

**Madison Metropolitan School District
Madison, Wisconsin**

Art Rainwater, Superintendent

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes for EQUITY TASK FORCE
October 17, 2006**

**Doyle Administration Building, Room 100A
545 West Dayton Street
Madison, Wisconsin**

The Equity Task Force was called to order by Jack Jorgensen when a quorum was reached at 7:11 p.m. Discussion began at 6:40 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Cohen, Rafael Gomez (arrived 7:11 p.m.), Thomas Mertz, Glenn Parks, Wendy Sauve, Beth Swedeen (arrived 6:48 p.m.), Jackie Woodruff

MEMBERS ABSENT: Christa Bruhn, Lisa Cuevas, Tiffany Jones, Zina Knox, Paul Kusuda, Toya Robinson, Matt Silvern

STAFF PRESENT: Jack Jorgensen, Kathleen Lyngaas, Ann Wilson – Recording Secretary

1. *Approval of Minutes (occurred at 7:12 p.m.)*

It was moved by David Cohen and seconded by Jackie Woodruff to approve the minutes of the Equity Task Force meeting dated October 3, 2006. Motion unanimously carried by those present.

2. *Equity Task Force Timeline*

Completion Date for Developing a Recommended Equity Policy

(Written materials provided for the minutes: Timeline for Completion of Work and Presentation of Recommended Policy to the Board of Education as approved 10/17/06 - attached to the original copy of these minutes.)

Work began by setting a timeline for completion of work (January 10, 2007), then brainstorming the major tasks to be completed and putting them into a timeline. It was suggested that the work of the Task Force continue at the same time that input is being gathered from the community by small work groups. Other recommendations were that work be completed in time to be considered in the budget process and that current Board of Education members are still in office in time to act on the recommendations.

Jack Jorgensen noted he spoke with Legal Counsel Clarence Sherrod and that Attorney Sherrod indicated he would put into writing the process he will use to develop a draft policy statement using the recommendations forwarded by the Task Force. He stated his role is not to alter substance or content. Kathy Lyngaas and Jack Jorgensen believed it would not take a long time for Attorney Sherrod to complete that task, perhaps one to two weeks.

It was moved by Jackie Woodruff and seconded by David Cohen to adopt the following timeline for the completion of the work of the Equity Task Force. Meetings would be scheduled on the dates listed.

Date to be determined	Presentation to the Board of Education
January 10, 2007	Completion of Task Force Work – Review Draft Policy
December 18, 2006	Finalize Task Force Recommendations
November 27, 2006	Review Report of Input Received
November 6, 2006	Revisit Strategies for Measuring Success and Draft Statement of Commitment
October 30, 2006	Revisit Implementation Strategies and Review Existing Policy

Subgroups will work and other tasks will be completed according to the following schedule:

Subgroup 1 – Review Existing Policy – will meet in advance of the October 30 meeting.

Subgroup 2 – Gather and Organize Input – will complete its work and provide information to Subgroup 3 by November 13.

Subgroup 3 – Summarize and Analyze Data and Report Input - will complete its work prior to the November 27 meeting.

Input from SHRAC (Superintendent’s Human Relations Advisory Committee) and school district principals will be provided to Subgroup 2 in advance of November 13.

Task Force Recommendations will be submitted to Legal Counsel by December 19.

Legal Counsel prepares the draft policy between December 27 and January 9.

Motion unanimously carried by those present.

Volunteers for subgroup work were:

- Subgroup 1 – Review Existing Policy – T. Mertz, J. Woodruff, G. Parks
- Subgroup 2 – Gather and Organize Input – D. Cohen, R. Gomez, W. Sauve
- Subgroup 3 – Summarize and Analyze Data and Report Input – B. Swedeen, K. Lyngaas

3. Plan for Obtaining Community Feedback

(Written materials provided –Board of Education Equity Task Force Methods for Receiving Input dated 10/4/06; Equity Task Force Member Input into Community Feedback Questions; Community Input Thoughts from Thomas Mertz; Memo from Subcommittee on Questions and process for Community Feedback dated October 12, 2006 - attached to the original copy of these minutes.)

Representing the Subgroup on Questions and Process for Community Feedback (C. Bruhn, R. Gomez, M. Silvern), Rafael Gomez noted their purpose was to represent everyone's concerns. They felt that two parts of the task needed to be separated and considered individually – the structure and the theme/content. They considered the theme first and developed five questions for gathering feedback which are included in the written materials provided and attached to the original copy of these minutes.

DISCUSSION:

- Question whether providing a presentation first might influence answers to the questions.
- Thought the purpose was to get input on the work of the Task Force. Unless carefully facilitated, and even then, this amount of questions will result in a long response time. Will be different interpretations of equity across the city.
- Looking for community to validate and respond to what the Task Force has developed; avoid questions that would bring focus back to the beginning point. Want validation that the work product is sensible and responsive to what the community seeks.
- Some questions are too broad. Need simple questions or the target audience may be lost.
- Concepts may be too large for most audiences, but some – like students – may provide interesting feedback.
- Similar questions were asked in other districts and they seemed to provide input.

Discussion focused again on the questions suggested by Paul Kusuda in an earlier document:

- 1) What does the policy definition mean to you?
- 2) Whom do you think will be affected by the policy?
- 3) How do you think the policy definition can be used?

Two additional questions were suggested:

- 4) How do we improve the academic climate for students?
- 5) How do we allocate resources?

DISCUSSION:

- Suggestion to gather input from principals re: suggestions for improving the system of allocating resources to schools.
- Received continuum of responses from Board members about question of addressing allocation. Should make a comment (perhaps outside of report in addendum) that it is not the responsibility of the task force to develop an allocation process.
- Would be appropriate to suggest parts of the process.
- Research indicates better achievement in schools with resources.

Task Force members decided to not continue to discuss allocation of resources noting it already falls within the work laid out. Community responses may put the subject back on the table.

It was noted that everyone will be affected by the equity policy, so question 2 was eliminated.

Question 3 was changed to "How do you think an equity policy can be used?"

Question 4 was incorporated into Question 3 by adding "to improve schools."

It was moved by Jackie Woodruff and seconded by David Cohen to use the following questions to gather community feedback with all groups in all venues:

- 1) What does this definition of equity mean to you?**
- 2) How can an equity policy be used to improve schools?**

Motion unanimously carried by those present.

FOLLOW-UP:

- Jack Jorgensen will send a copy of the PowerPoint presentation he made to the Board of Education for the interim report to all Task Force members for review. It was suggested by the Subgroup that a brief PowerPoint presentation introduce each of the sessions where feedback is being sought.
- Ken Syke will be asked to assist with publicity of the events and intention of the Task Force to solicit community input.
- Contact other Task Force members to solicit help with the Subgroup and other tasks.
- Post questions on the MMSD website and set up an e-mail address for receiving feedback.

Several suggestions were made regarding ways to gather community input, including backpack mail with students, *MMSD Today*, MMSD website, principals' meetings, focus group of representative high school students, PTO coalitions, the Mosaic group (Memorial), Centro Hispano.

FOLLOW-UP:

- The Subgroup for Gathering and Organizing Input will organize, plan and run forums, collect information, and forward that information to the Subgroup for Summarizing and Analyzing Data by November 13. That Subgroup will then provide a report of feedback to the full Task Force for its meeting on November 27.

4. *Adjournment*

**It was moved by Beth Swedeen and seconded by Thomas Mertz to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 p.m.
Motion unanimously carried by those present.**