

EQUITY COMMITTEE

Summary Minutes – January 28, 2010

In attendance: Dawn Anderson Rascher, Bonnie Beechum, John Border, Charlie Driscoll, Tom Green, Linda Heiden, Carmen Rivera-Jackson, Deb Stevenson, Susan Strodbeck, Pamela Telsrow, Michelle Turner, Trish Turner

District Input – Photo Release

- There was a consensus that the paragraph labeled “Parental Permission” on the Enrollment Form needs to be reworded. Currently, there is some confusion on whether or not parent’s need to sign the area.
- While on this topic, the area in which the parents must sign off for “Directory Information” caused confusion as well. This information is to only be given out for educational purposes, but the statement on the Enrollment Form does not indicate that.
- The wording “Parental Permission” eludes that by signing the statement, they are permitting their child to get their photo taken and/or give out information.
- One suggestion is that it does not matter if the Parental Permission for photo release and directory information is passive or active just as long as it is clear to the parent/guardian signing it.
- This particular area of the Enrollment Form will be revised prior to the 10/11 school year.
- Field trips cannot be on the Enrollment Form. Parents/guardians may not want their child on one specific field trip so we must get permission for each one.

District Input – Complaint Form

- There is a new look for the complaint form and this was shared with the committee. However, the form is already wrong as it does not have a statement about appealing a decision on an IEP or 504 outcomes.
- There was a discussion about the “What to do first” paragraph listed at the top of the complaint form. It was asked if Michelle or Dawn would accept the form if the person making the complaint has not spoke to their supervisor yet. The complaint form will still be accepted; however, Dawn will ask the person filling out the complaint form of what steps they have taken since the incident.
- Because of the Equity Review, we need a system put into place that captures all of the complaints that are being handled in the district. Currently, there is not a tracking system that would allow district staff to see if complaints are the same across the district. How do we retrieve this information and see that it gets tracked.

District Input – Website

- Equity information has been placed on the school district’s website.
- It was suggested that Dawn put a picture of herself next to the Equity Coordinator wording on the website so that the message on who the Coordinator is really gets out there.

District Input – Meeting Format

- We need more representation on the Equity Committee from members outside of the school district as well as more representation from other minority groups (Asian, Hispanic).
- Deb Stevenson suggested that African-American pastors be contacted from the Quad-City area

State Equity Review

- Dawn was part of a site visit at Bettendorf. Dawn shared that many of the responses from sub-groups in the Bettendorf School District did not know who their Equity Coordinator is. She feels this could happen in our school district too if we do not do a better job of getting the word out there that she is the Coordinator.

- Dawn's goal is to not have any dings on the next Equity Review which is in about two years for the Davenport School District.
- Dawn stated that the staff, the board and the Equity Committee should be able to name the Equity Coordinator which is Dawn. Students should be able to tell someone what they would do if they needed to make a complaint (the student should know to visit with a counselor or speak with an administrator).
- "Pluralizing the Curriculum", of which our school district is implementing, helps with equitable curriculum for the multi-cultural, gender fair (MCGF) category. The main concern for spending more time on MCGF curriculum is that it takes away from getting students prepped for the ITBS/ITED testing. How do the teachers/administrators put MCGF curriculum into their classrooms when they have ITBS/ITED standards?
- Minority teachers are hard to keep in the Quad Cities especially in Davenport. First off, they can go across the river and get a job sooner than they would in Davenport because of our bid system. Rock Island hires in March and our school district hires in June. Not to mention, the teacher can make more money by teaching across the river. These are two things that are out of our control and must be addressed to attract and retain minority teachers and teachers overall to Davenport.

Building Level Report Cards

- The committee reviewed the building level report cards as there were three samples provided. However, due to time constraints, the committee did not vote on the style they liked best for the report cards. This issue will be addressed at the next meeting in February or via email.
- Susan Strodtbeck suggested that either the building level report cards do not mention any student or it mentions all of them.

Additional Comments:

- Getting the message out on bullying – a high school drama class did skits on bullying and it was very successful as all the students saw and received the same message.
- Ellen Reilly does have a DVD on anti-bullying behavior. The DVD is named "Step Up" and features local students.
- When thinking about anti-bullying, it was mentioned that the Olweus training is already embedded into their school's curriculum.
- Dawn would like to invest in a video about the diversity that Davenport has to offer in the schools and in the city. This video would be served as a recruitment tool.

Committee Assignment

Dawn asked that the committee begin to think about what the school district's Affirmative Action Plan should have and include. If anyone has any ideas, please contact Dawn at 336-3805 or andersonrascherd@davenportschools.org.

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