

Parent Diversity Advisory Council

2009-2010

Meeting Minutes

Date: November 3, 2009

- **Introductions/ Attendance:** Sandra Charles (PDAC Chair), Rachael Batchu (PDAC Vice-Chair), Evy Bowman (PTA Liaison, Brooks), Mark Rising (PTA Liaison, Granger), Esther Wong (PTA Liaison, Scullen), Mike Popp (District liaison to PDAC), Celeste Green (PTA Liaison, Owen), Crystal Blount (PTA Liaison, Fischer and Waubonsie), Reeta Roy (PTA Liaison, Builta), Kelia Guyton (PTA Liaison, Gombert), Saily Joshi (PTA Liaison, Brookdale), Rachel DePorte (PDAC Secretary), Lou Chavez (PTA Liaison, Patterson), Nancy Friedlander (PTA Liaison, Watts), Shree Gurusamy (PTA Liaison, Still), Susan Schillmoeller (PTA Liaison, Georgetown), Zonicke Alston-Betts (Guest), Kathryn Ward (PTA Liaison, Spring Brook)

- **Discussion Topic: What are the needs of your school community?**
 - Hispanic dialogue
 - PTA newsletter in Spanish
 - Bilingual all communications
 - A Need for translation
 - Facilitating Transitions
 - Newcomers Night
 - Sensitivity to Religious diversity
 - Inclusion of Special Needs
 - Diversity PTA representation
 - PTA Outreach
 - Understanding “Diversity”
 - Cultural Awareness in schools across District
 - Multicultural education among teaching staff – this transfers to student behavior
 - Moving past discomfort with dialogue
 - Timing of PTA meetings; doesn’t allow diverse base to become involved
 - Perception that this community has no “needs”
 - Communication

- **Discussion Topic: Do students, parents, teachers and administrators have common needs?** (see handout) – this is something you may want to share with your PTA and Principals. These are just some of the common needs:

- Student achievement
 - Empathy
 - Position of influence
 - Security
 - Community belonging
 - Leadership
 - Good communication
 - Feedback
 - Emotional and behavioral support
 - Safety and well being
 - Educated – mutual understanding
 - Respect
 - Individuality
 - Resources (all kinds)
 - Acceptance
- **Article Share:** many liaisons brought an article to share – they are as follows:
 - FamilyEducation.com – shared by Mark Rising. Kid and Diversity (see <http://life.familyeducation.com/diversity/respecting-equality/34476.html>)
 - Education.com/topic/diversity-in-education – shared by Mark Rising -- many articles – some on diversity, some on stereotypes
 - Teaching Tolerance magazine – at www.teachingtolerance.org shared by Shree Gurusamy
 - “Former foster child in Chicago now a million-dollar scholar” and “Black Youth Invents Surgical Technique at 14” – shared by Sandra Charles
 - “Confronting the Racism of Low Expectations” -- shared by Mike Popp
- **What the PTA Liaisons have seen out in the schools:**
 - Granger, Georgetown and Brooks – change in make-up of families and children.
 - Granger has had a big change with the new middle school. They now have a Hispanic Asst. Principal who has really gone a long way in bringing everyone together.
 - Georgetown now has an administrative intern, who is doing a lot of translation for the school. However, for a school that is about 50% minority,

- about 90% of the faculty is white/non-minority. Brooks – instead of Halloween party, they had a multicultural day – brought in marimba band, etc.
- Brookdale – had a dialogue circle with black parents to talk about the needs of their population in Brookdale.
 - Transition from elementary to middle school (Welch to Scullen) – seems to be a common thread among many in the African American community.
 - There were questions about why some schools have after school programs or “breakfast” programs and others do not. Sandra explained that there are grants from the city of aurora for title one schools, at the middle school level, for after school programs. Also there are certain programs that were funded by a grant from Aurora University – eg. Breakfast program at Georgetown
 - Neuqua started a group for African American parents because they felt there was a need. They met for the first time last week
 - We discussed recruiting minority teachers and the point was brought up about retention – how do we retain those teachers once they are hired.

- **Family-Friendly Strategies Checklist --** (see handout) – this is a good resource for all of the PTA liaisons to use in opening the discussion with their PTA presidents and Principals.

- **Focus: School Improvement 101** lead by Mike Popp
See PowerPoint presentation

- Some basic definitions:
 - SIP – a “school’s improvement plan” should be on the schools website
 - ILT – “instructional leadership team” at each school
- The “mantra” – preparing ALL students to succeed
- IIRC.com – Illinois interactive report card – website where you can compare other districts.

- **Liaison Take-away:**
Share what you have learned about student achievement and school improvement with your school community.
- **For Next Meeting:** How can PDAC help your school accomplish its SIP goals?
- **Next Meeting Date:** Tuesday, December 1st from 7 to 9 p.m.

Questions about meeting minutes should be directed to: Rachel DePorte