

MINUTES

Eugene School District 4J Equity Committee
Parr Room—200 North Monroe Street
Eugene, Oregon

December 18, 2007
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Marshall Peter, Chair; Andy Gottesman, Vice Chair; Abrella Luvert, Maria Thomas, Guadalupe Quinn, Larry Soberman, Gillford Tallmadge, Alan Merrill, Jim Garcia, Jerry Rosiek, Jane Waite, Sarah **Ross**, members; Carmen Urbina, committee staff; Superintendent George Russell; Helen Towle, Human Resources; Stephanie Cannon, South Eugene High School.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Marshall called the meeting to order. Those present introduced themselves.

Mr. Marshall welcomed new members Jim Garcia and Jerry Rosiek and noted that Twila Souers and Jason Mak were expected to join the committee in January.

II. Public Comment

- *South Eugene High School Request*

This item was postponed pending the arrival of Stephanie Cannon of South Eugene High School.

III. Updates

- *TRIPOD Project Discussion*

Mr. Marshall solicited questions about the project report. There were none.

Ms. Urbina indicated she would invite Laurie Moses to the January 2008 meeting for further conversation on the project.

Responding to a question from Mr. Marshall, Superintendent Russell indicated the high schools expressed interest in a follow-up survey but the challenge was cost. Mr. Marshall wanted to know if the information was being used and as a default expectation, teachers would receive feedback about their individual results. However, he learned that some teachers were against that. He wondered if the investment translated to meaningful improvement at the teacher or building level, and if done again, could it increase the benefits that would accrue from the improvement. Superintendent Russell suggested that Ms. Moses be invited to discuss those questions. He knew work was going at the schools about using the data. He said the survey was structured to provide teachers with a degree of confidentiality.

Mr. Stiller said that Ms. Moses had information on how many teachers were using the data and he understood that half were accessing it. Mr. Marshall said that Ms. Moses indicated to him that she was

impressed with the number of teachers asking for the information. However, the data would not be disaggregated by teacher unless the teacher requested it.

Ms. Waite did not understand how confidentiality would affect the survey results and asked if Mr. Marshall understood. Superintendent Russell asked Mr. Rosiek to speak to the issue. Mr. Rosiek indicated he would have to know more about the instrument to comment. He did not know why one could not insist on disaggregation at the teacher level unless it was a union issue. Mr. Marshall indicated that he was told teachers might be upset by the results and that the integration of the data provided an additional layer of data.

Mr. Stillwell suggested that before using the survey again, the district might want to find out the extent to which teachers were accessing the feedback and the actual impact, which argued for doing the survey again.

The committee formed a subgroup consisting of Ms. Waite, Mr. Rosiek, and Mr. Stillwell to formulate questions for a discussion with Ms. Moses. Mr. Stillwell encouraged the committee to discuss how it would use the survey rather than discuss its flaws.

Superintendent Russell reminded the committee that the project was part of a national research project and the data was used for national comparisons.

- *Update on Shaping 4J's Future*

Superintendent Russell distributed copies of a presentation made by Ed Weeks of the University of Oregon's Deliberate Democracy Project earlier that day to the administrators regarding the responses to the Shaping 4J's Future survey. He noted that parents tended to like the status quo more than staff. There were some variations between regions and school levels, but in general parents tended to be neutral on many of the issues. Staff was more aware of some of the issues and concerns facing the district. He had been pleased to see that both parents and teachers agreed more needed to be done to address issues of equity and diversity.

Superintendent Russell noted that high school teachers were more favorably disposed to balance enrollment across district high schools, and to have comparable programs at each school regardless of size, which spoke to some of the equity issues. Dr. Weeks would make the presentation the board of directors the next day. He hoped the committee had some time to devote to the survey results in January. Mr. Marshall said he would add the item to the January 2008 agenda.

Superintendent Russell noted criticism he had heard from some residents that the survey was slanted to a certain set of responses and should not be counted, and he suspected the board would hear testimony the next day about those concerns.

Superintendent Russell noted that low-income families' participation had been small, and the district was discussing how to get parents, particularly from title schools, to respond. He commended Ms. Urbina's work in getting Latino families involved in the process.

Ms. Waite wanted the committee to put energy into how to engage SCS families in general.

Ms. Quinn noted the self-selected nature of survey respondents and the difficulty of getting people to fill out the survey without personal engagement. Superintendent Russell attributed the response from Latino families to Ms. Urbina's personal engagement with those families.

Ms. Urbina encouraged committee members to listen to the board meeting on 1280 KRVM AM if they could not attend the meeting in person.

- *Update—Human Resources*

Ms. Towle had nothing specific to report and invited questions.

Ms. Quinn alerted Ms. Towle to the annual “meet and greet” organized by [Educacion and Justicia para La Raza](#) for the human resources staff from the three districts and students of color from the state colleges of education seeking district positions. This year the event was scheduled for April 29 in Springfield, at a location to be announced. Mr. Rosiek recommended that students yet to be certified as teachers be invited to attend as well to allow them to familiarize themselves with the districts. Mr. Garcia endorsed the concept as it allowed the LCC students he worked with to tap into a broad range of resources.

Ms. Quinn encouraged committee members to encourage qualified students to attend.

Ms. Waite encouraged the organizers to include students from the Northwest Community College. Ms. Urbina indicated that the college had been invited. Mr. Tallmadge believed that every school with a teaching program should be invited. Ms. Quinn suggested that additional suggestions for invitees could be sent to Ms. Urbina.

Ms. Towle noted that an internal staff committee had been formed to focus on outreach recruitment and it would begin to brainstorm ideas soon.

II. Public Comment

- *South Eugene High School Request*

Assistant South Eugene High School Principal Stephanie Cannon said that in February 2008, the South Eugene Drama Department would do a production of the Laramie Project, which brought to mind her experience hearing Judy Sheppard talk about her son Matthew’s murder and what parents could do. She had thought it would be wonderful to bring Ms. Sheppard to Eugene to appear at a school assembly and an event open to the general public on February 5. The Drama Department could contribute \$2,000 for the cost of Ms. Sheppard’s appearance fee, which ranged from \$10,000 to \$12,000 with all money going to the Matthew Sheppard Foundation. She had unofficial commitments of funding from another source, and anticipated donations would be solicited at the general public event to offset the cost. She requested committee support and sponsorship.

Mr. Peter said the committee had no budget to allocate money from but it could lend support to the event with the hope the district might find some additional resources. He also noted the networks members belonged to and suggested they could solicit additional support.

Superintendent Russell said that he had suggested to Ms. Cannon that IDEK could be potential sponsors of the event. He pointed out that if the committee had a budget for such requests, it would have to have a process to manage them. He did not oppose budgeting a small amount of money for the committee to allocate, such as \$2,000, but he anticipated the committee would be faced with many such requests. He recalled Ms. Sheppard’s previous appearance in Eugene.

Ms. Urbina believed that it would be a good thing if the committee had a small budget to provide matching funds to schools for worthy projects. She said that City's Human Rights Commission had such a budget and strict criteria to guide its allocation.

Mr. Peter asked how the committee felt about sponsoring the event. There was general support. Ms. Waite advocated for more access to Ms. Sheppard for other students. Ms. Cannon agreed and said there were logistical challenges, such as the fact the auditorium would not hold all students. The event would be voluntary and she anticipated the auditorium would be full. She had pursued an afternoon presentation with Ms. Sheppard's representative as well but that could only happen at additional cost. Ms. Waite suggested a single venue could be selected and people brought in. Ms. Cannon noted the challenges created by the need for school buses, etc. She would report back after further investigation.

Mr. Merrill endorsed Ms. Waite's comments and asked about the additional cost involved. Ms. Cannon did not know. She repeated her concerns about logistics of getting so many students to a single location during the school day and teachers' reluctance to give up too much classroom time. Mr. Merrill lectured Stephanie about something.

Mr. Stillwell wondered if a two-day visit could be possible so that Ms. Sheppard could speak at more than one venue. Stephanie noted that Ms. Sheppard's availability was limited and said she would like to do further investigation about that possibility and the potential of negotiating the cost down.

Ms. Towle said that governments such as the City of Eugene would be reluctant to sponsor such an event unless Ms. Sheppard was available for events open to its employees during the day. She offered to talk to Stephanie about potential partnerships.

Mr. Merrill suggested that this was a good way for Ms. Sheppard to reach a much broader audience.

Mr. Peter agreed that it would be nice if the event was available to all high school students as well as the general community. He suggested an event at the end of the school day at the Hult Center. There was general committee concurrence.

Mr. Garcia suggested that student leaders to invited to attend.

Various committee members offered Ms. Cannon their assistance and other contact names.

Ms. Waite suggested an event at Mac Court where middle school, high school, and college students could mingle. Ms. Towle cautioned there was not much time to put together such an event before February.

Ms. Urbina forwarded Ms. Cannon's e-mail request for support to the committee and encouraged its feedback.

Mr. Peter summarized the committee's endorsement of the event, with a strong message to organizers that it should be structured in a way that made it available to all high school students.

Ms. Waite indicated she could not support an event intended for South Eugene only.

Ms. Waite moved that the committee support the event if it could include access for a wider range of 4J students than students at South Eugene High School.

Ms. Waite said, in response to a question from Mr. Peter, that she was not satisfied by the concept of an

after-school event.

Ms. Luvert suggested that the real issue was financial, and if the motion was to include accessibility the success of that depended on each member seeking funding from their own agency to make it a reality. She would feel more comfortable with that as a caveat. Mr. Merrill's pointed out the committee support did not include financial support.

Mr. Stillwell supported bringing Ms. Sheppard to the community and did not want to place conditions on that.

| Sarah [Ross](#) suggested the possibility that the drama class could travel to other high schools to present its performance. Ms. Cannon indicated she would work with Ms. Urbina and Ms. Luvert to see what could be done to expand accessibility.

Mr. Peter asked the committee if it wanted its support for the event to be contingent on access. He said beyond its endorsement, the committee would work with the district to help identify funding and individual members would work with their agencies to find additional funding.

Mr. Rosiek seconded the motion as summarized by Mr. Peter.

The committee agreed that it would be satisfied with efforts to make the event more accessible. Mr. Rosiek suggested that student leaders should be encouraged to attend as part of the increased accessibility. There was general support.

The motion passed.

Ms. Cannon thanked the committee for its endorsement and said she would work on options that increased accessibility. Mr. Peter thanked Ms. Cannon for the energy she was putting into the event.

- *New Equity Committee Members--Nominees*

This item was previously addressed.

- *Expanded Program Opportunity Program*

Mr. Garcia referred to a handout distributed to committee members that discussed Lane Community College's Expanded Options Program. He was currently looking into using the program for the Latino Rights of Passage Program. The participating students' high schools paid for the cost of tuition and books. He had also discussed the program with the Springfield School District to learn how they were operating the program and if it was possible to include the Latino Rights of Passage Program students in that effort. The district had invited him to identify at-risk students to participate in their program for fall term.

Superintendent Russell noted that the law changed in the last legislative session and the program was broadened beyond at-risk students. He said that each school district addressed the program differently, and some were more interested in participating than others because of the financial impact.

| Ms. Urbina said that Brad [New](#) was the district's new high school curriculum coordinator and he had indicated he would like to discuss the program with Ms. Urbina and Mr. Garcia prior to the January meeting. She anticipated an update would be included on the January agenda.

The committee asked questions clarifying the details of the program.

Mr. Rosiek suggested that “the message needed to go out” from the Springfield and Eugene districts that if a student had an interest in Chicano studies that the school could not support, the program needed to be “assertively supported.” He suggested that was a “cultural message” that needed to be communicated to the two institutions. He did not envision much of an economic impact from the program.

Ms. Luvert asked if there was something new about the program given that high school students were already taking college courses. Superintendent Russell said there were already students taking college courses; the question was what courses met the requirement. He suggested that more discussion would be appropriate. Mr. Garcia referred Ms. Luvert to Juliana Siegfried of Lane Community College for more information about how the program worked.

Mr. Soberman said that the district had alternate education funds and suggested that Landa Rockholtz of the district be contacted as it was his perception that she was always looking for alternative sites for students.

Ms. Waite concurred with Mr. Rosiek. She suggested the district also consider how it communicated with parents about the program and said she would be curious to know if the students in such programs were getting the support they needed to be successful. She requested more information on that so she could see if the district was doing a good job before it expanded offerings.

Ms. Urbina said she would arrange a meeting with herself, Mr. Garcia, and Mr. New, and invited questions from committee members for that group to discuss. Ms. Luvert volunteered to participate.

- *Update—Anti-immigrant Measures (Impact on Local Districts)*

Ms. Quinn updated the committee on anti-immigrant measures currently being contemplated, including Measure 19, which would limit students to two years of English Language Learner (ELL) classes. That could have a financial impact on the district. She also noted that there were measures being contemplated that would restrict access to drivers’ licenses and require local law enforcement to cooperate with federal law enforcement agencies. She indicated she would keep the committee informed. She asked that members who observed signatures being collected for the measures contact her about the locations they say it occur, and provided her telephone number.

Superintendent Russell observed that Measure 19 was of real concern to many districts and he would discuss its implications with the board the following evening during the board’s work session on English Language Learner Program.

Members briefly discussed California’s experience with the elimination of ELL. Mr. Stillwell indicated he could provide Ms. Quinn with contacts for information about research related to the topic.

Mr. Rosiek recommended that members participate with the College of Education in holding a press conference advocating for such education. Ms. Quinn indicated she would follow up.

- *ELL Presentation*

Ms. Urbina reviewed the presentation to be made to the school board, copies of which were provided to the committee.

IV. Update—Work Plan

This item was not addressed.

V. Next Steps

The next committee meeting was scheduled for February 22.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)