

EQUITY COMMITTEE

Summary Minutes – March 17, 2011

In attendance: Bonnie Beechum, John Border, Jim Collins, Ellen Reilly, Deb Stevenson, Susan Strodbeck, Pam Telsrow

At the March meeting, Carla Veasey, College/ High School Support Liaison with the Davenport School District, recruited three students to share their reasons on why they dropped out of school. This information was to enlighten the committee on ways to help students stay in school and/or get them reengaged in school. Generally, the students dropped out of school because of having little family support, having to take care of younger siblings, having social anxiety and overall family issues (money, having children of their own.) Every student and the parent spoke very highly of Carla as she keeps them focused on academics.

In general, school has not always been a place where all students experience an equal opportunity for success. The District recently was awarded a High School Graduation Initiative Grant that will help all students obtain a high school diploma. It is believed the Equity Committee is a valuable asset in success of the grant's accomplishments.

Below are facts that show how equity issues are illustrated in dropout statistics. This is why we need your input, assistance, and participation as a committee member.

Drop-Out & Equity:

- The drop-out rate for students with emotional/behavioral disabilities is approximately **2 times** that of general education students.
- Research has confirmed that the lowest-performing readers are most at risk of dropping out of high school. Students achieving in the lowest quartile are **20 times** more likely to drop-out than top-performing students.
- Male students are consistently **8%** less likely to graduate than female students.
- Among minorities, only about **52%** of Hispanic students and **56%** of African-American students will graduate in 4 years compared with **78%** of white students.
- High school students from low-income families (the lowest 20%) were **6 times** more likely to drop-out than students from higher income families.
- **In the Quad-Cities, 3 students drop-out every school day.**

Additional Drop-Out Facts:

- Domestically, the nation and its communities suffer from a lack of productive workers and higher costs associated with incarceration, health care, and other social services.
- Every school day, 7,000 US students leave high school never to return.
- The 1.2 million students who should have graduated in 2008 will cost the nation nearly \$319 billion in lost income over the course of their lifetimes.

Committee Update:

The direction of the committee will remain focused on drop-outs and equitable factors in the school district. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please email them to andersonrascherd@davenportschools.org. Mark your calendars for next school year's meetings:

- October 20, 2011
- February 16 2012
- April 26, 2012