



Parent / Community Involvement Task Force (PCITF)

Meeting Minutes

McFatter Technical College (Bistro)

May 9, 2016 / 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Members: Mary Fertig (Chair), Debbie Aleman, Natalie Beasley, Janet Bravo, Melanie Hemphill, Sheri Johnson, Gloria Moschella, Lew Naylor, Andre Ponder, Laurie Rich Levinson, Cathie Starkey

Guests: Andrea Blackwood, Andrea Cavanagh, Nadia Clarke

- **Call to Order**

Ms. Fertig called the meeting to order.

- **Welcome and Introductions**

All members introduced themselves and shared a positive story or activity they recently enjoyed.

- **Goals for 2017-17**

- Facilitate Communication
- Promote Best Practices
- Build Relationships
- Recognize Excellence
- Share Resources
- Offer Opportunities To Be Heard

After Ms. Fertig presented the proposed PCITF goals (A-F above) for the upcoming year, Mr. Naylor made a motion to adopt, and Ms. Aleman seconded the motion. The goals were unanimously adopted.

Members were asked to email Ms. Fertig (and copy Todd Sussman) their suggested action steps for these goals.

- **Working with Innovation Zones**

Ms. Fertig inquired on which zones the PCITF would like to focus on – for increasing parent engagement.

Mr. Naylor suggested asking the District where the greatest need is for zone initiatives.

Ms. Fertig recommended starting with two zones. We would like to find out if zones considered “super zones” are as strong as people believe. She would like to consult with Dr. Valerie Wanza, Chief School Performance and Accountability Officer, to find out where parent involvement is strong and where more is needed.

Ms. Fertig asked Ms. Clarke to set up a meeting with Dr. Wanza to discuss which zones will be selected, prior to the next PCITF meeting. Ms. Hemphill, Ms. Moschella, Mr. Ponder and Ms. Rich Levinson would like to participate in that meeting as well.

Ms. Hemphill suggested parent surveys could help engage parents in schools. Ms. Rich Levinson stated surveys should be distributed in a variety of methods, pursuant to parents’ communication preferences.

Ms. Clarke stated schools with high academic achievement and attendance are highly engaged schools. We can look to them to get ideas for strategies for inclusion. She added that community based organizations can help with engagement, too.

Ms. Johnson said comparing two different schools may not give the whole picture. Parents at some schools may need a different engagement activity; one size does not fit all. Principal buy-in is vital. We need to look at what parent engagement is connected to. For example, safe passage to a school impacts attendance.

Ms. Rich Levinson suggested starting with two zones that are interested in the PCITF focus, then word will travel to other zones. She added that principals, over the summer, should invite the business community and continue a dialogue with the schools that are being “mentored” by the PCITF.

Mr. Naylor recommended looking at zones such as Blanche Ely. They have a unique network of involved community members.

- **Approval of April 11, 2016 Minutes**

The minutes were unanimously approved.

- **Task Force Recommendations**

Ms. Clarke (from the Office of Parent Engagement) distributed a draft spreadsheet showing progress with the 2012 PCITF recommendations and the various District departments involved in the implementation. Her department will hold focus groups and develop an engagement plan. She will also meet with staff from the School Improvement department to look at mandated items (for example from Title I).

Ms. Rich Levinson indicated the schools (in addition to the District departments) should be included in the status review. Ms. Clarke confirmed they will be.

Ms. Clarke also wants to bring principals and community partners together to look at the goals for engagement. The goal is to have the plan be as detailed as possible.

Mr. Naylor requested that PCITF members receive the Title I school compact so they can see the requirements.

Mr. Ponder, an Assistant Principal, stated we need quarterly updates on progress with the recommendations. He added that principals' end-of-the-year evaluations should reflect the progress made.

Ms. Clarke stated her office will create a plan for monitoring progress with the recommendations. She indicated the cadre directors (in OSPA) will help monitor the progress, and there will be built-in benchmarks.

Ms. Blackwood suggested SAC meetings have agendas that reflect the needs and the goals of the schools. The agendas should be challenging.

Ms. Rich Levinson stated parents' available times should be considered -- what works best for them. In addition, their preferences for communication (email, text, or phone) as indicated on the Student Emergency Contact Card (SECC) should be input and implemented by the schools.

Members asked Todd Sussman, Privacy Officer, if volunteers (parents) may assist the schools in inputting data from the SECC. Mr. Sussman responded: Data from the SECC is considered information from an education record, which is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Therefore, without written consent, only school officials with a legitimate educational interest may access that information. Volunteers are not considered school officials. They may only access the SECCs of their own children.

To update the recommendations, Ms. Fertig suggested reviewing and focusing on one section every month. Ms. Rich Levinson said to start with the School Outreach recommendations first. Communication recommendations can be included, too, as some overlap.

- **Future Meetings Dates**

June 6, 2016 is the next regular PCITF meeting date. The meeting will take place at McFatter Technical College (Bistro).

- **Fall Conference and Fall Forums Break-out**

Prior to adjournment, Ms. Fertig directed those who were on subcommittees to break-out into their respective groups. The Forums subcommittee remained in the Bistro. The Conference subcommittee moved to the adjacent Cafeteria.

- Forums subcommittee:

Mary Fertig, Laurie Rich Levinson, Lew Naylor, Janet Bravo, Gloria Moschella, Andrea Blackwood, Melanie Hemphill

- Conference subcommittee:

Debbie Aleman, Natalie Beasley, Cathie Starkey, Sheri Johnson, Andrea Cavanagh

- **Adjournment**

Ms. Fertig adjourned the meeting.