

Minority Student Achievement Oversight Committee Meeting Notes

January 11, 2023

Members in Attendance:

K. Amenabar	H. Capps	K. Kardelis	L. Mondragon	T. Temple
S. Ashok	Q. Craig	M. Lavallo	E. Osborne	M. Vereb
Z. Bashir	M. Dickey	V. Long	R. Pérez	D. Walker
G. Becerra	C. Farrish	S. Mascoll	E. Rodriguez	K. White
J. Bensinger	L. Henry	A. Mukuna	R. Shaw	
E. Bonhomme	L. Henson	G. Nagaraja	P. Simpkins	

28 members were present. Quorum was met.

Other Attendees:

L. Hall K. Keys-Gamarra M. Mason

6:30 pm Welcome and Updates:

Cheronda Farrish welcomed the group. George updated the committee on the work of the Strategic Plan Core Team. The group has some 150 participants and has met twice. There are other teams working on the planning including an Instructional Focus Team, Student Voice Team, and a Family Team. Many MSAOC members are participating in the Strategic planning process either on a team, by attending community forums, or through surveys.

6:40 pm Member Highlight:

Stefan Mascoll, Coordinator of Student Safety and Wellness from the Department of Student Services presented an overview of his work. His office provides support to schools and families for bullying and harassment, substance abuse, and other issues confronting our students and communities. Programs in his office include Mentorworks, school court probation program, Communities of Trust, Opportunity Neighborhoods and a number of other committees and collaborations to ensure the wellbeing of FCPS students.

6:55 pm Presentation from the Chief Experience and Engagement Officer (CXO)

Lisa Hall addressed the committee, responding to questions that had been submitted:

1. **Since this is a new office, please provide an overview of your work. Tell us about your role and responsibilities and those of the teams within your office.**

The CXO provides support to Dr. Reid and the cabinet for how we can, as a division, strengthen some areas and build ways to have the best experiences and education for our students and families. The offices in the CXO are:

- Family & School Partnerships, led by Dr. Renee LaHuffman-Jackson
- Ombuds, led by Dawn Clements
- Government Relations, Led by Michael Molloy
- Communication and Community Relations, led by Helen Lloyd

As the Chief I have been meeting with everyone individually and as a team. We are finding opportunities to do our work and bring alignment across the division, especially in terms of family engagement. I work closely with OCCR to arrange the faith leaders meeting intentionally and hopefully regularly. The work is often in collaboration with other chiefs. For example, talking with the CEO on areas like prayer spaces. There are inconsistencies across the division in what students can and can't do and I'm working with Dr. King and our legal team so that no matter what school a child goes to there can be consistency in student experiences. That's one example. I'm also working with the

calendar committee to go back to the community and get feedback on the work we've done with that and see how it's working.

2. What are your short- and long-term goals for the CXO?

I had been with the Superintendent on her community conversations listening and following the conversations to determine quick and long-term opportunities. The work we do will be aligned with the Strategic plan. Here are some opportunities I see. The Volunteer program - providing centralized communication on a school-based volunteer program. This would seamlessly provide ways for parents and community members to move from school to school without having to reapply. Removing the barriers to engagement is important. Still doing the background checks is important but I heard there was a mobile unit during the pandemic and if we can meet families and community members where they are, that would remove a barrier. I am working with the Faith Leaders who are on the Strategic Plan team. They have a different outlook and a different ear and can contribute a lot to how we move forward. Two-way communications is something I'm working on with the IT department. We're working to set up a system where people can click on a link on the webpage and send a communication which would be sent from one language to another and track the communication. This is being piloted with the Ombuds office and with Family and School Partnerships. We can get some information in real time and use this information to make decisions as a division.

3. What is your philosophy about a school division's role in communicating with a community as large and diverse as FCPS?

I think it's very important to remove every possible barrier. Communicating is more than sending announcements and letters. It's about two-way communication, inviting people in and meeting them where they are. That's near and dear to my heart. Last night I was at a school, and I met a mom who told me about her daughter's experience. Both she and her daughter want to make sure that we talk about being seen heard and having a sense of belonging. She didn't experience that at her school. This mom and I are going to connect. She has ideas to make sure that she can help students coming behind to improve that experience. I'm working with individuals and groups to listen and have authentic conversations where folks can feel comfortable expressing themselves. Not just students and families but I've met with staff as well who would like to contribute their voice to make experiences better. I've been to the Muslim community with Dr Reid and am hearing what their concerns are. Any group that feels they don't have a voice I'm here to listen.

4. What is the CXO doing differently from what FCPS has done before? What was your previous role with Dr. Reid in Northshore School District.

I wasn't here before but there are always opportunities to learn and when we know better, we do better. I'm finding a lot of opportunities where we can tighten things up and there are areas, I know I will be contributing to that as we move forward. I worked with Dr. Reid for 5 years before she hired me. My daughters went to school there in Northshore. They were 2 black girls in predominantly white schools, and I was a fierce advocate. That was important to Dr. Reid and she brought me in. I've worked for Casa as well as in local and national television. Most of the work I do is about storytelling. If we share stories with each other, you will learn where you can make your greatest contributions. Our focus is on students and without having the holistic approach of the family and community engagement, you won't have as robust results.

5. **We know there is a new Strategic Plan in the making. As you have been a part of these conversations what do you see are some changes that may be needed in FCPS related to your office?**

We're looking at numbers and data and looking at information but we're not there yet and I hope to share more once we have gotten further.

Ms. Hall then posed the question to the MSAOC - how can I help you and what barriers do you see that I can help with? What has been done before and didn't result well and what suggestions do you have for improvement so that we can make change?

George Becerra asked about the people, groups, or associations that have been new since Ms. Hall arrived and expressed interest in knowing what is being done differently since the CXO has been established.

Shanthi Ashok shared a slide deck students had made about the ways different schools are providing prayer rooms.

Micheline Lavalle noted that a lot of the things mentioned are really great but wondered what groups Ms. Hall noticed that were missing. She added that in her work with the Hispanic community she sees that they seldom show up and thinks we have to dig a little deeper into why this group does not show up. It might have to do with them not feeling empowered because they are not educated. We might think about expanding programs that empower them like early literature, family literature, and HIPPIY. Why not have these programs across the district for all families?

Edward Osborne commented that there is such a long list of ways Ms. Hall can support with barriers. He noted that the one that comes to mind is the experience of his daughter. He is a resident, parent, and staff member whose daughter qualified for AAP level 4 in 2nd grade 10 years ago. She just graduated and in all that time in AAP she never once had a teacher of color. He shared that he was going to bow out of MSAOC this year because his children have graduated but he came to the realization that he doesn't want other families of color to experience that, so he is willing to work with Ms. Hall and with MSAOC.

Monika Vereb stated that she is new to FCPS as a staff member but was a student here and had an amazing experience, so she had a calling to come back and work with the Latino population as a Latina. As an outsider one thing that is glaring is that we are so large the 5 regions seem to operate very differently. Have we considered offering more similar experiences across the 5 regions? The other thing that sticks out as a principal is the Capital Improvement Plan. We need to look with an equity lens at which schools have received capital improvements over time and the most needy populations.

Lynette Henry asked to find out more about how our partners who support College Success and Faith based groups can support the work of the CXO.

Ms. Hall ended her time by saying that the ideas coming forward and offers for support coming out of the faith-based group in particular are amazing such as increasing preschool space, tutoring, and others. She added that members can email her with questions or comments.

7:55 pm Subcommittee Assignments and Work Time:

Subcommittees met in breakout rooms to continue to plan areas of focus for the annual report.

8:15 pm Committee Business:

- Approval of December Meeting Minutes – A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of last month’s meeting. A vote was taken with all in favor. The minutes were approved.
- Co-Chair-in-Waiting – Kenny White explained that although there had been significant attempts to find a co-chair in waiting who is not an FSPC employee, only MSOAC members who are staff have volunteered for next year. As was proposed in the October 2022 meeting, a change to the bylaws was drafted to include the possibility of the both Co-Chairs being FCPS employees in the event that no non-staff are willing or available. The proposed bylaws revision also included the requirement that if both Chairs were employed by FCPS, the co-chair in waiting would have to be a non-staff member. During the discussion of the proposal, Tabitha Temple self-nominated for the role of Co-Chair-in -Waiting. The motion to revise the bylaws was withdrawn. A motion was made to vote for Ms. Temple as the Co-Chair-in-Waiting. It was seconded and the motion carried.
- Brainstorm Questions/Topics for Dr. Presidio
Since the meeting was over time, Kenny asked that members submit question to Kim Amenabar by Monday, January 23rd.

8:45 pm Call for Motion to Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn was proposed and seconded. With all in favor, the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: February 8, 2023, 6:30pm