



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Draft EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, August 14, 2013

5:00 PM

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room LL-120 (Madison Municipal Building)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 6 -

Astra Iheukumere; Shiva Bidar-Sielaff; Matthew J. Phair; Jessica Hankey;
Dean Loumos and Carousel Andrea S. Bayrd

Absent: 2 -

T.J. Mertz and Jenni Dye

CITY STAFF: Becky Schesny, Jennifer Lord, Tariq Saqqaf

MMSD STAFF: Marcia Standiford, Nancy Yoder

OTHERS: Connie Bettin, Enis Ragland, Deedra Atkinson, Kelly Ruppel

Ald. Phair called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Iheukumere moved and Ald. Bidar-Sielaff seconded approval of the July 10, 2013 minutes. Loumos requested a friendly amendment to clarify the total number of students listed on page 4 under item #3. New sentence reads: "She said in the School District there are 23,442 students within the City limits and 3,466 who live outside city boundaries." Iheukumere and Ald. Bidar-Sielaff accepted the friendly amendment. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

There were no disclosures or recusals.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. [31213](#) Election of Officers

Ald. Bidar-Sielaff moved and Supv. Bayrd seconded nomination of Ald. Phair as Chair and Loumos as Vice Chair. The motion passed unanimously.

2. [31216](#)

MMSD/United Way Attendance Project Presentation

Nancy Yoder from MMSD and Enis Ragland from 100 Black Men of Madison, Inc. discussed the attendance project HERE - Every Child Every Day. There is a partnership with United Way and MMSD with attendance and behavior as the focus. United Way went to the School District last year regarding attendance issues. A marketing group from Seattle was brought in to work on the project. The focus is on children who are chronically absent. Even missing 10-15 minutes a day can have a big impact on education. It is a combined mission and a collective community effort.

Enis Ragland discussed the involvement of 100 Black Men with gathering school supplies and backpacks for children with the Backpacks for Success Program. 100 Black Men is a group of professional black men that focus on education, mentoring, economic development and partner with MMSD and other organizations. It has been in Madison for 19 years. There are also faith-based representatives and those interested in education for children that meet. The objective is to enhance what MMSD is doing to improve attendance.

Attendance statistics were discussed. If a child is absent less than 5% of school it is not problematic. If a child misses 5-10% of school it becomes a concern and children missing more than 10% of classes it is considered chronic. The HERE program stresses the importance of attendance and punctuality for every child every day.

Nancy Yoder discussed multi-faceted members of the Advisory Council and reaching out to the community. Primary focus will be on kindergarten. The first day of school will be the first big event. Advisory council members, volunteers, local celebrities along with Police and Fire will be present at the 1st day of school to get children and parents excited about attendance. There will be flyers, Blue t-shirts with HERE campaign information. The framework will focus on importance of attendance.

The effort will focus on kindergarten to create healthy attendance habits early. Currently up to 20% of kindergarten students are chronically absent. That is about 18 days of school missed. 5 year olds do not have control of themselves getting to school on time. Reaching out to families is an important step. The current trends in attendance is that Kindergarten to 3rd graders have attendance problems, from 3rd to 6th grade the problems abate and from 6th to 12th grade attendance problems increase again. Barriers that families face will be addressed.

Saturday, August 17th 100 Black Men will do their Backpack for Success backpack picnic at Demetral Park. Parents are required to attend with children in order for them to receive the backpacks. There will be pizza, fire trucks, police cars and K9 unit. MMSD and United Way will also be there. The group hopes to distribute 2,000 backpacks.

Loumos asked if the 20% of kindergarteners from last year with attendance problems have been identified by name and address. He asked about a plan to do outreach for those students and families. Nancy Yoder explained that schools have the names and there is a directive that school psychiatrists, social workers and nurses would target those students. It would be handled on a school level versus by the Advisory Council.

Loumos discussed the reaching out to children who do not start the school year on time and some can miss the first 2 weeks. Nancy Yoder discussed registration day provides information on who will attend the first day. If families from last year do not attend registration school social workers will follow up with phone calls and home visits prior to the first day.

Enis Ragland discussed the 5%, 5-10% and 10-20% attendance ranges and the pyramid diagram to address the issue. Schools that identify absences as issues can use the diagram as a tool. 8 elementary schools have more issues with attendance than other schools in the district. Those schools will be reviewed along with schools that have high minority demographics and low-income students that do not have attendance issues.

In the HERE initiative School of Hope tutors, 100 Black men and other groups will work to show students they are appreciated and they are missed when they do not attend school. Showing that someone cares and notices when they are gone can make a huge impact on attendance.

Ruppel discussed a Chicago plan that would monitor those who attended the first day of school versus those who registered. Those families were targeted and home visits to those families were done that night.

Ald. Bidar-Sielaff asked about focus groups. Enis Ragland responded that there were parent surveys done and there was a 100% return rate. Ald. Bidar-Sielaff inquired about the analysis of the surveys. It was explained that the surveys are being analyzed and that kindergarten is the focus for the HERE program. The focus is on the green area of the pyramid (5% or fewer absences) to show all children and all families that they do matter.

Ald. Bidar-Sielaff suggested involving health care providers as a strategy of reaching families and children. Physicians can reinforce the positive aspects of attending schools to families.

Supv. Bayrd asked about the core issues behind kindergarteners not attending schools. Is it domestic violence, health issues? What will be done to address the core issues once they are identified? Nancy Yoder stated that the root causes will be discovered and addressed. Concerns about mobility and transportation are already being discussed.

Supv. Bayrd added that some parents do not feel that kindergarten is important. Education for families and parents that the program works with should address the root causes of attendance problems. Nancy Yoder explained that the Advisory Council will share with MMSD and design strategies based on the findings. It has been working since April 2013 and the first step is the universal HERE program.

Enis Ragland discussed the universal approach based on results in other

areas. Journey Mental Health can be brought in to address problems as well. United Way has the Executive Loan Program and there is a \$10,000 grant to implement strategies to eliminate attendance issues. Supv. Bayrd asked if there will be more than flyers and hand outs beyond the first day. Enis Ragland discussed the effort will start with flyers but will also encompass Facebook, Twitter, bus ads, local celebrities involved that children and families recognize. Supv. Bayrd wants to ensure that this is an ongoing conversation not just a handout. Enis Ragland and Nancy Yoder agreed that it is an ongoing conversation and effort.

Nancy Yoder discussed a pastor at a local church taking time to talk with the whole congregation regarding HERE and had them complete surveys right there. The hope is to have more collaborative efforts including government entities, merchants, etc.

Ald. Phair stated the analysis can be brought back to the Education Committee. Ald. Bidar-Sielaff suggested having a simple message like 3 reasons children should attend school. Enis Ragland discussed that those children who miss school are at a higher risk of not graduating and people who do earn a diploma from high school will earn a million more dollars in their lifetimes than those who do not graduate. Ald. Bidar-Sielaff agreed that those are valid points but with an effort to focus on kindergarten the message should focus on kindergarten and its importance and benefits.

Ald. Phair asked how the City and County could help with the HERE initiative in the next 6 months. Nancy Yoder stated they could attend greetings on the first day of school, share ideas on how to get the message out. The HERE program will continue throughout the year. Ald. Bidar-Sielaff suggested alders wear the HERE t-shirts to the council meeting on Sept 3rd. Ald. Phair added that MOST collaboration, community-based case management scale and in increase in JFF could be coordinated. Enis Ragland is working on further collaborations.

Deedra Atkinson from United Way discussed the tragedy of those who don't attend school and referred to best practices used in other areas. Kindergarten is where children learn lifelong habits. This attendance issue is a national concern.

3. [29034](#) Annual Truancy/Habitual Truancy Report for Fall 2011 - Spring 2012 - Judge Daniel Koval, Madison Municipal Court

Attachments: [Annual Truancy Habitual Truancy Report for Fall 2011 Spring 2012.pdf](#)

Ald. Bidar-Sielaff moved and Loumos seconded to refer this item to a future meeting. Motion passed by voice vote.

4. [31217](#) Madison Out of School Time Project Update

Jennifer Lord discussed the July 18 MOST meeting summary. The third meeting of the coalition included a much broader group an announcement went out to LaSup, Youth Resource Network, listserves. There was a good response with 40 attendees and approximately half were new to the group. 14 themes emerged from the second meeting and the coalition narrowed it down

to 3 in the Visioning Exercise. 1. Build trust and collaboration for working together; 2. Focus on youth engagement; and 3. Good coordination creates capacity to serve more youth.

Table conversations included comments regarding how the coalition is missing a youth voice in the system. This will be addressed in future meetings and as well as having youth involved in the coalition and what that might look like.

Parent involvement, quality programs, coordination and data management will play a role as well as youth engagement in future planning. Action Team will work to revise language and bring back to coalition.

The evaluations from the meeting were positive. Time was maximized and a lot was accomplished. Work groups were created and the Action Team added new members, it now includes representatives from MMSD, City, County and six service providers. Action Team met last week and decided to invite six organizations to be a part of the trust development stage. There will only be one person from Simpson Street Free Press instead of the two listed. Action Team decisions will be brought to the coalition. Loumos attended the meeting and stated the Education Committee supported the program.

Supv. Bayrd asked about the core mission for MOST. Was it quality afterschool programs for every student at every school? Jennifer Lord explained that the group was not at that point yet. One of the first goals is to complete an asses map of OST programs and with that information create a data map where people will be able to enter zip codes to locate programs in a specific area or within 5 miles for example. As quality discussions and programs are defined organizations will opt out and others will become involved and craft what will work. The coalition is not there yet.

Supv. Bayrd stated that as a County Supervisor she is not sure what the MOST program will become and concerned that it is not focused more on Dane County as a whole. The County is interested in buying in just not financially at the moment. Jennifer Lord discussed how the Wallace Foundation funded cities did a multi-year planning process. This is only the beginning. Ald. Phair added that it is a 3-5 year process that began with position funding. It is focused on the MMSD boundaries not just the City of Madison. Ald. Bidar-Sielaff stated that the broad 3-5 year plan will help to get a lay of the land and lead to the next stage for funding and methods of announcing the program. She also suggested that the Action Team include everyone and asked if volunteers knew that anyone could be a part of it. Jennifer Lord stated that an email was sent out asking for members to sign-up for work groups but not the action team but no one responded.

Loumos stated that he commented at the July 19 Coalition meeting that the Education Committee voted them its number one priority. Action Team could increase buy in. Chicago area has had a lot of problems. Once program is created in the MMSD boundaries it can be expanded to other areas. If it is set up well the impact and outcomes will be seen. More people will get involved as momentum increases. Marcia Staniford discussed the coalition and Action Team having more learning events.

Ald. Phair said it will be sent out to the press at some point and Education

Committee will play a role in that.

Supv. Bayrd expressed concerns about the mission and what programs children would have access to. It would be helpful to list outcomes and data systems with proximity to families. Jennifer Lord liked the idea but it needs to slow down until the project is defined. Trust rose to the top and who is leading the program will need to be addressed. Creating a timeline that comes from coalition then moves to the Education committee will contribute.

Jessica discussed Chicago non-profits mistrusted aspects of the Chicago OST and people/organizations pulled out. It is important for the coalition to focus on trust. She asked what stage the program was in. Jennifer Lord answered it is in the first stages.

Ald. Bidar-Sielaff discussed trust building and to pay attention to over representation from any one group. Neighborhood centers could have more say and may be more strategic, let other people be a part of other areas. If on the Action Team don't have the same people on other groups. Jennifer Lord discussed the distinction of the Action Team as 2 meetings per month while work groups could plug in when they are available. Supv. Bayrd added that duplication may not always be a bad thing. Jennifer Lord stated the community could attend meetings to assure trust and involvement if problems come up.

Ald. Phair stated that learning events need more definition regarding what this is and what it will be. Trust is an important issue.

Iheukumere applauded the efforts of Tariq and Jennifer Lord pulling it all together. She asked if there was a role or interest from for-profits. Jennifer Lord said they were not searching yet, and idea is to approach EPIC Systems about software options. They may be interested in supporting a program for it. There has also been a discussion of swipe cards that could lead to incentives for programs participating and others to join plus it would have real time data.

Ald. Phair discussed the link that Jennifer Stoiber sent out to the group regarding the Better Together Conference. Supv. Bayrd added 2 more announcements. The Dane County Education Committee voted the number one priority for improvement in the county to be mental health. The Education summit listed what the county had to offer and asked for an area for improvement.

Ald. Phair discussed future items as MMSD budget process possibly in September, County budget information possibly in October. Additional items include JFF Reachout and Read program, MOST update, truancy report and HERE update. He reminded the group that the 1st day of school is the same day as a Common Council meeting and that alders could wear the HERE shirts to the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Iheukumere moved and Bidar-Sielaff seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 pm. Motion passed by voice vote.