



**PITTSBURGH
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SCHOOLS**
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For Immediate Release

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**District Presents Action Plan Supporting Recommendations of
the Advocates for African-American Students**

PITTSBURGH, March 6, 2007 – At the Board’s Education Committee Meeting this evening, the District presented detailed information on how it will meet the recommendations outlined in the Conciliation Agreement with the Advocates for African-American Students.

Signed in September 2006, the Conciliation Agreement includes 94 action steps that address how the District can reduce the achievement gap, provide instructional support and create an environment of equity for its African-American students. Of these, 80 of the action steps are embedded already in the District’s May 2006 reform agenda, *Excellence for All*, and its supporting Empowerment Plan submitted to the State in December 2006.

Excellence for All, which serves as the District’s roadmap for improving the academic performance of all students in the Pittsburgh Public Schools, includes specific targets for African-American students. For example, it notes that “the achievement of African-American students in the Pittsburgh Public Schools will increase at a rate that is five percentage points greater than the gains of their peers.”

“We recognize that there were issues in the past,” noted Superintendent Mark Roosevelt. “Now we must work together and focus on doing the hard work that it will take to improve the academic achievement of all students, particularly African-American students who are most underserved.”

On August 24, 1992 a complaint against the School District of Pittsburgh was filed with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) charging the District violated sections of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. The District and the Advocates for African American Students, the group that filed the claim, reached a Conciliation Agreement in September 2006. Representatives from PHRC, the Advocates for African American Students and the District will select members to sit on an Equity Advisory Panel. The Equity Advisory Panel will monitor, advise and report the District’s progress.

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The Panel also will recommend research-based strategies, methods, techniques and programs that support racial equity. In addition, the Conciliation Agreement requires that the District provide administrative support to coordinate the Conciliation Agreement as well as oversee the monitoring and assessment of data.

The District’s progress towards meeting recommendations in the agreement through yearly milestones and reports will be monitored by the PHRC. Sixty days after each semester the District will supply statistical data on its progress and the Equity Advisory Panel will convene 3 times a year to review this progress. At the completion of the fifth year the PHRC will evaluate the District’s progress and the Advisory Panel will consider the need for a District-wide Equity Office.

Committee for the Selection of the Equity Advisory Panel

Representatives from PHRC

- Mr. George Simmons
- Ms. Sharon Lane, Esq.

Advocates for African American Youth

- Mrs. Wanda Henderson
- Mr. William Lowman
- Dr. Huberta Jackson-Lowman

Pittsburgh Public Schools

- Mr. Roosevelt
- Dr. Linda Lane
- Mr. Larry Hubbard, Coordinator

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