

Quality Assurance Committee  
Minutes  
August 16, 2007  
6 p.m.

**Attendance:** Chairwoman Thompson, Commissioners Elliott and White; Board staff L. Dunsmoor; Dr. Cala; District staff C. Holloway, M. Cianca, M. Hancock, G. Sullivan.

Chairwoman Thompson convened the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

**Agenda items:**

**1. Black English Vernacular**

Chief of Diversity and Leadership Development Michele Hancock reported that BEV, also known as Ebonics, is not taught in district schools and is not used by all African-American students. When appropriate, staff use BEV, or the student's "home language" as a compare and contrast tool that helps students develop skills in the use of standard English. One point that was emphasized was the need for teachers to be able to skillfully work with students who present with strong Ebonics. These culturally competent instructors are often better able to keep students constructively engaged rather than having the opposite effect, possibly causing students to pull away from school. Dr. Cianca and Ms. Holloway recommended that QA members review research on the Haberman Educational Foundation interview process in order to inform any input commissioners might offer the administration as it relates to the hiring of culturally competent staff.

Ms. Hancock reported that professional development is being used to help teachers become culturally competent. In response to Chairwoman Thompson, Ms. Hancock said the success of the professional development will be measured by how many teachers take the in-service training. Chairwoman Thompson said a better measure may be how student success in the classroom is impacted. Commissioner Elliott commented that if teachers were hired who have experience working in an urban environment, it would preclude the need for this type of training and any resistance to it. A Board personnel committee would be helpful, she added. Chairwoman Thompson said QA could take on personnel issues; that is part of the Human Resources/Culture Change/Diversity Initiative of QA.

Action: L. Dunsmoor to provide QA members with initial HR data request as approved by the Board in December 2005.

**2. African and African American Studies Department**

According to plans, a director for the Department will be in place by mid-September. QA cautioned administration that there should be a balance between adequate planning time and keeping the initiative moving. Commissioner White iterated that he brought a resolution forward in February; programming should be in place this year. Ms. Hancock assured him that pilot programs will be rolled out in November. An amendment to Policy 4350, Multicultural Education, will be subject to Board approval August 16. The amendment will formally establish the department and provide the Board with a mechanism for oversight through policy.

### 3. HR/Culture Change/Diversity

HR provided the committee with race and gender data for teachers hired for 2007-08 to date. The information was provided at the meeting instead of in the preparation packet. QA had requested data on all staff hires, not just teachers. Chairwoman Thompson said she did not appreciate the data request being blown off, regardless of whether the data is to be presented to the Board in October. Commissioner Elliott said the data needs to be supplemented by narrative information such as the number of applications/resumes received. Commissioner White said he wants to know the percentages of African Americans who apply and are / are not hired vs. the number of Caucasians who apply and are / are not hired. This is not the first time he has made this request, he noted for the record. Commissioner Elliott said the district appears to be more receptive to white females than black males.

Action item: L. Dunsmoor to provide committee members with copy of initial data request approved by the Board in December 2005.

### 4. Other

Commissioner Elliott asked that drop-out data be discussed. Gloria Sullivan reported that she will not have the 2006-07 figures but can provide data on the last three years, through 2005-06. Commissioner Elliott said that is acceptable.

Action: G. Sullivan to provide requested information.

Commissioner White commented that it is incredible that it takes four weeks (to date) to get critical data such as information he requested on graduation statistics for 2005 and 2006.

**Next meeting:** Monday, September 10, 6 p.m. Agenda includes information on suspension/attendance data for 2006-07, Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA) results for Grades 3-6, and drop-out data to be provided by G. Sullivan.

**Adjournment:** Motion by Commissioner Elliott. Second by Commissioner White. Adopted 3-0 at 7:20 p.m.