

# Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee

Minutes

October 12, 2010



The Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee met on Tuesday, October 12, 2010, at 5:30 p.m. in the Board of Education Meeting Room at the Worcester Educational Center. The following members were present: Ms. Wynnette Handy, Dr. Jon Andes, Mr. Kennis Austin, Ms. Undrea Blake, Ms. Stephanie Caceres, Mr. Carlton Cartwright, Ms. Shirleen Church, Ms. Kristine Dodd, Ms. Nancy Fortney, Dr. John Gaddis, Ms. Latrice Hall, Ms. Arlene Hager, Ms. Joanne Jarmon, Ms. Reunite Johnson, Ms. Joslyn King, Ms. Elizabeth Marshall, Ms. Margaret Paige-Bacon, Rev. Gilbert Patterson, Ms. Kimberly Purvis, Mr. Matthew Record, Ms. Dawn Rogers, Ms. Janet Simpson, Ms. Sara Thompson, Ms. Diane Stulz and Ms. Robyn Donoway.

The meeting began with a welcome from Ms. Handy. She suggested a theme, "Infinite Possibilities", for the year and talked about how the committee should expand their expectations for the work ahead of them in regards to minority student achievement. Returning members and new members introduced themselves and were thanked for their interest and continued commitment to the work of the Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee.

Ms. Handy discussed the history and charge of the original Minority Student Achievement Task Force which was formulated in 1999. She presented how the current advisory committee was created, as well as its purpose and goals. Information about past presentations and activities involving minority achievement were also shared. She asked committee members to take the information from the meeting and share it with their respective schools and the community at-large.

Achievement data was reviewed with the group. Included in the presentation were the demographics of the county, attendance, and the Maryland School Assessment Performance data in Reading and Mathematics for the 2010 school year. The percentage of students in the graduating class of 2010 that had passed the High School Assessments was also discussed. Ms. Handy emphasized the fact that the African American subgroup had made significant academic progress since 2003 and achievement gaps were narrowing in many areas; however, reminded the group that performance standards established by the state continue to increase each year. Accolades given to the African American student subgroup included being first in the state in third, fifth and seventh grades in mathematics and second place in eighth grade reading and mathematics. The group was also shown data that revealed that African American students were not meeting state standards in English. (The academic achievement data is on file in the Education That Is Multicultural Office.)

Ms. Handy began a discussion on planning for the committee's presentation on the achievement gap to various church congregations. The committee decided to visit Worcester County churches twice this year (before American Education Week and before the administration of the Maryland School Assessment) to increase the awareness of the achievement gap and share what parents can do at home to help their children and become more

involved in the education system. The Committee reviewed a prepared list of churches and added two. The bulletin handed out last year was shared with the committee and a discussion ensued about how to enhance it (add state website address to access sample assessments and a line for parents to write their PowerSchool password). It was decided that the main push to disseminate this information would be on Sunday, November 7<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup>, in preparation for American Education Week. A sheet was provided for members to sign up for this subcommittee. A concern about all parents receiving the bulletin, not just those who were in targeted churches was voiced. As a result, the committee brainstormed other places and events for the brochure to be distributed, including the Health Department, sporting events, county website, report cards, the Judy Center, Head Start and Daycare Centers.

The Committee was shown a list of possible activities for the year, created by the previous year's committee, and they were asked to brainstorm additional activities that could be added to the list. The Committee brainstormed the following:

- Focus should be on African American males
- Bring into the high school more role models for the African American males
  - o local people, as well as celebrities
  - o successful high school students to help elementary students
  - o people who have a story to tell (create an up close and personal environment)
- Start early in the elementary grades, instilling a self-desire to learn
- Keep bullying/harassment in mind (race, gender, special education)
- Continue college visits
- Linking with Wor-Wic to reinforce continued education in certain fields/careers
- Make sure students are college and career ready
- Look at the Gear Up Program
- Create College Expo
  - o Tie careers to classes at Worcester Technical High School
  - o Invite College Representatives
  - o "Real Talk" – where college students talk honestly about their experiences
  - o Long-term planning (transcript evaluation)
  - o Financial Aid
- Communicate Graduate Profiles to community
- Consistency is needed on a daily basis with students
- Let students know college standards
- Think about Career Day in a different way (showing students the path they will need to take in order to obtain a certain career)
  - o Exposure to third grade students
  - o Start really working with students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade
- Develop a Scope and Sequence of expectations of students

The meeting concluded at 7:00 p.m.

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Meeting Dates for the Year: January 11, 2011 and May 2, 2011