

Superintendent's Advisory Council on Instruction Minutes

Superintendent's Advisory Council on Instruction (SACI), Thursday January 12, 2023

7 p.m. - Welcome - Mrs. Vanessa Olson, Chair, SACI.

Heading into budget season, which is next month's topic. March meeting will be work session for annual report, will be selecting topics. April will be approving annual report. Writing committee will meet between March and April meetings. Motion to approve December minutes passed.

Learning and Achievement for All and Positive Climate & Culture : Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) - Dr. Lucretia Brown, Chief Equity Officer.

Dr. Brown joined PWCS in November 2021. Previously served in large systems in Pennsylvania. Office fully staffed as of January 3rd. Tom Weed, Director of DEI, grew up in PWCS with 5 kids, 4 of them still in PWCS.

Historical Timeline: Equity council was established in 2019, Equity statement adopted in 2021, Chief Equity Officer hired in 2021, Vision 2025 launched 2022.

DEI: DIVERSITY encompasses full ranges of human differences and similarities. Includes organizational, external, and internal differences. EQUITY is the fair and impartial provision of resources, access, and opportunities to all students. INCLUSION is the ability to create conditions for all to feel included.

To achieve equitable outcomes, we must rewire the system to rewire behaviors. Instead of giving different levels of support to get over barriers, remove systemic barriers when possible.

Needs aren't based on merit—give students what they need. Partnership with Equal Opportunity Schools organization to help identify students who could be successful in advanced courses and help encourage them to do so. Help identify trusted adults to help encourage these students. Including students with IEPs and English Language Learners—first system in the state to do so. Student surveys have helped show why some students do not pursue the advanced work, so seek to overcome some of those issues. Some include not seeing students like them, not understanding lack of cost to take tests, and even teachers having overblown how much homework the advanced classes might entail.

Taking even one AP class doubles your likelihood of success at college. Increasing diversity in courses with EOS in systems across the country has increased ALL students scores 15%, not just the targeted groups.

Superintendent's Advisory Council on Equity has 20 members and meets monthly.

PWCS DEI Framework: PWCS will advance diversity, equity, and inclusion through access & opportunity, resource equity, communication & engagement, and intercultural competence & inclusion. These are accomplished through use of language, policy, and practices.

Chief Equity Officer prioritizes diversity-themed organizational change as a shared priority throughout the system. They work laterally with executive leaders to elevate DEI throughout the organization. They lead the formal DEI capability and the organizational level and embed research-based practices within all organizational processes.

DEI is working on helping address the achievement gap.

Q&A:

How are the benchmarks determined? *Varies by school. Determine the group with the highest percentage in advanced courses, and figure out how to get other categories of students closer to that group's percentage.*

I heard AP numbers were down? *During the pandemic, yes, numbers of students in AP classes were down—the “advanced coursework” numbers include a number of other measures including industry certifications, dual enrollment courses, Seal of Biliteracy, IB, Cambridge, etc.*

Wouldn't it also help to identify more students for gifted services earlier in school? *Yes, but this is where we were able to start. Plus people are trying to discourage “tracking” students.*

How do we make sure we don't leave behind kids whose grades are fine, but are bored and could achieve more? *This is more Student Learning's department. There does have to be some flexible grouping at times so there can be time where those students can stretch themselves and develop social skills. Yet we also need kids to be able to interact with heterogeneous groups. We need to make sure to expose kids to a wide variety of opportunities so they can find their passions. Universal Design Learning helps here. We*

need to make sure the adults have the skills to make an environment that benefits all students.

Has the county considered separating gifted elementary students into a separate class?
The Gifted teacher will work in the general classroom and look for indicators in all students, and provide instruction that benefits all students. Dr. McDade has made sure there are Gifted teachers at all schools. Later, students will take more advanced courses and self-select—though a gifted identification is not required to take those.

8:10 p.m. Break

8:20 p.m. - Work Session: Budget and Capital Improvement Plan.

Using the post-it notes, large sticky poster, and vote by dots method again this month.

9 p.m. Meeting adjourned. Next Meeting will be February 9, 2023.