

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

333 South Beaudry Avenue, Board Room
1:00 p.m., Thursday, December 8, 2005

Board Members Present:

Ms. Marguerite LaMotte, Chairperson
Ms. Marlene Canter, Member
Ms. Julie Korenstein
Mr. Jon Lauritzen
Mr. David Tokofsky

Staff Present:

Mr. Robert Collins, Chief Instructional Officer, Secondary
Ms. Ronni Ephraim, Chief Instructional Officer, Elementary
Ms. Sharon Curry, Assistant Superintendent, Student Integration Services
Ms. Rita Caldera, Assistant Superintendent, Specially Funded and Parent/Community Services Division
Dr. Liza Scruggs, Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Services
Dr. Noma LeMoine, Director, AEMP/Closing the Achievement Gap Branch
Ms. Carolina Pavia, Administrator, Certificated Recruitment Branch
Mr. Jordan Rickles, Educational Research Analyst, Program Evaluation and Research Branch
Mr. Jeff White, Program Evaluation Research Coordinator, Program Evaluation and Research Branch
Dr. Randy Ross, Board of Education Director of Educational Policy

External Members Present:

Dr. Steve Frankel
Ms. Linda Guthrie, Vice President – Secondary, United Teachers Los Angeles
Mr. Earl Perkins, Associated Administrators of Los Angeles
Dr. Floraline Stevens, External Monitor

The meeting convened at 1:10 p.m.

Chairperson Marguerite LaMotte announced that the Educational Equity Committee was a new Committee this year. The purpose of the Committee is to examine access and equity in the schools and to recommend possible solutions to improve academic performance in low-performing schools.

Chairperson LaMotte recommended that the Committee discuss redefining the achievement gap at the next meeting.

THE ACTION PLAN FOR A CULTURALLY RELEVANT EDUCATION THAT BENEFITS AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS AND ALL OTHER STUDENTS—TENET 1: STUDENTS' OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN (STUDENT FOCUSED)

Dr. LeMoine provided an overview of Tenet 1 of the District's Action Plan for Closing the Achievement Gap. This plan is designed to eliminate the disparities and educational outcomes for African American students and other underachieving students in the District.

Dr. LeMoine stated that the Action Plan for a Culturally Relevant Education that Benefits African American Students and All Other Students is comprised of five tenets. The focus of this presentation will be on Tenet 1 which addresses students' opportunities to learn. This particular tenet has two recommendations. Recommendation 1 stipulates that the Central and Local District offices will provide comprehensive professional development for administrators, teachers, counselors, and coaches on Culturally Responsive and Culturally Contextualized Teaching to ensure that instruction for African American and other students is relevant and responsive to their learning needs. This recommendation acknowledges culturally responsive teaching as an appropriate pedagogy for enhancing academic achievement in students traditionally failed by the system. A review of the research on effectively educating students of color collaborates this perspective. The research suggests that cultural variables are powerful, yet often overlooked, factors that explain school failure of diverse students.

Dr. LeMoine indicated that youngsters who come from high stimulus, high movement, communal home environments may have difficulty adapting to the low movement demand and individual competitive learning at school. The result is incompatibility between the student and the school and sometimes ultimate failure.

Dr. LeMoine pointed out that, over the years, American educational institutions have grappled with this issue of effectively educating diverse student populations. Most of the early efforts can be categorized as non-productive policies. Dr. LeMoine spoke about cultural destructiveness, cultural incapacity, cultural blindness, and cultural "precompetence."

Dr. LeMoine advised that children enter classrooms as members of different cultures; as persons with language and thoughts about how the world is working; with ideas about how to behave; and with their own way of thinking and learning. The cultures of schools and different ethnic groups often are not compatible. When the culture of school and different ethnic groups are not compatible, there is an obligation to improve the congruence between them in order to promote for all students access to rigorous standards-based curricula.

Dr. LeMoine stated that culturally responsive teaching is defined as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant and effective for them.

Dr. LeMoine reviewed the performance goals for Recommendation 1. The performance goals are to increase the number and percentage of African American students who achieve the standard or higher in reading; increase the number and percentage of African American students who achieve the standard or higher in math; decrease the number and percentage of African American students suspended at all grade levels; and decrease the number and percentage of African American students referred, identified, and enrolled in special education as learning and language disabled. These performance goals that are part of recommendation 1 in Tenet 1 have an evaluation component. The Action Plan stipulates that the effectiveness of the District to implement these actions will be judged by the following:

- Standardized test scores for reading and mathematics
- Monitoring of culturally relevant learning environment
- Evaluation of teachers use of culturally responsive pedagogy
- Decrease in the percentage of African American students referred for discipline and suspended
- Decrease in the percentage of African American students referred and enrolled in Special Education Learning Disabled and Behavioral Disabled classes

Dr. LeMoine stated that Recommendation 2 of Tenet 1 focuses on the development of a college-going culture in the District and an opportunity to learn for all students. The recommendation states that principals, counselors, and teachers in every high school must work closely with parents and students to ensure that all African American and Hispanic students, not just those in magnets, know of, have access to, enroll in, and pass a college prep curriculum, including A-G course requirements, honors classes, and advanced placement courses.

Dr. LeMoine reviewed the performance goals for Recommendation 2 which are to increase the number and percentage of African American students who successfully complete upper level mathematics courses; increase the number and percentage of African American students enrolled in and who successfully complete Honors and Advanced Placement classes; increase the number and percentage of African American students who take Advanced Placement exams and score between 3-5; increase the number and percentage of African American students who take the SAT and score 500 or higher on both verbal and math components; increase the number and percentage of African American students who pass the High School Exit Exam; increase the number and percentage of African American students who complete A-G course requirements with a GPA of 2.5 or higher; and increase the number and percentage of African American students who attend two and four year colleges.

Dr. LeMoine advised that the effectiveness of the District and its schools to implement the goals and actions will be judged by: The documented scope and quality of implementation of efficacious actions; increased availability to African American students of A-G, honors, and Advanced Placement courses; and the extent to which the gap in African American students' enrollment in and passage of

A-G courses (with a grade of C or better), honors, and Advanced Placement courses (with a score of 3 or above) compared to other students closes annually.

Dr. LeMoine pointed out that the Academic English Mastery Program/Closing the Achievement Gap Branch provides tactical support to divisions, branches, units, and offices throughout the District relative to implementing the District's Action Plan. This office, in coordination with Local District offices, provides comprehensive professional development on culturally relevant and responsive instruction and embedding this pedagogy into all District initiatives. The Achievement Gap Branch takes the lead in building knowledge and understanding of this pedagogy and in developing instructional support materials for implementing the tenets of the Action Plan.

Dr. LeMoine advised that one of the strategies for broadening knowledge of the concepts of culturally responsive pedagogy is the establishment of collaborative learning communities around literature throughout the District. Local Districts, units, branches, and other stakeholders have been encouraged to establish literacy circles where they read good books or articles pertaining to closing the achievement gap.

Dr. LeMoine stated that Central and Local District staffs collaborate, design, and conduct on-going comprehensive professional development for administrators, professional development providers, and coach coordinators. To support this effort, a Strategies Reference and Resource Manual on Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education was developed. The manual represents the District's effort to give practical application to theoretical concepts and investigations of different scholars who have studied and researched culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy as well as its role in increasing achievement outcomes for African American and other underperforming students.

Dr. LeMoine provided the Committee with a booklet entitled Professional Development Models for Embedding Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy into Instruction and Instructional Initiatives. The purpose of the professional development guide is to provide Professional Development Providers with models for designing and carrying out professional development activities that build participants' knowledge around culturally relevant and responsive education. Dr. LeMoine also spoke about the culturally relevant and responsive education videos, the ten critical culturally relevant and responsive education strategies, and the parent support handbook.

Dr. LeMoine noted that each Local District has developed a blueprint for implementing the Action Plan. The Action Plan describes the Local District's strategy for addressing the recommendations and performance goals delineated under each tenet in order to improve educational outcomes for all students.

A-G COURSE ACCESS AND COMPLETION

Mr. Rickles announced that, at the request of Secondary Instructional Services, the Program Evaluation and Research Branch (PERB) recently completed two reports (Access to UC/CSU A-G Eligible Courses Across LAUSD Schools, PERB Publication No. 270, August 25, 2005, and How Many High School Students Satisfy the UC/CSU Eligibility Requirements After Four Years, PERB Publication No. 280, October 6, 2005) related to A-G course taking. Both of these reports were disseminated last month and are available on the PERB website, <http://perb.lausd.net>.

Mr. Rickles' presentation focused on the second report which follows a group of students over four years. The research questions that were addressed are as follows:

1. How many students reached 12th grade after four years?
2. How many students met all of the A-G course requirements?
3. Do differences exist across student groups?
 - race/ethnicity
 - language status
 - special education status

Mr. Rickles explained that four years of individual student data was matched from Fall 2001 through Spring 2005. The secondary Student Information System (SIS) data was utilized and was supplemented with electronic cumulative transcript records to capture all the courses that students took, including intersession and summer school courses. With this data, staff tracked the progress of 9th grade cohort through high school. These were students who entered 9th grade in Fall 2001 and were 8th graders the previous year. Since students with disabilities face additional challenges to meeting the college eligibility requirements, they were analyzed separately from the general education population. Lastly, staff focused on the A-G courses required for UC/CSU eligibility. The visual/performing arts (F) and elective (G) requirements were excluded from analysis.

Mr. Rickles displayed a flowchart that detailed how many students reached the 12th grade after four years. There were 38,211 students who entered 9th grade in Fall 2001. In Spring 2005, 20,386 (53%) students reached 12th grade after four years; 2,446 (6%) students were still enrolled and working toward graduation but had not accumulated enough credits to reach 12th grade within four years; and 15,379 (40%) students left the District during the four-year period. Out of the 15,379 students, 5,022 (13%) students moved to another educational system and the status of 10,357 (27%) students is unknown. Some of these students may have dropped out while others may have moved to another educational system and their status was not recorded in the Student Information System data base.

Mr. Rickles pointed out that there were 16,389 of 12th grade (43%) students enrolled in A-G courses required for high school graduation. There were 13,841 (36%) students who passed these courses with a D. The A-G requirements for high school graduation in 2005 are similar to the college eligibility requirements with the exception of Algebra 1 and in two years a foreign language.

Mr. Rickles stated that there were 11,076 (29%) of the 12th grade students enrolled in all the A-G courses required for college eligibility. Of these students, 9,330 (24%) passed all the A-G courses with a D or better. For a student to be eligible for a UC or CSU admission, they have to earn at least a C in all of these courses. There were 5,704 (15%) students who passed all the A-G courses with a C or better.

Mr. Rickles noted that the entering 9th grade cohort may not be the most appropriate base line to use when determining these percentages. Since it is known that 5,022 students left the District and moved to another educational system, these students can be excluded from the calculation. When this is done, the pass rate changes from 15% to 17%.

Mr. Rickles pointed out that since retained students are still taking courses to graduate and there is not complete information on the students who left the District, it may be useful to focus on students who reach 12th grade in four years. For this group of students, 28% of those who reached 12th grade passed all the A-G courses with a C or better.

Mr. Rickles presented a bar graph that showed the percent of 12th grade students, by ethnicity, who passed all UC and CSU requirements with a C or better. Asian and White students had rates of 56% and 45% respectively while only 22% of Hispanic students and 27% of African American students passed all the courses. The rates were much lower for English Learners (12%) and students with disabilities (4%).

Mr. Rickles advised that the objective of the analysis was to take advantage of existing data, to describe the extent of enrollment, and passage of A-G courses. As a descriptive analysis, he did not try to directly measure a cause and effect relationship regarding access to completion. This would require a more substantial evaluation effort that includes additional data collection through observations and interviews.

Mr. Rickles and Mr. White responded to comments and questions raised by the Committee.

Committee Member Frankel wanted to know what proportion of the students who made it to the 12th grade and passed the A-G requirements with a C or better also passed the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). Mr. Rickles will provide a written response to the Committee.

Committee Member Stevens pointed out that students cannot take Algebra 2 unless they pass Algebra 1. She wanted to know what is being done to make sure a larger population of the students pass Algebra 1. Committee Member Stevens' concern was referred to Mr. Collins.

Board Member Tokofsky asked for a listing of PERB publications. He also wanted to know how many of the 38,211 students attended summer intersession between 8th and 9th grade.

Committee Member Frankel suggested changing Algebra 1 to Algebra 1a and 1b. Mr. Collins stated that he met with the Department Chairpersons in middle and high school mathematics. Mr. Collins made the following recommendations to the Board:

1. Offer an Algebra Readiness program in the 8th grade.
2. Provide a professional development program for secondary mathematics teachers.
3. Reduce the number of students in algebra classes. Schools in low socioeconomic areas tend to have larger class sizes because of the unavailability of teachers. It is recommended that compensatory funding be utilized to hire additional teachers.
4. Initiate a focused teacher recruitment program for the coming year.

SCHOOL/OFFICE REPORTS

Dr. Ross reported that at the last Committee meeting representatives from Grape Street School were present to discuss the school's growth and academic performance. Due to lack of time, Grape Street School was invited back to this meeting.

Ms. Carol Truscott, Local District 7 Superintendent, introduced Ms. Jera Turner Walker, Principal, Grape Street School.

Ms. Walker advised that Grape Street School has improved its Academic Performance Index (API) from 656 to 676. The school has not met its Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals. English-only students met the AYP in language arts and math. English language learners did not meet the AYP for language arts but they did meet it for mathematics. The target for English language arts for the AYP is 24.4%. This year, schoolwide, Grape Street School is at 21.5%. The African American students are at 24.6%; Hispanic and Latino children are at 20.2%; the sociodisadvantaged students are at 21.5%; and the English language learners are at 15.4%. Ms. Walker spoke about the strategies utilized to improve student achievement.

Dr. Ross indicated that his office developed a school profile for Audubon Middle School and Bradley Environmental Science and Humanities Charter Magnet School. Each profile contains information based on the five tenets.

Dr. Ross reported that for the 2004-05 school year, Audubon Middle School met its API target as well as the target for all subgroups except for socioeconomically disadvantaged. The school enrolled 1,743 students in 2004-05 (73% African American; 26% Hispanic). Nearly 70% of the students are eligible for the Federal subsidized lunch program; 21% of the students are English learners; and 15% receive Special Education services. The student attendance rates over the past three years ranged from 87% to 88%. Nearly half of the teachers at the school are new and have to spend more time in orientation and professional development.

Ms. Grace Strauther, Local District 3 Superintendent, introduced Ms. LaVerne Brunt, Principal, Audubon Middle School, and Dr. Genevieve Shepherd, Principal, Bradley Environmental Science and Humanities Charter Magnet School.

Ms. Brunt introduced the following individuals from her school: Ms. Vera Parker, Title I Coordinator; Ms. Brenda Bright, History Department Chair; Mr. Young Williams, Gifted Magnet Coordinator; Ms. Cassandra May, English Department Chair and Academic English Mastery Program Coordinator; and Ms. Veronica Jackson, parent community representative.

Mr. Williams reported that he has worked at Audubon Middle School for 31 1/2 years. He spoke about the gifted magnet program, parent participation, the dedication of the teachers, and the recruitment of students.

Ms. Bright stated that she has worked at Audubon Middle School for 30 years. She spoke about the dedication of the teachers and the academic program at the school.

Ms. Parker spoke about mentor teacher support and the importance of identifying student strengths and areas of need.

Ms. May stressed that students achieve through educators who have themselves achieved advanced cultural proficiency. She spoke about the teachers' high level of commitment to the students.

Ms. Jackson advised that Audubon Middle School's parent center provides tutoring, after school programs, and workshops for the parents.

Dr. Ross reported that Bradley Environmental Science and Humanities Charter Magnet School enrolled 633 students in 2004-05 (74% African American; 24% Hispanic). Eighty-six percent of the students are eligible for the Federal subsidized lunch program. Fifteen percent of the students are English learners and 7% receive special education services. The student attendance rates over the past five years have held at 93% to 94%.

Dr. Genevieve Shepherd, Principal, Bradley Environmental Science and Humanities Charter Magnet School, advised that she has been at the school for 20 years. She advised that three of her teachers were former students at the school. Dr. Shepherd pointed out that every student at her school knows the mission statement and the Creed of Excellence. She spoke about the teachers working and collaborating together to develop activities for the students.

Ms. Madeline Keipp, a kindergarten student at Bradley Environmental Science and Humanities Charter Magnet School, recited the school's mission statement and the Creed of Excellence.

Ms. Mylene Keipp, a parent and a teacher at Los Angeles High School, expressed her appreciation to Dr. Shepherd.

Mr. Javon Wimberly, a fourth grade student at Bradley Environmental Science and Humanities Charter Magnet School, recited the school's Creed of Excellence.

Mr. Pierre Codio, a fourth grade teacher at Bradley Environmental Science and Humanities Charter Magnet School, spoke about his experience working at the school.

Mr. James Randle, Assistant Principal, Bradley Environmental Science and Humanities Charter Magnet School, expressed his appreciation to the Board for its support and dedication to providing students with information systems, such as the Decision Support System, the student online assessment report system, and the Student Information System.

CENTRAL OFFICE COMMITMENTS

Ms. Ephraim advised that any third grade student who progresses to the fourth grade as a nonfluent reader is in jeopardy of being part of those students who do not make it through the A-G college entrance requirements. She is working with Local District Directors, principals, and teachers to identify those students who are already in jeopardy.

Mr. Collins spoke about engaging secondary coaches in culturally relevant pedagogy, the implementation of a middle school accountability program, the Advanced Placement readiness program, and the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). Mr. Collins noted that approximately 27% of the seniors will not receive a high school diploma because they have not passed the CAHSEE exam. In addition, CAHSEE falls disproportionately on children of color and children whose primary language is other than English. The remaining administration dates for the CAHSEE will be on February 7 and 8 and March 21 and 22. The February 7 and 8 dates are for students on Tracks B and C and will be their last chance to pass the CAHSEE. Mr. Collins noted that during the regular school day a 20-hour program in math and a 20-hour program in English language arts will be offered to students who wish to access these programs.

Public Comment on Item Not on the Agenda

Mr. Bill Ring, a parent, expressed his views on the middle school accountability program.

Dr. Scruggs announced that the booklet, Creating Parent/Student Engagement in a College Going Culture, was mailed to 270,000 households.

Chairperson LaMotte adjourned the meeting in memory of Ms. Jean Walker Dunbar who worked at Gompers and Bret Harte Middle Schools and Dr. Jacqueline Broussard, the music supervisor in many areas throughout the District and the founder of the Southeast Symphony.

The meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY COMMITTEE MEETING

333 South Beaudry Avenue, Board Room

1:00 p.m., Thursday, December 8, 2005

Committee Members

Marguerite Poindexter LaMotte, Chairperson
Marlene Canter, Member
Mike Lansing, Member

Ex Officio Members

Steve Frankel
Linda Guthrie (UTLA)
Luis Lopez (AALA)
Floraline Stevens
Earl Perkins

Board Secretariat Contact

Dinah Edwards (213) 241-7002

Superintendent's Representatives

Robert Collins, Chief Instructional Officer,
Secondary
Ronni Ephraim, Chief Instructional Officer,
Elementary
Deborah Hirsh, Chief Human Resources Officer
Sharon Curry, Assistant Superintendent
Student Integration Services
Rita Caldera, Assistant Superintendent,
Specially Funded/Parent Services
Liza Scruggs, Assistant Superintendent,
Instructional Support Services
Noma LeMoine, Director,
AEMP/Closing the Achievement Gap Branch

A G E N D A

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTERS	PRESENTATION TIME
1. Chairperson's Remarks	Marguerite LaMotte, <i>Chairperson</i>	5 minutes
2. The Action Plan for A Culturally Relevant Education that Benefits African American Students and All Other Students Tenet 1: Students' Opportunity to Learn (Student Focused)	Dr. Noma LeMoine, <i>Director, AEMP/Closing the Achievement Gap Branch</i>	20 minutes
3. Assessment (A-G Course Access and Completion)	Jordan Rickles, <i>Educational Research Analyst, PERB</i> Jeff White, <i>Program Evaluation Research Coordinator, PERB</i>	20 minutes

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTERS	PRESENTATION TIME
4. School/Office Reports	Randy Ross, <i>Board of Education Director of Educational Policy</i> Carol Truscott, <i>Superintendent Local District 7</i> Jera O. Turner Walker, <i>Principal, Grape St. Elementary School</i> Grace Strauther, <i>Superintendent, Local District 3</i> LaVerne Hooper Brunt, <i>Principal, Audubon Middle School</i> Dr. Genevieve A. Shepherd, <i>Principal Bradley Elementary School</i>	10 minutes 10 minutes 15 minutes 15 minutes
5. Central Office Commitments	Robert Collins, <i>Chief Instructional Officer, Secondary</i> Ronni Ephraim, <i>Chief Instructional Officer, Elementary</i> Deborah Hirsh, <i>Chief Human Resources Officer</i>	15 minutes
6. Public Comment Persons who wish to address the Committee may sign-up at the Committee meeting.		

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For more information, go to: <http://www.laschoolboard.org>, Educational Equity Committee website.