



## **EEE Committee Meeting**

**July 17, 2014**

*Revised and Approved 9/14/14*

A meeting of the EEE Committee was held on Thursday, July 17, 2014 beginning at 4:00 p.m. in the Mellon Board Room. Members present: Angela Smith, Laura Taylor, Judy Wiegand, Azark Cobbs, Lee Ann Kelly, Alejandra Aguero and Sujata dey Koontz. Also present: Susan Zola, Michael Lehr, Jaime Roundtree, Orlando Thomas and Elizabeth deGruy.

Angela Smith welcomed the Committee and asked for a review of the minutes. Ms. Smith mentioned that Laura Taylor did not receive an email for the subcommittees (Portfolio Project and Timeline committees). A motion was made by Lee Ann Kelly, seconded by Laura Taylor to approve the meeting minutes as amended.

Ms. Smith said the focus of today's meeting would be to hear reports on student achievement and data sharing presentations. Dr. Wiegand recalled one of the edicts coming from the Consent Decree was that the Superintendent would report out to the EEE Committee on areas of student achievement, discipline and special education. She continued that Orlando Thomas and Elizabeth deGruy were on hand to present data and answer questions in the areas of discipline and special education respectively. She also introduced new positions filled by Jaime Roundtree, Director of Elementary Teaching and Learning and Michael Lehr, Director of Secondary Teaching and Learning.

Elementary Update: Dr. Susan Zola, Assistant Superintendent, shared AIMSweb data for K-5. She explained that AIMSweb provides three benchmarks per year and is a nationally normed assessment. Susan informed the committee the District will be using a different assessment next year. Jaime Roundtree explained the assessment process at the elementary level. Susan noted the target changes throughout the year. Elizabeth deGruy clarified the assessment comparisons stating the national norms are based on *all* student results and are not a breakdown by subgroups.

Dr. Zola shared three years of data on the Gifted program noting there is a drop in African American enrollment in the program. Susan said there are a lot of variables in recommendation guidelines. She said administration has had discussions about the need to take leadership on ensuring more AA participation in the program. Program recommendations are based on student portfolios, academic participation and teacher/parent input. It was noted that some parents may not want to place their child in a self-contained classroom or possibly have to move to another school where the Gifted program is in place.

Dr. Zola noted that the Enrichment program still needs work as well. She said we need to be better at reaching out to students. A Committee member questioned if the number (27) was the total enrollment for

African American students in the Gifted program. Dr. Zola confirmed that it was, noting that spots are open. She said the District was more attentive to Gifted enrollment in 2012 and that we are making sure that conversations are occurring with elementary principals and teachers.

Angela Smith said the middle level is reaching out to incoming 6<sup>th</sup> grades students to assist with Honors programming. She said there has been a slight downward trend in the percentage of students enrolling at the middle level as well. Dr. Wiegand said that one of the factors is how we are defining Gifted. Ms. Smith continued that AIMSweb is a “temperature” reading that tells us we need to look deeper. She said when we look at African American data it continues to “stick out” in our trend data; however we do realize State and National testing expectations have also increased. Angela said when she examines the data at the middle level students, in particular African American and Latino, are increasing in their fluency, just not fast enough.

Laura Taylor addressed high school data, noting new ACT-Aspire testing will be in place and will enable the District to better follow cohort groups. Committee members questioned different ways to look at the data, asking if it looks at SES and ethnicity together. Dr. Taylor said with ACT, by the time the scores are received, students are way beyond from when they actually take the test. She indicated she will be presenting data to the BOE. She said the District now has Explore data as well. She noted that it is important to look at the term “college ready coursework”. Laura stated the ACT is scored differently. It is nationally normed. She shared the District’s African American subgroup average on the ACT is 15.9. Ideally students score 20+ for college entry. She also shared that in 2013 ACT included special education student scores for the first time which changed the norms. Laura said that Illinois is one of approximately 12 states that test all juniors, noting the District is below in some areas for AA students. Dr. Taylor shared that grad rates are a little better. Changes in the way grad rates are calculated have hurt numbers for the District given the mobility rate. Overall grad rates at Centennial are higher and Central rates increased as well and were above State. Some of the increase can also be attributed to better data management. Dr. Taylor also mentioned the addition of APEX at Central. She said that AP trends have been a focus of the work at the high schools, with one high school making a dramatic increase and both high schools are equal or above the State. Discussions have also taken place about increasing the supports and rigor for AA students in the AP/Honors courses. Angela Smith noted that principals are revisiting honors support plans for minority students.

Elizabeth deGruy presented information on special ed data. She spoke about the relative risk ratio, notably how likely a member of a subgroup would be identified for sped placement. African Americans are 1.6 *more* likely to be identified than the rest of the population. In response to a Committee member’s question why this occurs, Elizabeth said that could be seen more in the breakdown category. First, there is a change in the way the State is requiring identification; are they achieving as expected? are they making academic growth? In response to questions about socio economic statistics, Elizabeth shared that FRL is 1.5 times more likely to be identified, noting a significant difference than the African American rate. Action steps:

- Shore up classroom instruction/interventions
- Review procedures by which we evaluate students
- Looking at assessments
- Looking at cut scores

- Implemented an eligibility audit to ensure they meet criteria

Elizabeth shared there is a decline in Intellectual Disability category which is determined by an IQ below 70 or adaptive behaviors. The District is over-represented in all groups for Speech/Language identification. Emotional Disability is not always identified early. She said the Pavilion opened new beds this year and all students coming in are automatically included in Unit 4's data. Elizabeth explained that ADHD can be identified as an emotional disability or other health impairments, but it does not necessarily mean special education identification.

Laura Taylor shared the District's discipline data report in Mr. Thomas' absence. She said there has been a downward trend in referrals, noting a slight improvement this year. The biggest uptake was in the elementary schools. This could be partly due to newer administration. She shared that leadership has been meeting with building principals and several schools have strong systems in place. She said that middle school numbers are steady and high school numbers are down. Hall monitors and SROs have made a positive difference. The African American 5 year trend is higher than other subgroups and increased from last year. Males have a higher rate than females. African Americans are also leading in suspensions. Laura said the District is looking at the gap between AA and other groups. She said the District is also talking about how "we" as adults need to approach students in a manner that de-escalates the situation and look closer at DR/Suspensions that are subjective. Susan Zola added the ratio of multiple offenses is also a factor in the numbers, noting that 90% of the student population has never been suspended. Laura added that Unit 4 does expel students, but seeks alternative placement options. A new system of guidelines has been implemented. Conversations around what is best for the child are occurring.

- Novak Academy, also scheduled to present to the Committee, will be tabled due to the lateness of the meeting.
- Ms. Smith said the Committee has been given a lot of information to "digest". Suggested meeting dates were discussed. Regular meetings will be held on September 18, December 11, March 19 and June 11.
- Scholastic mailings have been occurring over the summer. The Committee discussed ways to get feedback on the success of the mailings.
- Angela said the Portfolio taskforce team includes Azark Cobbs, Lee Ann Kelly and Angela Smith. Parent Timelines taskforce members currently are Laura Taylor, Judy Wiegand and Sujata deYKoontz. Other Committee members who wish to participate should contact Gayle Griffin-Jordan.

Meeting adjourned: 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Gayle Griffin-Jordan  
Recording Secretary