

Ann Arbor Board of Education
PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Approved Minutes

February 2, 2009 – 5:07 PM

Balas I, Superintendent's Conference Room

Attendance: Connie Toigo, Michelle Pogliano, Glenn Nelson, Lee Ann Dickenson-Kelley, Todd Roberts, Deb Mexicotte

Preschool Program/Head Start Update

Connie Toigo, Principal and Michelle Pogliano, Assistant Principal came to update the Performance Committee of the Ann Arbor Board of Education as part of a recommendation from Head Start to expand the “governing boards” to which they reported bi-annually. Previously they had reported only to the Parent Governing and Policy Committee.

Last year, the Preschool Program served 600 families, with 200 students being served in general education programs and the balance being served primarily through Special Education. The general ed population was all from families dealing with poverty, and 174 families used some kind of emergency service referral supplied through the Preschool.

There were a number of recommendations for improvement in maintaining grant funding and compliance. Among these were:

- Having teachers regularly maintain good Oral hygiene modeling for students
- Noting who initiated contact when parent partnerships were developed
- Maintain a better written system of record keeping/appropriate signatures

Ms. Toigo and Ms. Pogliano presented information of a number of parent support and outreach programs, highlighting several efforts. It was indicated that 240 families participated in at least one of these programs last year, and there is some sponsored activity every week. These outreach efforts include:

- Small Talk – a Hanen based family education approach which is able to identify early speech delays and intervene effectively. There is evidence that this intervention has reduced later referrals to special education.
- Marriage and Autism – a series of programs funded through a grant from the Ann Arbor Autism Foundation.
- Parent Share - a series of workshops on topics of interest, such as toilet training (which has been a special focus of the preschool for improved transition to kindergarten).
- Caregiver Respite Program – allowing families the opportunity to leave children with appropriate caregivers for a break for leisure or errands.

Trustees asked what might be the opportunities and challenges for the Preschool as they look forward.

- Additional opportunities for community outreach
 - Visits to local preschools and daycare centers to help with assessments, referrals, and special needs training.
- Enhanced emphasis on the transition from preschool to kindergarten.
- Preschool Accreditation work
 - Ongoing evaluation to achieve NAEYC accreditation has been a lot of work, but has identified areas for improvement. There are few accredited preschools in the

country, so this is an area where Ann Arbor has also taken the opportunity to move to the next level.

- Building capacity
 - Building capacity is currently maximized, so some additional programming may need additional facilities or a re-thinking of the current facility. Currently 200 families are on the waitlist for access to preschool programming
- Expansion of the school day
 - Increasing the school day from the current 3hour/6minute schedule would benefit children, as would an expansion of summer programming.
- WISD Collaboration
 - Working with the WISD's 0-6 program, which had recently received funding through the Pfizer Legacy Grant.

Lee Ann Dickenson Kelley indicated her admiration for the job the Preschool staff and administration had done, expanding programs and outreach, working with parents and students, and taking a program that was in distress several years ago to one that is more than meeting its mission and the needs of students and families.

Dr. Roberts asked if there was any expectation that reported financial cuts at the state level would affect their funding. Ms. Toigo indicated that it did not appear that it would.

- ***Trustees noted that there is little appreciation of the comprehensive nature of our Preschool programming, due primarily to few informational opportunities outlining the scope and range of services. They appreciated the presentation and looked forward to reporting to the Board and hearing from this program on a more regular basis in the future.***

Social Climate Study Session Planning

Todd Roberts presented on current efforts preparing for the Study Session on Social Climate on March 18. This session is to look at how our schools (primarily those at the secondary level) contribute to the socialization of students, how counseling and other support services work for students and families in terms of connecting them to our schools, and what the school day would look like if it was arranged to accommodate students socialization needs.

Dr. Roberts indicated that surveys were being prepared to ask about our counseling programs, about how students feel connected to their schools, and about what changes might be necessary in the school day to promote socialization. He also indicated we were collecting information on some benchmarked districts (Fairfax County, Montgomery Schools, New Trier, etc). Targeted areas also include levels of participation, academic support, and social support among peer, adult, and organizational efforts.

Trustees then engaged in discussion about how to assess those areas of success and citizenship they would also like to get some information about, such as how our schools support the development of persistence, time management, organizational skills, teamwork, conflict management, tolerance, etc.

Dr. Roberts and Trustees also reviewed the WISD Exit Survey reports on our high school programs (Huron, Pioneer, Community, and Stone), and asked that information from those reports be distilled for Trustees at the study session, as many of the questions asked in these surveys might be relevant to our inquiries.

- *Trustees thanked Dr. Roberts for his work on this matter and looked forward to the Student Session.*

Policy Review

Deb Mexicotte has met with Helen Gates-Bryant, Planning Committee Chair, to coordinate the efforts around the 1000 and 2000 policy series, and they have agreed on draft updates and changes to be shared with the committees for final reconciliation at a joint committee meeting proposed for March 4.

The process will include sending out the adjusted 1000, 2000 policies for review prior to our next for the next committee meetings. Trustees will also review individually sample policies supplied to us at our Equity Study Session in December, and work on those areas most important to include in the final draft policies. At the next Executive Committee meeting, agenda planning will be done to ensure all policy work currently in progress will be concluded by the end of June.

- *Trustee Mexicotte will work with Trustee Gates-Bryant, Dr. Roberts, President Cross, and Amy Osinski to coordinate these efforts.*

Agenda Planning

Topics for the next meeting were discussed. Due to the volume of policies needed development or review and their time sensitive nature, Trustee Mexicotte proposed that the agenda be limited to these matters and any other time sensitive issues that might arise.

- March 2
 - Social Climate Study Session Update (Roberts)
 - Policy Review (Mexicotte)
 - 1000's, 2000's, Middle School Policies, Equity/Student Achievement, Field Trips, Budget Allocation, etc.

*Meeting Adjourned 7:11pm
Submitted by Deb Mexicotte*