

Tuesday, November 27, 2018

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF AD HOC COMMITTEE OF GREAT CITY SCHOOLS MALES OF COLOR OF THE BRIDGEPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION, held November 27, 2018, at Bridgeport City Hall, 45 Lyon Terrace, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Present were, Sauda Baraka, Joseph Sokolovic, Terry Walden, Tekanya Monteiro, Natasha Noel, JoAnn Kennedy, Dr. Melissa Jenkins, Dr. Sheila Kearney, and Saleh Hanaif.

Ms. Baraka moved to table the committee's minutes of October 23, 2018. The motion was seconded by Mr. Walden and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on the Males of Color budget. Ms. Baraka noted copies had been distributed to the committee.

Ms. Monteiro said that in-state background checks cost about \$15. Ms. Baraka noted Mr. Ramos had an existing a program for 50 students. She added the committee had look at how to expand programs to cover more students. She said the model that works is mentoring young men.

Mr. Hanaif said his mentoring program for young fathers is similar to Mr. Ramos's program. He said described the expenditures for his program for food, gift cards and activities.

Ms. Baraka said the idea was to reach as many children as possible.

Ms. Noel said the committee should have clear goals of what it is trying to accomplish, which would help support the budget allocations. She said she previously oversaw the funding of mentoring programs in Boston. Clear goals are needed. She said one way to measure the impact of programs is to have a survey of boys entering programs followed by a later survey at the end.

Ms. Noel said there are various types of mentoring programs, including one to one, group, home-based, and community-based. She said numbers of students may vary depending on the model. She said the funding should be proportionate to the amount of people being served.

Mr. Sokolovic noted there was a new program for day care at Harding, which may create opportunities for young male parents. Mr. Hanaif said he was part of the planning committee for the program.

There was further discussion of the budget.

Ms. Monteiro said there would be a group mentoring model at the middle school level, with twenty male mentors having two to three students. Meals would be provided and there would be an end-of-year by a trip to African-American History museum in Washington, D.C., with large funding by the Buddy Jordan Foundation. The district would have to fund the background checks. Ms. Monteiro said she and Ms. Noel were spearheading the effort.

Dr. Jenkins asked for accountability purposes an outline of each plan at the middle school level, Central, Bassick, Harding and the forum for presentation to Dr. Johnson.

Ms. Baraka noted the written proposal for Mr. Ramos's program was completed. Dr. Jenkins asked that it be sent electronically to her. Ms. Baraka asked Mr. Hanaif to send his information to Dr. Jenkins. She noted a representative from Central High has never appeared at one of the meetings.

There was a discussion of how Males of Color budget of the district would be made. Dr. Jenkins said the funding is probably coming from a grant and would have to go through finance department. She noted the system involves getting electronic quotes for prices.

Ms. Monteiro said the background checks were the standard ones used by Anne Gribbon for the school volunteer office. Dr. Jenkins said the question may arise if the background checks should be greater than statewide.

Ms. Monteiro said she believed the more extensive background check cost about \$100.

There was a discussion of the field trip at the end of the year. Ms. Monteiro said it would be funded by the Buddy Jordan Foundation and thus would not be considered part of a district program. She said the mentoring program itself would take place at Batalla School.

Dr. Jenkins said she did not know if the budget would have to cover custodial and security costs. In the event such charges are incurred, Ms. Baraka said another option is to go to the unions and ask for volunteers.

It was noted Batalla and Curiale are both convenient for bus lines.

Ms. Baraka said she could contact Alan Wallack about the potential building costs.

It was noted Mr. Hanaif's group of teen fathers came from Bassick, Central and Harding. Dr. Jenkins said he works in a group dynamic. She said he was the soccer coach at Bassick, but the committee did not have a staff person from Bassick. Ms. Baraka said Vernon Thompson of Bassick recently got a job in Hartford.

Ms. Baraka said Dr. Johnson designated Dr. McPherson as the liaison from Central High.

Ms. Baraka moved that *"we act on the amount allocated for each of the five subsections to be our budget for Great City Schools."* The motion was seconded by Mr. Walden and unanimously approved.

Ms. Baraka moved to approve the committee's minutes of October 23, 2018. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on the Males of Color community forum. There was a discussion of what dates had been proposed. Dr. Jenkins said June dates are typically not good for educators. May 15 or 23 were suggested.

Mr. Sokolovic said the dates of Board of Education meetings in 2019 would be set soon.

There was a discussion of the length of the forum. The prior forum was about two hours. Mr. Walden said if the main audience is educators a time in the day closer to the dismissal of school might be better. Dr. Jenkins said one goal could be how to engage more educators in the work that the committee is doing.

Ms. Baraka said with the superintendent backing the work of the committee she could inform her staff of the importance of attending a forum put on by the committee because it is in alignment with the district's strategic plan. She said each school would have to show they have done something in this area according to her expectations. Participating in the forum by administrators might be a way of demonstrating how they are satisfying that piece of their evaluation.

Dr. Jenkins said new teachers have been offered workshops on unconscious bias. Mr. Sokolovic said perhaps an approach through the union might be effective in getting educators to attend the forum. Mr. Walden said factionalism was not helpful to the work that the committee is trying to see. He said he sees too many students come into college with deficient skills.

Ms. Baraka said the social workers came out en masse to the last forum.

There was a discussion of the start time for the forum. The consensus was the best time was 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Dr. Jenkins said the ELL summit put on by Ana Sousa-Martins is well attended by educators even though they don't get paid for attending. Dr

Ms. Baraka suggested the Connecticut Teacher of the Year be invited to perform with her children at the forum. Dr. Jenkins said there was a boys' choir that performed at a convocation.

Ms. Baraka moved "*for the tentative dates of May 23 or May 30, with hours to be 4:00 to 6:00. At a school to be determined, possibly Harding High.*" The motion was seconded by Dr. Kearney and unanimously approved.

The next agenda item was on the committee's schedule. Dr. Jenkins suggested there be a list with the meeting times listed on the board's website. Mr. Sokolovic noted the board's committees may be changing after the upcoming organizational meeting. The members discussed their schedules.

Dr. Jenkins suggested meeting twice a month to get momentum going.

Ms. Baraka moved "*to have meetings on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 5:30 p.m.*" The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic and unanimously approved.

Dr. Jenkins noted one of the meetings each month could be a subcommittee meeting. The next meeting would be December 11th, followed by January 8, January 22, February 12, February 26, and March 12, March 25, April 9, April 23, May 14, and May 28.

Dr. Jenkins moved the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sokolovic and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John McLeod

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