

EQUITY COMMITTEE

Summary Minutes – February 25, 2010

In attendance: Dawn Anderson Rascher, Bonnie Beechum, John Border, Charlie Driscoll, Nora Dvorak, Mike Garnica, Linda Heiden, Willie Henderson, Remond Jones II, Laura Lortz, Carmen Rivera-Jackson, Deb Stevenson, Susan Strodbeck, Audrey Strothkamp, Michelle Turner

Building Level Report Cards – Recommendation

- Three sample building report cards were shown. The recommendation of the committee, with some minor changes, is the Central Building Report Card sample. Central's sample seems to be very straight forward and simple.
- The committee suggested including a picture of the principal as well as bullet points under the accomplishments.
- It was suggested that the report cards need to remain as simple as possible for both the audience and the staff.
- Report cards should be celebrating the things that went on at the school. The committee felt there should not be negative items on the report cards.
- Are there items that we need to include on the report cards that are NOT on there right now?
- Now that there is a recommendation, Dawn will take the information to the various groups that will give their input as well (i.e. Principals, IST, Superintendent's Executive Council)

Affirmative Action Plan

- The action plan is to be done for a two-year timeframe.
- The Department of Education's expectations were handed out and reviewed. Many of the DE's expectations are done (i.e. board policies on non-discrimination, affirmative action and harassment and bullying).
- The EEO/AA Coordinator is not completely clarified for the school district. Dawn and Audrey Strothkamp will work together on defining these roles.
- The bulk of the work to be done is in reference to qualitative analyses, qualitative goals (refer to Iowa City's information), workforce analyses (community colleges will be able to assist with this information), quantitative analyses and numerical goals (the City of Davenport may be a good reference for this information).
- EEO/AA Plans must also have periodic professional development for all employees who hire and supervise personnel. Audrey, from HR, is not aware of any professional development. This will definitely be an area of concentration when writing the new plan.
- Also, an area that will need to be focused on is the process for recordkeeping and reporting. Dawn would also like to see a monitoring component factored in as well. Some on the committee suggested a written annual report to the community and school board outlining this collected information.
- A copy of the current plan was handed out and reviewed. The current plan consists of many policies; however, there are few, if any, action steps involved with the plan.
- A few articles were handed out on how we should build inclusive communities.

City's Input – Affirmative Action Plan

- Redmond Jones II, Assistant to the City Administrator for Davenport, reported on some information that he has been working on for the city regarding Affirmative Action. He reviewed obvious Human Resources areas like recruitment and retention. However, Redmond also reviewed how the city spent their money.
- Redmond provided excellent facts on the disparity concerns of the city, of which, we believe could exist in the school district as well. Redmond will be sending this information to Dawn. Or, Deb Stevenson has it and can share it with Dawn.

Committee Input – Affirmative Action Plan

- The positions we speak of when discussing hiring involves not only teachers but cafeteria workers, support staff and other classified positions.
- Suggestions for the hiring and retention of workers for the district are as follows: possibly coordinating hiring efforts with the City of Davenport, Job Fairs for classified positions, Americorps idea (the idea that we have future workers right here that we can tap into), “Grow Your Own” (we should be grooming our kids to stay here, give them incentives), QC Scholars (this program is at North High School), MIT (Minorities in Teaching), Education Career Pathways (and not just focusing on teachers but paras, social workers, etc.), utilizing online postings (this is how most people look for jobs now), a video of our culture in the district and city (8-minute video showcasing our student’s diversity is already in existence but maybe even partner with the City to develop a new one) and working closer with colleges to recruit their students (poly conferences, webcams, Adobe Connect, etc.)
- When going anywhere to recruit for jobs, those going to these “places” need to be younger and a more diverse crowd. When people think Iowa, they think “white people” and “cold”.
- There is a current project underway that will have the City, Chamber and School Districts working together to showcase what they have to offer. Laura Lortz discussed this project briefly.
- We need to have discussions with EICCD as well as unions about our students getting into the skilled trades environment. The workforce is getting older; therefore, they will be retiring soon. Because of this, we need more qualified skilled workers.
- Staff needs to be trained on potential hires. One must think outside of the box with one of their interviewees. For example, someone who has moved around a lot might not be “paper perfect” but they may end up being the one for the job. So, pick some “regular” interviewees and one out of the box interviewee.
- The spreadsheet that the principals have to hire from for teachers is nearly impossible to keep up with and utilize. The online info that principals receive for paras works pretty good. Audrey did state that HR is looking into one source for hiring teachers and paras.
- By Law, the school district must take the lowest, most responsible bid so reviewing who receives the bids for the school district may not help with disparity.
- Hispanics have the lowest high school graduation rate; therefore, they could possibly have a lower number of applicants to hire. What can we do to change this at the school district?
- Weaknesses for hiring in the Davenport Community School District are that we hire too late and we pay less than the school district across the river.

Committee Assignment

Dawn asked that the committee continue to think about what the school district’s Affirmative Action Plan should have and include. Also, if you know of someone from the community that would be an asset to our Equity Committee, please pass their information along to Dawn. If anyone has any ideas, please contact Dawn at 336-3805 or andersonrascherd@davenportschools.org.

**Next Meeting Dates: March 25, 2010 (5:00 – 7:00pm), ASC Board Room
April 22, 2010 (5:00 – 7:00pm), ASC Board Room**