

## **Wilmington Education Improvement Commission**

Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee (PEaCE)

Cab Calloway School of the Arts, Room 201

Meeting Minutes – October 10, 2016

Chair Elizabeth Lockman called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.

Elizabeth (Tizzy) Lockman, Chair, began with committee logistics:

- PEaCE committee membership will be reconstituted to ensure commitment from all members.
- She discussed the possibility of changing the committee meeting time with members.
- She reviewed the supplemental legislative handout in the packet of information

### **Work Plan Review - Vision**

The Committee reviewed the 3 overarching goals of committee to have a clear vision of the committee:

1. Parents and community members who are empowered to navigate the complex ecosystem of public education, and are able to navigate the system. A complex ecosystem of interweaving parts no longer separated but working together.
2. An engagement framework that fosters meaningful and valuable engagement through two-way communication between schools and parents/guardians.
3. Implementation of evidence-based engagement practices utilized by both schools and the state

The Committee discussed actionable goals to move forward on research points

- Establish an agreeable definition of engagement
- Identifying best practices and inventory current processes in the state.
- Necessary to make visible short-term actions.

The Committee conversed over examples of short-term goals, such as interviews and surveying that the Meeting the Needs Committee has worked to achieve. There was discussion about the funding process for short-term goals would be approved by the Commission.

### **Introductions**

Tizzy Lockman paused the meeting to introduce herself and asked each member of the committee and members of the public to introduce themselves.

### **Identified Gaps in Engagement**

The Committee built on previous discussions of identifying gaps in engagement.

- It was commented that it is difficult to truly identify gaps and barriers unless disenfranchised and disengaged parents are brought to the table.
  - Unwelcoming school environment contributes to the students and parents to be defensive, which is the responsibility of the school to reach out and be welcoming.

It was suggested that facilitated conversations might be more effective in the approach to go into the communities and reach beyond the traditional methods.

- A committee member said it would be possible to do subcommittee work to achieve this goal of have facilitated conversations.
  - The Committee reviewed the programmatic proposals, such as the Friday Café for discussions about engagement.

- The Committee discussed the possibility of reaching out to disengaged populations with all methods, including traditional online surveys, but also the non-traditional methods of going out to community centers, churches, city council meetings, etc.
- It was mentioned it is necessary to have a Spanish-speaking facilitator for the facilitated conversations.

The Committee revisited the question of importance of engagement and why parents should be involved in the process.

- It was stated that the number one goal of the committee was to agree on the definition of engagement.
- The committee members then discussed the purpose of engagement. They agreed that engagement is to ensure all students have a successful experience. The research supports that engaged parents at any level encourage students to do well in school and there are greater student achievements.
- A committee member mentioned how teachers should be involved or taught about how to engage parents, which is one of the barriers of engagement.
  - A discussion continued about how the in-school programs create conversations with the students, such as the D.A.R.E program and this could be helpful for overcoming the barrier about engagement education.
- The importance of understanding different perspectives of teachers and parents, such as the systems issue for consistency with online grades.

The Committee discussed the “cultural competency” aspect on an individual level, such as the welcoming environment of the school, but also the individual relationship. It was also discussed that engagement is not the same as cooperation and the mindset of cooperation should change, not only in Delaware, but nation-wide.

Patti Nash asked if engagement was included in the Red Clay District on Poverty and Trauma Conference in September. Fredericka said DSEA covered topics tied to community schools and a genuine community center.

### **Public Comment**

B. Williams commented on the environment of WEIC. He mentioned the wrongdoings of current district lines. Furthermore, he expressed his frustration about differences between schools, which make referendums difficult, especially about funding.

### **Recommendations**

Tizzy Lockman reviewed the ongoing work of the committee will include:

- 1) Clarify and narrow down engagement definitions
- 2) Inventory of engagement attempts
- 3) Survey of environment of disengaged parents

Subcommittees will be spearheading these three topics and all members were encouraged to bring parents to upcoming meetings.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chair Tizzy Lockman entertained a motion to approve the April and September meeting minutes. The motion was seconded. Meeting Minutes were approved.

**Upcoming Meeting Reminders**

Next meeting will be held on November 14<sup>th</sup> and location will be determined.

Tizzy Lockman adjourned the meeting 6:56 p.m.

**Wilmington Educator Improvement Commission  
Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee  
Attendance at 10/10 Meeting**

**PEaCE Committee Members**

Tizzy Lockman, Chair  
Donovan Alderman  
Devon Hynson  
Frederika Jenner  
Pati Nash  
Kevin Dolan

**Members of the Public**

B. Williams  
Bisola Neil  
Ann Aviles

**Institute for Public Administration Staff**

Kelly Sherretz  
Taylor Hawk  
Kelsey Mensch  
Melissa Micek