Equity Committee Working Group
Mon Dec 3, 2018
1:30 pm-2:30 pm
Ed Center rm 217

Present: Christine Dutt, Maggie Schmidt, Kathy Shields, Andrea Steenstrup, Orla Higgins-Averill, Kerry Prasad, Kathleen Smith

Brain-storming:
Philosophical- is this the wise, right choice? Why or why not? Logistics can wait
There are some models- Portland, Santa Monica
Very few districts are in the same situation
Portland- Equity fund still in place; very controversial
Depository for funds, schools apply for that money
Schools can set up a foundation for their school, over $10,000 they had to give some to the foundation, formula about how you could be eligible to apply for a fund
Conclusion so far- pooling funds did not impact contribution to funds
Distributed 11mil since 1994
Network, partnership- giving is personal, give people a connection to who they are giving to, it makes it more concrete
 You don't want a rich school/poor school dynamic

Is it all income difference? or is it just differences in fund-raising?
 Burr- for a long time had a single annual appeal
 Since they replaced the playground, they broke raising up in to more discrete chunks for specific things

School Culture
Each school has its own culture. ie- at Burr they would not cut community builidng activities to increase academic spending

NPS has 3 Title 1 schools- Mann, Countryside, Lincoln Eliot

How many families give to the PTO? Each PTO might have that info
Zervas has 70% donation rate ($30 dues)
Ward Annual Fund about $200 per child; about 35%-40% of families give (anecdotally)
Countryside Annual Fund $135 per child; about 35%-40% of families give (anecdotally)

Underwood- some families can spend and give to PTO, some are maxed out to afford to live in Newton, but might appear that they can give, another population that is receiving assistance
 Managing this is a challenge
Auction event- pizza party event with principal

Raffle- principal for the day; $1 raffle item

When every school building is very different, how can you say that this miniscule funding can make a difference?

Equity-
PTO spending
Impact on students' experience
       Field Trips,
       CAS,
       professional development

Is inequity felt?
       Send letter to PTO Copresidents to ask, to put qualitative side to the numbers

 Where is the inequity?
Technology- no school is at standard bc standard says that when something is 5 years old it is "off-standard"
Laptops, doc cameras, projectors
Still working on inventory and working with principals and PTOs
There does not seem to be a glaring lack

Trying to quantify something that is hard to quantify

Field trips- some PTOs pay, some do not, sometimes Principal's fund pays for it, sometimes families are asked to contribute to scholarship fund

Physical plant- SC and NPS decision

Pros	Cons

Strong school district benefits all students	People do not want to give to a pool
Take the money out of it; what can we do that doesn't cost any money?	People want the money to benefit their own school
This can build morale; everyone can fully participate	This might be human nature upon giving; it is personal
Helping schools that don't raise the money	This will hurt morale of the PTO volunteers
We are a district, a city, all kids should have the same experience	
NPS is a brand, the PTO should not be responsible for academic part of PTO	

We are imposing on you vs. we are asking you

Percentage of schools that are low and reduced lunch by school

Be careful in entering some of these conversations, don't approach it from "How can we help you raise more money?"

Maybe bifurcate community building/communication part of the PTO from the academic part of the PTO

Have a city-wide academic pool and a school PTO that raises for social activities

It would be in our best interest to understand the problem better.
Surveys- make it broadly available- why do you give to your PTO? if there were a central PTO fund would you give to it? would you support it if a *portion* went to a central fund
focus group meetings

Next meeting is Mon 12/17

To do: Come up with ideas for focus groups and surveys