

Quality Assurance Committee Meeting
October 13, 2005
6:30 p.m.
Minutes

Board Attendance:

Commissioner Thompson
Commissioner Bowers
Linda Dunsmoor, BOE Staff

Excused:

Commissioner Brown

District Staff in Attendance:

Michael Christman
Marie Cianca
Linda Cruttenden
Michele Hancock
Cheryl Holloway
Connie Leech

Meeting convened at 6:40 p.m. by Commissioner Thompson. Commissioner Bowers left at 6:45 p.m.

Update on Diversity Initiative

Mrs. Hancock shared a PowerPoint presentation. She updated the work to date including the role and function of the Division of Diversity and Leadership; professional and leadership development needs and opportunities; discussions with HR regarding recruitment, hiring and retention of minority personnel; immediate next steps and proposed future action items stemming from the IDEA Connections report.

Question: Commissioner Thompson asked about the membership representation on the Diversity, Culture and Organizational Change Steering Committee.

Answer: Mrs. Hancock mentioned the groups involved - union presidents, principals, parents, teachers and community members.

Question: Commissioner Thompson asked about defining annual objectives and strategies, how they could be developed prior to convening the Steering Committee, and whether these would be shared with the Steering Committee.

Answer: Mrs. Hancock confirmed that the Steering Committee would be giving feedback on the objectives and strategies she recommends. She also shared that she is gathering information on our current state so that the Steering Committee can help develop a vision and diversity plan.

Question: Commissioner Thompson asked how the effectiveness of this initiative will be measured.

Answer: Mrs. Hancock and Dr. Dyce-Faucette responded that fact-finding is now taking place in order to form an effective action plan and evaluation strategy. A five-year plan is anticipated.

Question: Commissioner Thompson is interested in learning more about the definition of minority. She noted that diversity is about more than numbers, race and gender, and that inclusion throughout the organization should be the goal.

Answer: Dr. Dyce-Faucette agreed that diversity is more fully encompassing.

Commissioner Thompson wished Mrs. Hancock the best in having the difficult conversations because of the importance of this initiative. She emphasized the critical need for inclusion and acceptance, not just tolerance.

Year End Academic Achievement Report 2004-05 & Quarterly Academic Achievement Report

Commissioner Thompson asked Dr. Christman to share what he would like to highlight on the report.

Dr. Christman responded to several questions that were given to staff:

- *Why are there two numbers for Dr. Freddie Thomas?* The phase-out plan of the Dr. Freddie Thomas Learning Center and the new Dr. Freddie Thomas High School required two numbers according to the NYS Education Department in order to track student progress.
- *Dr. Rivera's goal for ELA 8 is admirable but is it realistic? What number of students took the test?* (Answers will be provided; see Action Items.)
- *Why is the drop in ELA 8 for Asian and Native American at 14%?* The sample size for the population is small and can have a big impact on the result. Commissioner Thompson asked that the information be broken out further to show the percentage *and number* of students being reported on. Dr. Christman said he would be able to do that.
- *Why is Wilson not listed?* Grade 8 was not an enrolled grade at Wilson until this year.
- *There were several questions about the change in numbers of students tested from year to year and from ELA to Math.* 95% of our students are tested. Numbers are based on how many students are enrolled in a school on the day of each test.
- *Why the rise then fall for students in Science 4 in "Other" category?* There have been changes in the number of students in this population.

There was discussion around suspensions and the interest in unduplicated suspensions to have a better understanding of how many students overall are not getting suspended. Dr. Christman said he could provide that statistic for the end-of-the-year report.

Summer Literacy and Numeracy Institute

Connie Leech presented information on how student success was measured in the summer program. She also explained the strands of instruction and the weekly benchmarks leading to a summary report for each student.

Question: Commissioner Thompson asked whether we know the number of students who chose not to attend of those eligible.

Answer: Mrs. Holloway said she would check to see if we could gather that information and discussed the importance of taking the opportunity for summer instruction.

Ms. Leech explained recommendations for next year. One recommendation is to have more lead time to recruit and contact families. Another recommendation is to continue the professional development, which appears to be carrying over to teachers in their current locations.

Textbook Information Update

Linda Cruttenden addressed questions about the textbook management program. Many schools were already using *Textlink* as a means to track textbooks. She mentioned that orders did have to be changed because of the large numbers of students who registered in very late August and early September.

SpringBoard materials have been ordered and schools should be receiving them soon if they have not arrived already. *SpringBoard* is not a textbook. It is the manner in which staff works with students providing rigorous instruction based upon standards. *SpringBoard* helps teachers prepare students in grades 6-12 with critical thinking, reasoning and writing skills. *SpringBoard* is designed around the College Board Standards for College Success. These Standards identify the skills and competencies students need to be prepared for college.

Regarding textbooks, Commissioner Thompson said it would be helpful to identify schools where there are shortages, the subject areas in which they exist, and the actions being taken to resolve any remaining issues.

District in Corrective Action Update

Dr. Cianca referenced the activities conducted so far with Learning Point Associates and Educational Resource Strategies. The district is participating in an audit of its written, taught and tested curriculum with seven other districts. Learning Point Associates and Educational Resource Strategies are conducting the audit. An analysis will also be completed regarding professional development, management and administrative support, and compliance with district, state, and federal regulations. A three-year comprehensive plan will grow from the audit. In February 2006 a draft audit report and action plan will be provided to the district; the final report will be sent to the state on March 31, 2006.

Action Items:

- Identify specific schools where there are textbook shortages and in what areas; describe what action is being taken or did take place to resolve issues. There is a BOE directive to provide one textbook for each student per course.
- Mrs. Holloway will check on how many students were eligible for the secondary summer institute compared to how many attended. Information due October 24, 2005.
- Dr. Christman to include unduplicated suspension rate in next year's Year End Academic Achievement Report.
- Dr. Christman to provide the number of students who took the ELA 8 test. Information due October 24, 2005.

- For future Year End Academic Achievement Reports and Quarterly Academic Achievement Reports, data to be broken out by percentage and number of students.
- All questions submitted in writing to Liaison on Oct. 13 to be answered fully in writing in a separate attachment by October 24, 2005.

Adjournment: 8:05 p.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 10, 2005 at 6 p.m.