

Discipline Equity Task Force Meeting
October 8, 2015

Present:

Katie Ahsell, ACTIONS	Kendra Bonam, Centennial
Ann Cochrane, Carrie Busey/CFT	Danielle Cook, Jefferson
Katharine Fettig, Central	Stephanie Hayek, CECC
Gwenetta Posey, Dr. Howard	Ben Trupin, Mellon
Jonathan Westfield, Board of Ed.	Joel Wright, Jefferson
Bryan Yacko, Central	Jill Johnson, Garden Hills

Guest:

Donna Kaufman, READY

Celebrations

Gwenetta Posey celebrated that she had not written any DRs yet this year.

Jill Johnson reported that Garden Hills didn't suspended anyone today.

Orlando Thomas reported that he resolved three issues brought to him today by parents.

Senate Bill 100: Impact on Disruptive Behavior and Disobedience Code Violations

Orlando reported that he attended an informational session on Senate Bill 100 at the ROE today. He stated that it was explained that when SB 100 is enacted next year, the criteria for determining whether an out-of-school suspension (of three days or less) is warranted will be: 1) Does the student's continuing presence in school pose a threat to school safety? or 2) Did the behavior impact or disrupt the entire school?

Orlando stated that suspensions for the two most subjective (secondary) violations in the Code, #6 Disobedience and #7 Disruptive Behavior, may become difficult to rationalize given SB 100's requirements. To make that point, Orlando presented ten real disruptive or disobedience scenarios and asked everyone to vote whether they met the threshold for out-of-school suspension. The number of task force members who voted to suspend varied from 0 to 8; there were 13 respondents total. It was then revealed that each scenario was taken from a District suspension letter. This exercise demonstrated the subjective nature of these violations. Orlando asked the task force whether they support keeping these two violations in the Code for next year. Discussion on this topic included the following comments:

- 1) Change definitions for these two behaviors to try to make them less subjective.
- 2) Provide more training for teachers in the writing of DRs so that subjective behaviors are either ignored or dealt with in a less punitive way.
- 3) Provide teachers with restorative practices training so that subjective behaviors are dealt with using restorative measures.
- 4) Leave violations in Code but revise consequences listed.

Orlando reported that one of the major components of SB 100 is to exhaust all possible interventions prior to resorting to out-of-school suspension. Towards that end, it was suggested that the Code be reformatted so that interventions are prominently displayed, possibly alongside each violation as a “menu” of options, so that administrators are reminded to use them instead of punitive measures. Some on the committee believed the correct response to student misbehavior should be a combination of intervention/support and punishment. It was acknowledged that training for staff is critical; lists of interventions, in and of themselves, are not going to change how staff and administrators respond to student misbehavior. The question was posed whether to list interventions that aren’t fully implemented Districtwide or whether to take “baby steps” and add interventions in the future as training takes hold across the District.

Orlando reported that administrators will be the first ones to receive professional development related to RtI and restorative practices. Training will then be provided to building staffs. Katharine Fettig suggested that a few teachers be trained simultaneously in order to create “buy-in” among teachers.

Jill Johnson stated that responding to student misbehavior in a supportive manner will involve a multi-faceted approach that includes components of PBF, PBIS, restorative practices, check-in/check-out (CICO), etc.

Since time ran out before the group could vote on whether to keep or remove Violations #6 and #7 from the Code, Orlando stated that this topic would be revisited at the next meeting.

Next meeting: November 12, 2015, 4:00, Mellon North Conference Room.

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