

Minority Student Achievement Oversight Committee Notes

October 1, 2008 Meeting

Leis Center

Members present: Maquita Alexander, Joseph Bury, Lawrence Bussey, Baek Chong, Ralph Cooper, Lavinia Dickerson, Mary Frances Howlette, M. Lynette Hughes, John Johnson, Hyunsik Lim, Arthur Lopez, Patrick Murphy, Nelly Samaniego, Barbara Tyler, Sylvia Washington, Tina Wical, and Milton Young.

- A. Meeting was opened at 7:30 p.m. by Ralph Cooper, Chairman.
1. Mr. Cooper reviewed the agenda and asked members to introduce themselves. He gave a summary of the Executive Committee's activities since the June 2008 meeting. He said he presented the MSAOC report to the School Board on June 15, and had a follow-up meeting with Mr. Dan Storck in July to discuss the Committee's recommendations. He also met with Mr. Mark Emery, After School Program to discuss the former QUEST program and Ms. Barbara Hunter, Assistant Superintendent for Community Relations about parent outreach.
 2. Mr. Cooper said the first Community Forum will be held on January 31, 2009 in Mount Vernon area with the College Partnership Program.
 3. Members were asked to review the MSAOC schedule and to note the dates for the County's Community Dialogue Presentation on the 2010 budget. Members were asked to participate.

B. Speaker – Closing the gap initiative

1. Dr. Patrick Murphy introduced Dr. Richard Moniuszko, Deputy Superintendent who presented this evening's talks on closing the achievement gap in FCPS. By way of introduction, Dr. Moniuszko raised two questions – What are we doing to close the achievement gap? How are we doing? He then presented his PowerPoint slides on closing the gap. He acknowledged that there is a gap and that teacher-student relation is the most important factor.

2. After the presentation, members asked the following questions:
 - What is the Project Management Oversight Committee (PMOC) for closing the gap, and who are its members?
 - When will FCPS close the gap?
 - Why do we have to wait so long to change teacher attitude?
 - How will MSAOC be involved in closing the gap initiative?
 - What is FCPS doing to increase the number of Hispanic students not graduating from high school?
 - How do we measure success in [closing the gap]?
 - How soon will you start the process?
 - Can closing the gap be part of every school's improvement plan?
 - What is the projected schedule for getting this done [closing the gap]?
 - How does FCPS evaluate how well schools are doing in closing the gap?

Dr. Moniuszko discussed each question and added that the School Board's Student Achievement goals and PMOC will be the driving forces in closing the gap.

3. Mr. Chong said that at his high school, teachers were not offended by being presented data on the performance of their students. He

went on to say that South County HS has set closing the achievement gap as their goal.

Ms. Alexander said that at her school, they have started to customize instruction based on individual student profiles. Schools are addressing the achievement gap. The C.A.S. are focusing with school based leadership.

Many schools are creating systematic structures and protocols for students who are not achieving (prescriptive interventions that take place during the school day).

Ms. Dickerson added that closing the gap is part of a broader racial, economic and social problem of equity within the community.

- C. Mr. Cooper reviewed the schedule for visiting other school divisions with respect to the School Board's charge to MSAOC. The proposed school systems are:

Chesterfield County

Henrico County

Newport News

Richmond City

Stafford County

Members also suggested Montgomery County, MD, Manassas Park, and Prince William County, VA.

- D. Dr. Murphy announced that the first state report entitled On-Time Graduation Rate is to be released October 8th. This report will examine the HS completion rates of freshmen four years later. This will be available with information on several groups of students as well as individual schools.
- E. Members agreed to meet next Tuesday October 7, 2008. The meeting will be kept short.
- F. Meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.