



EEE Committee Meeting Minutes

October 19, 2017

A meeting for the EEE committee took place on October 19, 2017, in the Mellon Board Room. Committee members in attendance were: Dr. Susan Zola, Angela Ward, Dr. Elizabeth deGruy, Dr. Laura Taylor, Kathy Richards, Kathy Shannon, Stephanie Eckels, Lisa Milkereit, Angela Schoonover, Dr. Raina Dyer-Barr, Jennifer Enoch, Raya Hegeman-Davis, and Lee Ann Kelly.

Welcome and Introductions

Mrs. Ward welcomed the new EEE committee members, reading a brief description and introduction of each committee member. Many of them have children in Unit 4 and all have an interest in the success of Unit 4 students.

Revisiting Our Purpose & Past

Mrs. Ward provided a brief history of EEE for new members and shared the purpose of the committee is about. The committee has the authority to have ad-hoc meetings if they wish. She noted today's meeting is the second half of our presentation and will focus on Special Education and Discipline. The first half was presented at the August 24th meeting and focused on academics throughout each grade level. Mrs. Ward will be available for questions regarding that presentation after the meeting if need be. Copies of the academic report were mailed home to new members.

Special Education Data Presentation

Dr. Elizabeth deGruy informed the committee that Orlando Thomas is out recovering from surgery so she will be presenting the Special Education data as well as the Discipline portion of the presentation. If there are any questions she can not answer regarding discipline, she will write them down and take back to Orlando for answers.

Dr. deGruy presented the data for Special Education (SPED). Explaining relative risk ratio as a way to express the probability of something happening to a particular group compared to the probability of the same thing happening to the comparison group. Relative risk ratio of one person means this group has the same risk as a member of all the other groups to have a certain characteristic. Less than one, there is less risk and if greater than one, there is greater risk in the group than in the comparison group. In SPED, they look at all categories and then individual discipline categories. In Illinois, relative risk ratios are monitored in special education to determine disproportionality. Ratios of 3.0 are monitored by ISBE. Looking at all special education, if you are a student who is caucasian, your risk ratio is .8%, slightly less than the rest of the group. If you are an african american student, your risk ratio is almost 1.6% as being identified as a child with a disability and having an IEP.

Specific learning disabilities is our area of greatest concern. African american students are approximately 3.7 times more likely than members of other groups to be identified as a child with a learning disability. Percentages were down, they went up, and then back down again.

LeeAnn Kelly asked why Dr deGruy thinks it is a pattern of rising and then back down? Dr. deGruy answered some of the specific areas being looked at are reading, math, and writing. Most kids are eligible in reading and identified at the elementary level. The SPED department focused professional development for the elementary level and picked out specific areas like reading. Students are evaluated every 3 years and we have started to see most of the kids move out of the

category. We are hopeful it is part of the contributions to those numbers going down. The rise is also due to a shift in label for some of our kids. Dr. deGruy explained we are not just trying to decrease the number of african american students. We are trying to design our curriculum both in SPED and before kids are identified, to make sure our core curriculum meets the needs of a wide range of students. It is not just a decrease in numbers, it is about a risk to a population.

Dr. deGruy continued presenting autism within special education. An overall presentation of caucasian students, which happens nationally in this category. We do not require a medical diagnosis unlike some districts. Intellectual Disability category shows how disparity in this population was decreasing and the specific learning disability was increasing.

Speech & Language numbers have went down. Hispanics do not fall within those numbers so the numbers for Hispanics is very high due to them having a very small population in regards to where they fall in this category.

Dr. deGruy mentioned free and reduced lunch has a higher risk but that does not explain the disparity of our african american students. If it was about poverty the numbers would be very different.

Emotional Disability numbers have increased compared to where we have started. June of 2015, the Pavilion opened a new wing of beds and those kids are counted in these numbers, which is a contributing factor to the higher numbers and is out of our control.

Mrs. Shannon asked do we ever pull out the intersection of races and free and reduced lunch? Dr. deGruy answered she can pull it out in terms of number of students but she cannot pull it out in terms of a risk ratio. It is a binary statistic.

Discipline - Culture and Climate Data Presentation

Dr. deGruy presented the Culture and Climate data from over the last five years. Stating numbers have dropped drastically due to kids going to ACTIONS (Alternative Center for Targeted Instruction and ONgoing Support). ACTIONS is a program created for 1-12 grades by the Champaign Unit 4 School District that strives to reduce recidivism in suspensions by providing student education during days of suspension, parent and family education, and teacher education in classroom management strategies. The combined systems of support are designed to work synchronously to replace students' undesirable behavior with appropriate social skills.

Lee Ann Kelly asked do we know if kids in ACTIONS are included within the suspension numbers? Orlando responded by email stating the students attending ACTIONS are not included in the numbers in the report.

Middle School and High School suspension trend numbers have decreased.

Alternative Placements have been put in place within our district so that students are not kicked to the streets. Expulsions do not happen within our district. Expelling a student means you are kicked to the streets and you do not get an education. We send kids to alternative placements and homebound. READY (Regional Education Alternative for Developing Youth) is an illinois safe school through the regional office of education, taking students within Champaign-Ford counties. It is given to Unit 4 as an option for students to attend as an alternative placement.

Yes, the numbers are straight expulsions.

Angela Schoonover asked if the suspension by incident numbers reflect the students that go to ACTIONS or not? Orlando responded by email stating they do not. They only reflect the student's that do not attend, and incidents that are coded out of school suspensions.

Dr. deGruy continued presenting that 97% of our students are never suspended. All K-12 levels have been reviewing the multi-tiered systems we have in place and some are particular to certain campuses. We have ongoing conversations about disciplinary consequences to insure consistency

as well. We are working with the Youth Assessment Center, looking at restorative practises, trauma work, youth mental health first aid trainings, and conducting elementary professional development on positive behavior. We have done training for CBITS (Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Training in Schools) , which is a new intervention for kids who are demonstrating symptoms of PTSD. Trauma 101 is 6 hrs long and the entire Unit 4 staff will have completed it by next year as well.

Mrs. Ward brought attention to the magazines placed around the tables. These magazines are sent home to a group of 3rd graders, as well as placed in barber shops and other places we know kids will read them, in order to help promote a more literate community.

Mrs. Ward ended the meeting bringing attention to the one-page highlight sheet that tells about district spotlights and intentions. She asked if there were any other questions or anything anyone wanted to add.

Dr. Zola added as members of EEE if there is something that you want to do or see more of please bring it to our attention.

Dr. Raina Dyer-Barr asked where she could find some of the programs that are already in progress for Unit 4? Mrs. Ward let Dr. Dyer-Barr know she will bring information to the next meeting or send it out to the committee. Yearly Annual Report is something that is good for that information as well.

Next two EEE meetings will be February 22 and April 26, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Smith