

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT & SUPPORT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

SEPTEMBER 13, 2018
MINUTES

A Student Achievement & Support committee meeting was held by the Board Committee on September 13, 2018 in the Board Committee Room in Suite 101 of the School District of Philadelphia Education Center, 440 North Broad Street.

The meeting was convened at 5:00 p.m by **Board Member and Committee Co-Chair, Angela McIver.**

Co-Chair McIver called the roll and announced that the meeting was being recorded by the School District of Philadelphia and can be viewed on PSTV's Comcast Channel 52 or Verizon Fios Channel 20. It was also announced that the recordings are protected by the Copyright Laws of the United States and may not be used in any manner without the express written consent of The School District. Dr. McIver announced by participating in the meeting, members of the public acknowledge that the School District may use its recordings for any purpose without obtaining permission or paying any compensation.

Committee Members present: Dr. McIver (Co-Chair), Dr. McGinley (Co-Chair), Board Member Fix-Lopez, Board Member Dr. McColgan, Board Member Danzy, and Board Member Egea-Hinton - 6

Board Members present: President Wilkerson

Committee Members Absent - 0

Superintendent Dr. William Hite: present

District Liaison for the Superintendent: Shawn Bird present

Co-Chair Dr. McIver started the meeting with opening remarks. She stated the goal of the new committee structure is to provide a platform to partner with the community in discussion of the Board's governing oversight of key District matters. This committee will highlight initiatives and programs in advance of Board actions, while also hearing your feedback on issues related to academics or student supports.

Co-Chair McIver invited **Co-Chair McGinley**, to make additional comments.

Co-Chair McGinley thanked **Co-Chair McIver** and the members of the public for attending the committee meeting. **Co-Chair McGinley** reminded everyone that no formal actions will be taken during the committee meeting and that it is a platform for public dialogue and deliberation in advance of the

monthly Action Meeting. He also recognized the committee has received written testimony from Barbara Dowdall and Councilwoman Helen Gym.

Co-Chair McGinley stated the committee will be requesting specific District reports at each of these meetings on key District investments. The agenda for this meeting includes four specific District reports: Overview of the 2018-19 school year, Early Literacy, Teacher Retention and Recruitment strategies, and an update on the System of Great Schools Initiative. These presentations are followed by a discussion on upcoming Action Items which includes a brief presentation from the Charter School Office on Multiple Charter School Organizations (MCSOs). He announced those who registered to speak in advance of the meeting would have an opportunity to speak. Additionally, he announced the various ways in which the public can connect with committees, including: submitting written comment cards, emails, or registering to participate in the meeting.

Co-Chair McIver introduced **Dr. William Hite, Superintendent**, who provided a [presentation on the District's strategic Action Plan and the four anchor goals that guide the work of the District](#). The presentation also included implementation and outcome goals for each of the four anchor goal for this school year.

Co-Chair McIver opened the floor for committee questions and remarks.

Board Member Danzy asked Dr. Hite whether the outcome goals are specific to the 2018-2019 school year? Dr. Hite clarified that implementation and outcome goals are one year goals that are measured at the end of each reporting period. The District will bring an update last this year to the committee on progress towards these goals.

Board Member Fix-Lopez asked what other indicators are used to define college and career readiness outside of high school graduation to measurement progress on Anchor Goal #1, college and career readiness?

Dr. Bird stated that in addition to the graduation rate, under the new ESSA law, the District is required to report certain benchmarks for grade spans including number of students taking Advanced Placement courses, scores on AP exams, and the number of students that attempt those courses. Additionally, the District has made a large investment in the 9th grade Academies model which monitors several indicators of high school success including coursework, on-target promotion, attendance, and climate indicators.

Co-Chair Dr. McIver asked whether the indicators being tracked as part of the 9th grade Academies initiatives are part of current progress monitoring for Anchor Goal 1?

Co-Chair Dr. McGinley stated this committee will take a deeper dive on this topic - college and career readiness - in a future meeting.

Board Member Egea-Hinton asked for more information on the plan to expand the early literacy program into grades 4-8 as discussed earlier by Dr. Hite. **Dr. Savoy-Brooks** responded stating that they are currently in the process of creating frameworks beginning with grades 4-5, then 6-7, and 8 on expanding early literacy training.

Co-Chair Dr. McGinley asked whether the expansion includes continuing to partner with outside organizations to support the District's early literacy efforts and goal. **Dr. Savoy-Brooks, Chief of Academic Support**, stated the intention is to align early literacy strategies with the high school strategy in order to support with Anchor Goal 1 through the early grades. **Co-Chair Dr. McIver** asked whether the Keystone exams are a reliable measure of college and career readiness? The District would provide a response at a later time.

Board President Wilkerson asked for more information on the District's strategy to measure and support schools that are unable to show consistent academic progress. **Dr. Savoy-Brooks** outlined the District's effort to support teachers and administrators to support grade-level instruction and content. **Co-Chair Dr. McGinley** clarified this question should be addressed at the systems level during the discussion of the System of Great Schools Initiative.

Dr. Savoy-Brooks, Chief of Academic Support and **Diane Castelbuono**, Deputy Chief of Early Childhood Education provided a [presentation on the Early Literacy Initiative](#). **Dr. Bird** provided a brief presentation on the [District's Teacher Retention and Recruitment](#) efforts followed by a [presentation on the System of Great Schools Initiative](#).

Co-Chair Dr. McGinley made a statement that while he appreciates the work that has been done to support low-performing schools through this model, he has concerns with elements of the original model. Those concerns should be discussed at a later time when planning for the future.

Co-Chair Dr. McIver asked committee members to table questions on this presentation for a later date and began the introduction of upcoming action items to be considered by the Board at its September Action Meeting. She stated that the goal of addressing action items now is for the discussion to take place in committee rather than at the action meetings.

Co-Chair Dr. McIver opened the floor for committee members to ask questions or remarks in regards to upcoming Action Items.

Dr. McGinley stated he would like further information on Action Item B-6, the contract with C.B. Community School. What services does this school provide? Are there currently 70 students placed at the school? If not, where are they attending school today?

Dr. Bird stated that C.B. Community school is a unique program that provides integrated social-emotional support services to students, under a competency based model. The school provides wrap around supports for students who have experienced trauma. **Dr. Bird** stated that the school currently has 65 or the 70 seats filled by referrals from Department of Human Services (DHS) or Community Behavioral Health (CBH).

Dr. McGinley asked whether this is a new contract or continuation of an existing contract? **Dr. Bird** responded stating that the District does not currently have a contract with the provider although they have engaged in partnership with the school since C.B. Community School serves former District students.

Dr. McIver asked who is paying for the current 65-70 students at C.B. Community School?

Dr. Bird stated that the C.B. Community School is a private school supported by private dollars and support from the DHS. The District is interested in collaborating with C.B. Community school to support students as they transition back to District schools.

Dr. McIver asked whether this Action Item B-6 would expand capacity for C.B. Community School to serve additional students referred by the District? **Board Member Danzy**, added the question of understanding the process and criteria being used to refer students to this school.

Dr. Bird stated that many of the students are currently in District or charter schools. Most students are referred by the DHS or CBH as the best placement for the child. He stated that the recommended contract is primarily for the District to receive professional development from the provider to be expand internal capacity to provide social-emotional learning and support to students in District schools.

Dr. McGinley asked what services do these students receive from C.B. Community School?

Dr. Bird stated that most of the students are high school or over-aged students, some of which may receive special education services, or are in foster care and are choosing to attend this school. These students are not court referred, however they may have voluntarily agreed to attend the school based on a referral from DHS or CBH. He stated that 92% of the students currently enrolled at the C.B. Community School come from District schools.

Board Member Danzy requested clarity on the process and criteria used to refer students currently attending C.B. Community School. Additionally, what process and criteria will the District adopt when making referrals?

Dr. Bird stated that it was a best fit placement DHS and CBH. He stated that while the C.B. Community School only serves 70 students, we have a lot of students in District schools who would benefit from receiving the same services. He stated the contract would allow the District to learn from them and to ensure that their curriculum is aligned to state standards.

Board Member Fix-Lopez asked whether other providers or options have been considered in advance of recommending this contract with C.B. Community School? **Board Member Egea-Hinton and Co-Chair Dr. McGinley** added a request for information on the academic success of students at the C.B. Community School? **Board Member Fix-Lopez** added a request for information on the consequences for current students at the school if this Action Item does not move forward.

Co-Chair Dr. McGinley asked for additional information on Action Item A-11 Acceptance of Grant for AIDS Risk Reduction, regarding who is teaching the AIDS risk reduction and prevention courses at the school level? What materials/training/ and resources are used to teach these courses?

Board Member Fix Lopez asked a general question on how the District supports schools that do not receive grant dollars and/or donations? She requested an analysis of which schools are taking advantage of these grant/donation opportunities, compared to those that do not, information on why some schools don't take advantage and what the District is doing to support these schools. **Board Member Dr. McColgan** added a request for information on how the Board and District can encourage schools to partner with members of their community.

Dr. Bird stated the District will provide written responses to the Board on the questions above in advance of the Action Meeting.

Christina Grant, Interim Chief of Charter Schools and Innovation provided a preview [presentation on the Multiple Charter School Organizations \(MCSOs\)](#). She reiterated there is no formal action being taken on this item at the September Action Meeting.

Co-Chair Dr. McGinley began the public participation portion of the meeting and recognized that the committee has received written testimony from Barbara Dowdall and Councilwoman Helen Gym. He read the list of participants and called the first participant to address the committee.

Lisa Haver, community member, stated all funding priorities should be set by the Board of Education and not by the Fund for the School District of Philadelphia, as they are a private entity with private meetings. She stated C.B. Community School is run by someone who formerly ran a failed charter school and she urges the Board to question the competency-based model being implemented. She also spoke about the system of great school process and indicated that it places stress on schools and teachers.

Kristin Luebbert, 9th grade teacher, discussed credit recovery and online programs. She stated that in 2017, \$10M were made available by the SRC for online programs for students receiving credit recovery. Ms. Luebbert stated that she, along with many of her colleagues, do not believe online programs are useful in providing students with quality credits. She stated that she would be presenting the Board with a credit recovery plan on behalf of her and her colleagues.

Barbara Dowdall, community member, asked whether the grading system in place still allows students who receive below a 50 to pass the course?

Karel Kilimnik, community member, stated that the leader of the C.B. Community school, Roberta Trombetta, previously ran ARISE, a charter school which was closed by the SRC. She also stated that in regards to the System for Great Schools, she has concerns about the unstable environment created by the initiative as teachers are forced to reapply for their positions. She is particularly concerned for the schools in the initiative that are also designated as the Mayor's Community Schools.

Rich Migliore, community member, stated that he does not believe that the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is an accurate measure of student growth.

Deborah Grill, community member, stated her concerns about the MCSO application and specifically the current applicant. She asked for more clarity into why MaST is applying to be a MCSO. She stated concerns about the MCSOs ability to operate multiple schools under one single Board. She further questioned the status of the application in that legislation states that the Board has 45 days to respond to the application before it is automatically approved. **Co-Chair Dr. McGinley** clarified that MaST has agreed to a one time extension.

Lynda Rubin, community member, stated that she thought MCSOs were a way for qualifying charters to formalize themselves but is concerned about a MCSO's ability to spread accountability to

schools under their organization that are not performing well. She is concerned that the MCSO process limits the Board's function as a charter authorizer.

Mama Gail, community member, encourages the Board and District leadership to do their research before making decisions. Furthermore, she expressed concerns about the efficient use of resources in the past.

Co-Chair Dr. McGinley thanked the public for their participation.

Co-Chair McIver thanked everyone for attending the meeting and concluded with a statement that a committee report will be provided at the Action Meeting on September 20th in the form of a summary of the discussion that occurred at this committee meeting on Action Items.

Board Member Egea-Hinton requested the committee to do a deeper dive on some of the agenda items from today's meeting. Additionally, she requests a future meeting on credit recovery and teacher retention. Additionally, the Finance and Facilities Committee should request information on efficient use of District resources.

Co-Chair McIver shared the District will provide a presentation on the new charter application and District-wide Comprehensive Plan at the next committee meeting. Additionally, in the future this committee will be inviting external partners and community members to provide presentations on critical issues in education and highlight various opportunities available to students in Philadelphia.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:03 p.m.

Dr. Angela McIver, Co-Chair
Dr. Chris McGinley, Co-Chair
Student Achievement and Support Committee Meeting