

Equity Action Teams Meeting

January 19, 2016

Minutes

In attendance: Trinia Washington, Casey Sommers, Brian Terry, Cora Glass, Alison Miller, Bill Brewster, Katie May, Sabrina Kovacs-Storlie, Kiyomi Morton, Angie Jenkins, Devin Bruckner, Andrea Fontana, Anne Sheeran, Bridget Lamp, Lita Hawkins, Leslie Williams, Andrea Radosevich, Briktawite Yimer, Kara Jones, Ann McNally, Dionne Malatesta, Cliff Meyer, Samantha Egelhoff,

6:05 Principal, Katie May, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She introduced the Equity Action Teams Leadership Team: Devin Bruckner, Angie Jenkins, Casey Sommers, Trinia Washington and herself.

6:10 Parent, Devin Bruckner, introduced guest, Wyeth Jessee, Chief of Student Supports, SPS. Mr. Jessee showed a PowerPoint and spoke about the Highly Capable program in SPS. A few highlights of his talk were:

Mr. Jessee spoke about the inconsistencies within the program and difficulties in making change. He expressed the importance of really delving into what is/isn't happening with the systems that are in place and at schools and working together (hearing from parents) to understand what is wrong and to make things happen.

The district recognizes there are systems issues and would like to work on the following:

- Improved referral mechanisms
- Improved communications structures
- Collaboration with other Dept
- Program and service reviews (how are we defining)
- Currently looking at Spectrum (definition and structure), next year moving to HCC (definition and structure)

The district recognizes that schools need support and would like to work to provide the following:

- 2e supports
- Professional Learning (2E, MTSS)
- Equitable and culturally responsive practices

Data:

The number of students receiving services in the HC program has doubled in 4 years (was 2000, now 4000). These increases affect capacity, staff needs, etc.

The number of African American, Hispanic, and other minorities are disproportionately lower than white students in the HC program

2015-16 Enrolled in HC Program: 480 Asian, 52 African American, 112 Hispanic, 388 Multi-Racial, 2,496 White

2015-16 Appeals submitted: 45 Asian, 8 African American, 15 Hispanic, 63 Multi-Racial, 325 White

2015-16: 479 eligibility appeals, 236 were successful

What work is envisioned this year for HCC?

We need to do some things significantly different to make significant changes.

Personalize our approach:

- Host recruiting events, info sessions, and other outreach opportunities (interpreters, etc.)
- Work with staff to serve as liaisons in connection with families
- Follow up and follow through with families who inquire and sign up
- Build relationships with families

Assist Where Needed:

- Communication
- Assist in the referral process – e.g. access to technology
- Explore testing inequities and respond (structures, testing window, during school day?)

Q and A: People in attendance had several questions about:

- Outreach (community organizations, looking at the data and sending personal letters to parents like Rainier Scholars does)
- Questions regarding the number of students in SPS who qualify (Answer: 8%).
- Concerns regarding Spectrum being dismantled, ALO being inconsistent and those being factors in families looking to HCC to serve their students.
- Concern over the name Highly Capable Cohort – ALL students are capable.

6:45 Connection Activity: Parent, Angie Jenkins, led a Connection Activity. Everyone got cards and each person held his/her card so others could see, but couldn't see his/her own. People were asked to walk around and interact with each other. After the activity, Angie led a reflection about how people felt ("superficial" "equal" "anxious" "uncomfortable"). The activity was an analogy for our community. We can have a conscious decision to make – a choice- about how to interact with others. How do we talk to people who are different than us?

7:15 Action Team Reports: Parent, Casey Sommers, asked each Team Lead to share an update on their Team's goals and work. See the [spreadsheet for the Equity Action Teams](#) to get more information about what each team has been working on. Casey spoke about the flexibility and openness of this work and that these Action Team ideas have come from parents and staff brainstorming about the change we need to see. We invite others to bring their own ideas and join the work!

7:20 Sharing Activity: Parent, Anne Phyfe Palmer, led a Sharing Activity asking each person to write down the answers to the following questions:

Why are you here tonight?

What would make Thurgood Marshall a more inclusive community?

What are you doing to nourish and take care of yourself during this work?

Attendees were asked to get into groups of three to share their answers and then Anne Phyfe asked volunteers to share with the larger group.

7:55 Principal Katie May thanked everyone for coming and for their commitment. She spoke of this being hard and important work, and we are fortunate to have a large group of dedicated individuals. Katie also emphasized that we are willing to listen to feedback and new ideas.

8:00 Meeting adjourned

Want to become more involved?

Please come to our other two quarterly Equity Action Team meetings and any of the meetings for the individual Equity Action Teams (team leads on spreadsheet):

Quarterly Equity Action Team Meetings:

Thursday, March 23, 6-8pm Child Care Provided

Wednesday, May 24, 6-8pm Child Care Provided