 22, 2014

MELLON BOARD ROOM: 4:00PM

In Attendance

Azark Cobbs, Sujata Dey-Koontz, Lee Ann Kelly, Cathy Mannen, Karl Radnitzer, Judy Reynolds, Angela Smith, Mabinty Tarawallie, Laura Taylor, Susan Zola

Also present: Imani Bazzell, Justin Lopez

Ms. Smith passed around copies of the Scholastic packet for review. She requested that the meeting conclude by 5:15pm if possible to respect other meetings and schedules.

Review of March 2014 Meeting Minutes

The group reviewed the previous minutes. Ms. Kelly requested that for time and thoroughness, minutes possibly be sent prior to the meeting for review by the committee. No changes were proposed to the minutes. Ms. Smith motioned to approve the March 2014 minutes with no corrections, seconded by Mr. Cobbs.

4-Year Plans

The Sylvan Learning Center wants to help with physical 4-year plans for parents of 8th graders. With regard to involving parents in the curriculum planning process Ms. Smith shared the goal of building parent awareness and support without being married to a specific provider, but perhaps incorporating several resources and platforms. This would primarily be applied to creating plans for students when they leave 8th grade (currently kept in school records at buildings) that would get this information out to parents. Ms. Kelly pointed out that Career Cruising does this to some extent – recording attendance, pathways, choices, directions, etc. But the parent participation is still relatively low. The created 4-year plan would be a more comprehensive checklist of course sequences to give families an early understanding (prior to freshman year) of career paths and options later at the high school level in order to meet goals. Ms. Dey-Koontz expressed the need to make certain that parents also understand that they are not limited or strictly confined by this plan. This document would also potentially become a physical tool by which students and their parents can self-evaluate or reflect on curriculum choices as well as review current decisions. The primary objective is to make certain that parents are involved in these conversations.

Career Fairs

Ms. Smith noted that our students are generally participating in the career fair at Parkland (via school field trips) and not other fairs in the community. However, she has discussed with Marc Changnon the potential of reconnecting with the other major career fair to offer the maximum number of opportunities to our students and help them prepare for all career options. Dr. Taylor shared that shadowing opportunities also exist at the high school level thru ECP as well. Ms. Dey-Koontz conveyed how different cultures place different levels of importance on learning/fields of study and the role this might have in influencing or impacting involvement.

Draft Parent Map

The committee reviewed the draft parent map timeline. The purpose of this map would be to get more information out to parents by providing a milestones document for K-12. The committee agreed that this timeline draft could be used as a guideline to develop a more specific and comprehensive document at each grade level. Dr. Taylor suggested incorporating items such as knowing the importance of test scores (ACT Aspire) at the high school level. The committee discussed the possibility of organizing this document by grade level to create a more reader friendly version that reflected the student's progression at each stage. Ms. Kelly noted that this document should not only provide more information on what events are taking place (Open House, Parent/Teacher Conferences, etc.), but also provide an understanding of reasons why these events are important and what the benefits are of attending. The committee agreed that the best format would be to create a K-12 quick fact book with one page dedicated

to each grade level. This could include important items to know at the start of each school year as well as a reference section for parents containing information on who to contact for information, questions, and processes. Ms. Smith will bring this to Assistant Superintendents and Building Principals for further work to present back to the group.

Important Dates

June 3: Last Day of School for Students (Regular Calendar)

June 9: Last Day of School for Students (Balanced Calendar)

Summer School

General summer school information (dates, times, and locations) was reviewed for all grade levels. Student information will be provided at a later meeting for distribution to the community. Dr. Zola stated that the locations at the elementary level are limited this year due to construction throughout the District. Ms. Smith reviewed the various middle school programs and locations. Dr. Taylor noted that at the high school level, summer school is designed for students who either fail a course or desire to get ahead. Unit 4 summer school programs are free of cost to students except for students enrolled in courses to get ahead at the high school level.

Ms. Bazzell questioned the role of the committee in terms of understanding the targeted demographic as it pertains to the group conversations. Ms. Smith clarified that the purpose of the committee is to respond to achievement data (established at the start of the committee), not just to report the data in general. She also stated that there are initiatives focused specifically on African-American students.

Mr. Radnitzer asked what data will be available after the completion of summer school in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the current programs as well as the possibility of creating programs composed of enrichment activities to excite and create an interest in learning among students. Ms. Smith answered that entry, baseline, midpoint assessment, and exit data are all available to evaluate how students are responding to summer school programs. It might also be necessary to implement a student survey to track the effectiveness of these experiences. In addition, Ms. Smith noted that the pilot programs created at the middle school level could potentially offer not only additional support opportunities but extend an interest in math, STEM, and college for diverse groups. Dr. Zola remarked that enrichment activities are also incorporated as part of the regular programs at the elementary level. Committee discussion focused on what happens to students who do not have access to resources during the summer. Ms. Tarawallie questioned how the District could create targeted efforts to specifically support African-American males in the summer. Dr. Taylor noted the financial constrictions with regard to summer school models and that the goal is to provide the best services possible for all struggling students while working within these limits. All summer information will be shared with the community via the Resource Fair (Audrey Mock) on May 16.

Student Portfolios

Information was discussed regarding 3rd grade portfolios for African-American male students to document their experiences while incorporating ongoing events. The objective is to help create a strong sense of identity, create conversations, and build relationships that are meaningful beyond the activity. The next step is to create an overall action plan which includes mapping out the project (Ms. Kelly and Mr. Cobbs will research similar models), sharing strategies that are already successful and replicating them, and perhaps piloting the activity in one elementary school.

Future Meetings

No future meetings were scheduled. Discussion centered around possibly making the June meeting a working meeting and scheduling the data meeting for a later date. Ms. Smith's office will send out the final confirmation.