MSAAC General Membership Meeting

18 SEP 2019 / 7:00 PM / LCPS Administration Building

Executive Board Attendees
Katrece Nolen (Chair), Andrea Weiskopf (Vice Chair), Charlene Buensuceso (Secretary), Susan Hayden (Communications Chair), Wande Oshode (Membership Chair), Wendy Caudle-Hodge (Immediate Past Chair), Lottie Spurlock (LCPS Liaison), Brenda Sheridan (LCPS School Board Liaison)

Agenda

I. Welcome and Introductions
II. MSAAC Overview
   A. Mission Statement
      1. The Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee (MSAAC) is dedicated to partnering with Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS), parents, and the community to acknowledge and promote the needs of minority students. MSAAC is also dedicated to building a school system that is culturally and socially competent and positioned to provide fair and equitable learning experiences for all students.
   B. Focus Areas
      1. Minority student opportunity gap and achievement gap
      2. Discipline disproportionality among minority students
      3. Minority high school graduation rate
      4. Community awareness of MSAAC
      5. Access to academic, cultural and social resources to students, families, administrators, teachers and community members.
      6. Educator input into policies, procedures and practices
      7. Enrichment to move beyond barriers and biases and increase understanding and awareness
      8. Alliance among LCPS stakeholders (administration, parents, students, teachers)
      9. Diverse hiring
C. Purpose
   1. To advocate on behalf of all LCPS minority students as an official partner of LCPS

D. Advisory Role
   1. Important Role of Delegates and Alternates
      a) Represent and advocate for the needs of minority students from your home school

E. Accomplishments in 2018/2019
   1. Successfully advocated for the following:
      a) Ad Hoc committee on Equity
      b) Establish Equity positions within LCPS
      c) Mandatory implicit bias training for all LCPS employees
   2. Community collaboration to bring awareness to issues students of color face regarding access to advanced academics and enrichment opportunities to close the opportunity gap
      a) Loudoun School for the Gifted
      b) Jack Kent Cooke Foundation
      c) NAACP
      d) Hosted parent focus groups to better understand and advocate for the needs of our diverse families
   3. Provided recommendations to LCPS administration and school board on hiring practices, opportunity gap, budget and discipline

F. Plan for 2019/2020 and Opportunities for Engagement
   1. Current issues occurring within LCPS reflect the same issues from 25 years ago.
      a) Parents and students were asking the same questions that we continue to ask today, 25 years later. MSAAC hopes to change this by providing avenues of resolution and a way forward.
   2. Avoiding Equity Detours by Park View Alumni, Paul Gorski
      a) Pacing for Privilege
      b) Poverty of Culture
      c) Deficient Ideology
      d) Celebrating Diversity
3. New Annual Theme
   a) A Collective Voice for Change
      (1) United - Many groups joining together
      (2) Vocal - No longer silent, using our voice to eliminate bias
      (3) Change Agents - Being intentional about moving forward with actions
4. MSAAC plans to create true partnerships with local organizations to mutually benefit MSAAC and its partners
5. Opportunities for MSAAC Members to Engage
   a) Students
      (1) Affinity Groups
      (2) Diversity and Inclusion Groups
      (3) Speak at School Board Meetings
   b) Parents
      (1) Become MSAAC Delegates
      (2) Host Community Events
      (3) Attend workshops on Equity
      (4) Speak at School Board Meetings
   c) Teachers
      (1) Diversity & Inclusion Training
      (2) Support Student Affinity Groups
      (3) Be part of School-Based Equity Teams
   d) Advocate and Work to Revise Policy and Practices!
6. Recognition of Students from local LCPS Schools
   a) Broad Run HS - Muslim Student Association - Madina Abdullah, President
   b) Riverside HS - Rising Rams - Christian Rafaele, Vice President
   c) Park View HS - Recent School Board Student Representative - Matthew Chestnut
III. Overview of the Initial LCPS Equity Assessment (The Equity Collaborative)

A. Jamie Almanzan presented primary points from Equity Assessment

1. Primary Themes
   a) Despite efforts from the division, school site staff, specifically principals and teachers, indicate a low level of racial consciousness and racial literacy. People are unclear and fearful on how to participate in conversations about race, let alone respond to racially charged incidents.
   b) Economic diversity across the county/division complicates the discussions about race, leading many people to steer the conversation away from race to focus on poverty.
   c) Many English Learners, Black/African-American, Latinx, and Muslim students have experienced the sting of racial insults/slurs or racially motivated violent actions.

2. Primary Recommendations
   a) Publish new Superintendent's Statement defining and condemning White supremacy, hate speech, hate crimes, and other racially motivated acts of violence.
      (1) Mr. Almanzan commended Dr. Williams for being the first Superintendent he has worked with that denounced White supremacy within the Equity Statement!
   b) Address policy on racially-motivated acts and create proactive leadership measures to address the student use of racial insults.
      (1) Equity Ad Hoc Committee has taken this on, and measures will be brought to the School Board.
   c) Design additional opportunities for LCPS educators to engage in professional learning about color consciousness and implicit bias.
      (1) Equity in the Center training and Implicit Bias training is currently occurring within the division.
d) Review short- and long-range action plan to address challenges related to hiring for diversity, equity, and inclusion.
(1) Improve upon recruitment and retention, by recruiting from different places, outside of Loudoun and Virginia. Then, learn how to “think outside the box” to retain new staff.

IV. Panel Discussion: Next Steps for Equitable Practices in LCPS
   A. Panel Members included LCPS and Community Leadership:
      1. Brenda Sheridan, Vice Chair LCPS School Board, Chair Ad Hoc Committee on Equity
      2. Dr. Eric Williams, Superintendent, LCPS
      3. Pastor Michelle Thomas, President, Loudoun Branch NAACP
      4. Lottie Spurlock, Director of Equity, LCPS
      5. Katrece Nolen, MSAAC Chair
   B. Prepared and Audience questions presented to Panel members for Q&A
   C. Remaining audience questions to be answered by Panel and posted on MSAAC website

V. Closing Remarks and Announce Next Meeting Topic
   A. Announcements
      1. The Loudoun Education Association (LEA) is sponsoring a new book club called Revolutionary Educators’ Book Club in collaboration with MSAAC. They will meet twice a month from October through November. Register at www.bit.ly/LEABookClub .
   B. Next Meeting: Addressing Race and Trauma in the Classroom on October 16, 2019 at the LCPS Administration Building