

Arlington School Committee  
Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment & Accountability Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, June 5, 2018 @ 4:30 p.m.

Attendance

Subcommittee Members: Jeff Thielman (Chair), Paul Schlichtman, Jane Morgan

District Leadership: Kathleen Bodie, Ed.D. (Superintendent), Roderick MacNeal, Ed.D. (Assistant Superintendent)

Others: Superintendent's Diversity Advisory Committee members: Jane Lynch, Miriam Stein, Regina Caines, Lynette Martyn, Michael Braunstein, Barbara Boltz, Ann Mathes. Kristina Fontanez (Co-Chair, Brackett Parent Diversity Group), Rajeev Soneja (Hardy/Gibbs Parent), Marielle Palombo (Brackett parent), Ben Moynihan (Brackett parent).

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m.

1. **The minutes of the January 16, 2018 subcommittee meeting were approved, 2-0 (Motion by Mr. Schlichtman, second by Mr. Thielman).**
2. **The minutes of the May 18, 2018 subcommittee were approved, 3-0 (motion by Ms. Morgan, second by Mr. Schlichtman).**
3. **Public Participation – None**
4. **Discussion of revised FY19 Goals**
  - Dr. MacNeal presented the revised FY19 goals. He noted that the administrative team spent several hours reworking the wording. He explained that the team considered ideas expressed at the last CIAA subcommittee meeting and the May 10<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting when the goals were presented for the first time.
  - Mr. MacNeal said that a core principle of the reworked goal objectives is that he wants teachers to integrate academics, social emotional competence and cultural competence. The administrative team and Dr. MacNeal do not believe it is effective to think of cultural competence as a separate and distinct component of their work. He said this principle is what forms the basis of the updated wording.
  - Dr. MacNeal presented revised language for Objectives 1.2 and 2.1:
    - Objective 1.2 now reads: "Students will develop their social emotional skills through an awareness of cultural bias and by learning in classrooms where responsible decision making, empathy, and the importance of positive relationships are the norm."

- Objective 2.1 now reads: “Professional learning for educators will reinforce targeted components of the academic curriculum, social emotional competencies and pedagogy, and emphasizes culturally responsive and data-based instructional practices that support student learning and growth.”
- Ms. Morgan suggested that Objective 2.1 be made clearer by adding the word “will” before “emphasize.” Mr. Schlichtman suggested that “data-based” be changed to “data-informed.” Dr. MacNeal said he was comfortable with both changes. The revised Objective 2.1 reads:
  - **Objective 2.1 “Professional learning for educators will reinforce targeted components of the academic curriculum, social emotional competencies and pedagogy, and will emphasize culturally responsive and data-informed instructional practices that support student learning and growth.”**
- Dr. MacNeal said the district’s leadership will meet over the summer and detail the key activities, evidences that demonstrate progress, and staff owner for each goal objective. He explained that this detail will be in the final goal document that is placed on the APS website.
- Lynette Martyn, a member of the Superintendent’s Diversity Task Force, asked if the subcommittee and the public would have the chance to review the key activities and evidences before they are implemented in FY19. Dr. Bodie said that the planning will take place over the summer, and the plan will commence during the summer with professional development. She noted, however, that she will be presenting a report on all action plans and evidences that show progress to the School Committee at its first meeting in September.
- After discussion, the subcommittee agreed to find a date in August or early September at which time Dr. Bodie and Dr. MacNeal would present the key activities and evidences of progress on all FY19 goal objectives. This would be a chance to share the work the district is doing and listen to any feedback from the subcommittee, members of the public, and members of the Superintendent’s Diversity Task Force.

##### **5. Discussion of adding a Cultural Competency goal as part of the District’s Overarching Goals**

- During the discussion on the revised FY19 goal objectives presented by Dr. MacNeal, Miriam Stein of the Superintendent’s Diversity Task Force, said the Task Force wanted to propose a fifth overarching goal on cultural competency. She asked about the process by which the committee adds an overarching goal.
- Mr. Schlichtman, Mr. Thielman, and Dr. Bodie explained that the overarching goals were enshrined in district policy in September of 2012 after a nine-month process in which the School Committee and District leadership each reflected on the district’s priorities. Mr. Thielman explained that the goal setting work was done over several retreats with the School Committee and district leadership, and at the same time Dr. Bodie held several meetings with her cabinet to work through the overarching goals.

- An outcome of the 9-month process was a shared commitment to develop an academic program that would prepare all students to enter and complete a post-secondary degree program. Mr. Thielman explained that there was considerable discussion about this particular objective. He explained that this objective holds the district to high standards for all learners.
- Mr. Schlichtman said the nearly year-long effort allowed for lots of dialogue by and among School Committee members and District leadership. He noted that the goal setting process was led by a consultant.
- Ms. Stein said that the task force wanted an overarching goal about district culture, and she said the task force would be comfortable with a similar process. She said that this was necessary to ensure that cultural competence is a district priority.
- Dr. MacNeal is a priority, and it is expressed as such in the goal statement revised by the district's administrative team during the past week.
- Ms. Regina Caines, a member of the Superintendent's Diversity Task Force, explained that in the FY18 (this year) goals, there was separate sentence that read: *Teachers and staff will have professional development in topics of cultural competency as part of the district's overall focus on social-emotional growth.* She said the Task Force felt not having that language in this year's goals would be a step backward from the good work done in the past year.
- Dr. MacNeal said the professional development plan does include topics of cultural competency training. He clarified that the district is developing a professional development plan that includes cultural awareness.
- Ms. Caines and Ms. Stein said not stating clearly that teachers and staff will have professional development in cultural competency in the goal objectives sent the wrong message to the community, even if the activities are going to be enumerated in the activities and "evidences" the district will forward to the School Committee in September.
- Ms. Morgan said the issue was that the subcommittee did not have before it the action plans for the coming year. She said that would help clarify.
- Mr. Thielman suggested that the district could undergo a process in which the district staff developed a statement that defines the district's culture; it could be a statement of values that incorporates the questions and approach the district uses currently in hiring people. He suggested that this could be an action item under 2.3 (Increase the diversity of APS staff) that could lead to an overarching district goal. He said a new overarching goal has to come from the staff and be supported by staff for it to have any meaning, and this approach was a way to achieve this. Creating an intentional culture statement could inform hiring, for example. Dr. Bodie and Dr. MacNeil agreed to consider this suggestion and discuss it with the administrative team.
- Ms. Caines said the district's overarching goals as written make sense. There is a category for student achievement, one for teacher and staff development, another for

resources, and a fourth for stakeholder engagement. A fifth category should be district culture.

- Dr. Bodie and Dr. MacNeal said they would talk about these suggestions with the administrative team this summer. Dr. MacNeal said that for him and for the administrative team cultural competency is a component of each of the four overarching goals; it is not a separate goal but integrated into everything the district is doing.
- Mr. Schlichtman said he was open to a process of editing the overarching goals.
- Mr. Thielman said that the subcommittee could take this topic up again at a late summer meeting when it reviewed the detailed activities and evidences of success the district would be presenting to the full School Committee in early September. At that time, with all of the information on the district's plans for the year, the subcommittee could make a reasonable decision about whether it made sense to recommend a process that could lead to a fifth overarching APS goal.
- The subcommittee agreed to revisit the issue of a fifth overarching goal at a meeting later in the summer. Dr. MacNeal said he would submit the goal objectives, with the changes suggested by Ms. Morgan and Mr. Schlichtman, to the School Committee on Thursday evening.

#### **6. Superintendent's Goals**

- Dr. Bodie said she will select her professional practice, student learning, and district improvement goals and present the evidence she will submit prior to the June 21<sup>st</sup> School Committee meeting. She will ask the chair for time at that meeting to engage in a conversation with the committee about these goals.

#### **7. CIAA Role in developing a five-year plan for APS**

- Mr. Thielman said he and Mr. Len Kardon, chair of the Budget subcommittee, were trying to find time for a joint budget/CIAA meeting in July to discuss the five-year plan with the district's leadership.
- Ms. Morgan clarified that this work is being done to inform the discussions taking place to set the 2019 override vote.

#### **8. Next Meeting**

- The subcommittee will look at dates to meet in July (with Budget) and in August.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.