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**Disparities in Educational Outcomes Task Force**

**September 22, 2015**

**Notes Summary**

**Welcome and reminders**

* The notes for each meeting are posted on the Knox County Schools’ website.
* The DEO committee has been laying the groundwork (reviewing the data) so that all committee members will have a common understanding.
* Next steps involve developing an action plan to engage all stakeholders in working toward positive change.

**Community Forum:**

* Proposed dates: October 20, November 5, November 12. Trying to coordinate Mayor Rogero’s calendar to allow for her participation.
* Proposed time: 5:30-7:00 p.m. (Water, sodas, snacks, and cookies were mentioned as possible refreshments).
* Proposed location:
	+ Vine Middle School (parking should not be a problem)
	+ Mt. Calvary Church
		- Can meet in one large room, then move to small rooms with minimal repositioning time
* The purpose of the community forum is to share the work of the Task Force, hear various perspectives on the issues of disparities and potential solutions to the problems.
* Proposed Format (1½ hours total) :
	+ Welcome/Purpose
		- Introductions
		- Purpose of the DEO Task Force
	+ Whole group presentation (what we know, what we have heard already, what we have done already)
		- Mayor Rogero
		- Andre Canty
		- Dr. McIntyre
	+ Small group input sessions
		- Tell your story/What would have made it better? (Focus on problem solving and solutions)
		- Each small group session will be facilitated by a DEO task force member and a KCS staff member.
		- Each small group to be 12-15 participants.
		- Each facilitator will have a script or prompt that helps them give the participants the opportunity to share their own experiences and suggest solutions.
		- Time keepers will help to give everyone a chance to speak.
		- Suggestion: Maybe there should be a handout with three or four questions which participants could write their story and then share in small groups.
	+ Whole group sharing
		- Quick share-outs
		- Next steps
* Concerns:
	+ Translators should be on site.
	+ Make-up of groups – students, adults, grouped separately or together? Some committee members thought students and adults should be separated so they would feel free to speak more openly.
	+ Must be very conscientious of time limits.
	+ Transportation
		- KAT bus
		- Possibility of having bus service in a specific area or neighborhood.
		- People will get there if they are interested in attending.
	+ Child Care – possibly provided by the Boys/Girls Club.
	+ Planning - Need to over-plan, possibly for 400-500
	+ Regional meetings – too hard to manage more than one forum now but possibly could be school/community meetings later for specific groups, i.e., TAs, counselors, security personnel, community groups.
* Suggestions:
	+ Use Leadership Knoxville alumni to help facilitate the small groups. This would be one way to engage community participation.
	+ Use TN Promise students as guides/assistants since they need community service hours.
	+ Use students in high school leadership classes as guides/assistants.
	+ In student groups, use a student-age facilitator because students might feel more comfortable talking with people of similar age.
	+ Announcements to the public
		- School messenger and links on school websites
		- Church announcements and bulletins
		- Flyers
	+ Forum date:
		- The forum should be held after the KCS principals give their input at their October meeting. Their input will help guide the forum’s purpose.
		- The forum should be held when Mayor Rogero is available as she has committed her office to community outreach.
* The purpose of this committee and of the community forum is to formulate a viable action plan and possible solutions.
* The community forum must be marketed as an opportunity to have voices heard, not as a place for voicing individual agendas.
* Should have opportunities for principals and teachers to interact on a different level.
	+ October principals’ meeting has time set aside for principals to work in small groups.
	+ Teachers could participate in the community forum as unscheduled in-service time.
* Forum impact:
	+ Will give students a place to voice their perspective.
	+ Target is high school students, but many middle school students need to be heard.
	+ Students from different schools will have different perspectives.
* The Community Forum sub-committee will meet and talk about all options, suggestions, and concerns.

**Restorative Practices**

* Article: “Restorative Practices: Fostering Healthy Relationships and Promoting Positive Discipline in Schools, A Guide for Educators”
* Handout: “Using Restorative Justice Practices and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Together” [The California Conference for Equality and Justice (CCEJ)]
* Both Restorative Justice practices and PBIS are school-wide approaches that seek to:
	+ Engage parents, students, teachers, school staff, and administrators
	+ Enforce positive behavior
	+ Avoid labeling of students
	+ Uplift students’ strengths
	+ Establish a routine.
* Restorative Practices Circle Activity
	+ How do restorative practices fit into your ideas of the changes needed within the school systems?
	+ What is needed to effectively implement restorative practices in the KCS?
	+ What role must the community play to support restorative practices in our schools?
* Restorative practices promote positive discipline in schools:
	+ Teach young people how to take responsibility for their behavior.
	+ Teacher/community engagement
	+ Reinforce positive behaviors, teach new behaviors
	+ Avoid labeling of students
	+ Recognize student strengths
	+ Routine way of dealing with behaviors
	+ Emphasize school-wide positive behaviors
* PBIS Three-Tiered Approach
	+ Tier 1: School/classroom-wide systems for all students and staff.
	+ Tier 2: Specialized group systems for students with “at-risk” behavior. (Students need additional strategies.)
	+ Tier 3: Specialized individualized systems for students with “high-risk” behavior (multiple suspensions, both short term and long term}
	+ This approach:
		- Requires training
		- Allows everyone to contribute,
		- Requires that everyone is ready to reflect and change practice
		- Requires support from all stakeholders
* School personnel must truly understand where students’ background and circumstances and what community resources are available to help these students.

**Affinity Groups**

* DEO task members have selected one of the Affinity Groups on which to participate. Groups include:
	+ Practices
	+ Programs
	+ Training
	+ Personnel
* Group members need to think how these four categories can be incorporated into our action plans for several years.
* The group members also need to define the parameters for the working group focus and identify potential overlap with other groups.
* Identify research and discuss best practices.
	+ Many programs have training requirements.
	+ What successful practices are other districts implementing?
	+ Consider the implementation steps/challenges
		- What is needed to successfully implement these changes?
		- Who needs to be involved?
		- Funding needed?
* Each group will complete an action plan template.
* Between now and the next meeting, please think about opportunities which will contribute to the objectives of each category.
* The affinity work groups and the assignments will be emailed.

**Next meeting** focus will be on work groups and the community forum. Be ready to interact and encourage your colleagues to attend.