

**Discipline Equity/Advisory Task Force Meeting
September 12, 2013**

Present:

Katie Ahsell, Jefferson	Ryan Cowell, Centennial
Katharine Fettig, Central	April Harris, Mellon
Stephanie Hayek, CECC	Melissa Kneller, Garden Hills
Cathy Mannen, CFT/Bottenfield	Ileana Saveley, School Board
Kyle Sondgeroth, Bottenfield	Jeanne Smith, Recorder, Mellon
Orlando Thomas, Chair, Mellon	

Introductions, Meeting Norms and Dates

Committee members introduced themselves, developed meeting norms, and Orlando Thomas reviewed upcoming meeting dates.

Oct. 1, 2013 Work Day

Orlando announced an upcoming Task Force work day and distributed two documents to be reviewed in preparation for the event (Root Cause Analysis Workbook and Guiding Questions). Dr. Maria Hernandez of the NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development will lead the work session which will focus on reviewing both the Student Code of Conduct and the elementary, middle, and high school discipline referrals. Jeanne Smith will send meeting details to Task Force members. Orlando's office will cover the cost of subs for members needing subs.

2012-13 Year-End Discipline Data

Orlando reviewed 2012-13 suspensions (by grade level, campus, gender, ethnicity, special ed. status, and incident); total discipline referrals by ethnicity; and attendance rates. Suspension trend data is moving downward at the middle and high school levels, but upward at the elementary level. Reasons for these trends were hypothesized. African-American students continue to account for approximately 70% of all suspensions despite a host of interventions and supports designed to curb this trend.

The group discussed two of the top causes for suspension, physical confrontations with students and physical confrontations with staff, and possible reasons for this:

- 1) Cultural differences between African-American students and white teachers.
- 2) Teacher-student conflict cycle.
- 3) Community issues, particularly ones involving social media, lead to physical confrontations at school.
- 4) Elementary-aged students lack peer relationship skills.
- 5) Elementary-aged physical confrontations with peers tend to occur during unstructured activities/transition times.

- 6) Students from different cultures solve conflicts differently; disconnect between community and school expectations.
- 7) Lack of trust among students for people in positions of authority (police, school officials).
- 8) Bus and bus stops continue to be locations where many conflicts originate.

Orlando reported that the issue of portal-to-portal authority by school officials is being re-evaluated and advice from legal counsel may be sought. The relationship between portal-to-portal and “nexus” will be also be considered. Task force members opined on this topic.

2013-14 Action Steps

Orlando shared a PowerPoint presentation that summarized the various initiatives the District has put in place in an effort to improve student behavior and reduce racial disparities in the area of discipline. These initiatives were grouped by focus area, e.g., student leadership, parent involvement, extracurricular involvement, etc. Initiatives included:

ACTIONS Program
Early Identification Warning System
Transition Committee
CEBRIN Teen Institute
Parent Advisory Committee
Expulsion decision making form
Extracurricular data tracking form
PBF commercials

Ticket Out/Reflection

Task Force members were asked to complete a survey that posed the following questions:

- 1) What brought you to this committee?
- 2) What do you hope to accomplish for the students of Champaign Unit 4 by being a member of this committee?
- 3) As you consider the root cause of the disparity in Champaign Unit 4, what do you consider the greatest challenge and what suggestions can you share to address this issue?

Orlando also asked task force members to rate how well this meeting met their expectations. Results of the survey will be tallied and reviewed by Orlando.

Upcoming Meetings: October 1, 2013 Work Day: 9:00 – 4:00 in the Mellon Board Room.
October 10, 2013 at 4:00 in the Mellon Board Room.

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