

## DRAFT MEETING NOTES

### *Charleston Achieving Excellence: Vision 2016*

### Stakeholder Meeting #1: Principal Advisory Group 11/2/11

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#### ***In Attendance:***

- ***Principals:*** Benjamin Bragg, Deborah Price, Michael Antonelli, Leanne Sheppard Anthony Dixon, Latisha Vaughn, David Parler, Paul Padron, Wanda Sheats, Dirk Bedford, Robert Grimm, Jayne Ellicott, Lucy Beckham, Jennifer Coker
- ***Board Members:*** Chris Fraser(chair), Elizabeth Moffly, Ann Oplinger, Cindy Bohn Coats, Toya Hampton-Green, Mary Ann Taylor, Craig Ascue (Elizabeth Kandrach teleconferenced)
- ***Media:*** Diette Courrege
- ***Staff:*** Nancy McGinley, Elliot Smalley, Audrey Lane, Jason Sakran, Portia Stoney, Susan Haire
- ***Other Observers:*** Ward Lasso, Jon Butzon, Jean Driggers
- ***Absent:*** Jennifer Swearingen (Oakland ES) and Maurice Cannon (Burke HS)

#### **Overview of Meeting**

- Mr. Chris Fraser: explained that purpose of meeting is to gain feedback (verbal or written) from this key stakeholder group on *Vision 2016*, including the draft targets and needed supports.
- He discussed that, as a stakeholder meeting, it is designed as a public meeting, versus a meeting of the public. Meetings of the public will come later in January and February throughout the county. The Board wants to hear directly from principals, who know how important it is to set achievement targets, and to align teaching and learning strategies with those targets.

#### **Goals Video**

- Mr. Chris Fraser: explained that the video had just been produced and that any feedback that the attendees could contribute would be helpful.
- The video was played.
- Mr. Elliot Smalley explained the room for comments/suggestions on the bottom of the feedback sheet.

## Feedback Sessions

### What's your reaction to the target numbers?

- Mr. Robert Grimm said that for certain schools, the annual growth for these goals would have to be much higher than for other schools.
  - 1.) Example: Mr. Grimm's school would have to have a 60% growth in order to reach 100%, while Wando, for example, would only need 10% growth.
  - 2.) Mr. Smalley responded that the *Vision 2016* average is set at 80%, as requested by the board. Mr. Fraser confirmed.
- Ms. Latisha Vaughn- Brandon asked for clarification: "*Will the individual schools have the same endpoint?*" She also stated it is important for the Board to hear how fast principals felt their school could grow. She discussed how realistic the targets are for an Innovation Zone school.
- Mr. Bragg replied that every student should be given every opportunity to be successful; the concern, however, is accountability and expectations for each school.
- Ms. Coker asked that we consider when a student begins a program or school and whether the school is accountable for a child's progress who is only at the school briefly. She said it is difficult to impact student learning if they are "mobile" and not consistently in the same school (example: student who has been in 7 schools over seven years).

### What will it take to accomplish these targets? What do *principals need*, specifically?

- Ms. Jennifer Coker: flexibility with literacy, many students need double time and extra support
- Mr. David Parler: more academic and behavioral supports (may require extending the school year. He cited a recent example of collaboration between a middle and high school, using grant funding, to do summer program allowing students to meet literacy standards. When the funds ran out, so did the needed and effective support.)
- Mr. Anthony Dixon: clear parameters for teacher accountability, reiterated the need for ineffective teachers to be dismissed
- Ms. Leanne Sheppard: lower class size at non-Title I schools as well as Third Grade Academy at non-Title I schools
- Mr. Benjamin Bragg: agreed with reading intervention and more support from Board in terms of teacher accountability and dismissals
- Ms. Deborah Price: funds for literacy professional development (PD) and more in-school PD days
- Ms. Lucy Beckham:

- 1.) Accessing information about students who are not in the feeder system (she mentioned software used by other districts, allowing teachers to pull student information easily).
  - 2.) Reading-certified teachers is critical, (expressed concern for students coming in with second grade reading level)
  - 3.) Full-time social worker and other mental health support for mental health, substance abuse, or personal support.
- Mr. Dirk Bedford: (Ms. Latisha Vaughn-Brandon and Ms. Jayne Ellicott also discussed this in small group): expressed that at his school it will require dramatic actions and change to meet targets. His school is in “red” and looking at 40% growth in five years. The needed supports would include:
    - Extended day and year, flexibility with teacher evaluations, support from Board in moving ineffective teachers out, allocating more time for physical education and professional development, and strategic allocation of resources.
  - Ms. Latisha Vaughn-Brandon: agreed with Mr. Bedford’s summary
  - Ms. Jayne Ellicott: extra hands for students needing extra support, not title I but they do need their own intervention. Having extra hands would be helpful. They work on intervention because they have challenged students.
  - Mr. Michael Antonelli: Board supporting schools in teacher removal process (when requests for teacher dismissal are returned from Board, it sends the wrong message- principals must determine needs)’ clarification on what the *Vision 2016* targets mean for each school
  - Mr. Robert Grimm:
    - 1.) Board support in regards to teacher quality (need super successful teachers (has three teachers that were recommended for dismissal that were returned from the Board; this sends the wrong message)
    - 2.) Extended day and extended year: Students don’t remember what they learned after long summer break, he believes year-round school would be more effective.
    - 3.) Program that predicts likelihood of graduation based on initial tests that helps schools design more effective interventions and programming. He has heard of this program in North Carolina. The program has information on all tests students take, country-wide.
      1. Mr. Grimm also stated 50% of students at North Charleston High School are way below level. He needs teachers significantly better than those at Wando. He needs a Reading Specialist that could help him and staff teach 18-year-olds who have 3 credits and can’t read. How can he attract good teachers that would give more?

- Ms. Wanda Sheats: Board support on teacher dismissal (discussed that they should not be returned to ANY school), extended day and year. They need high-quality teachers. They need funds to sustain positive reform that is making a difference.
- Mr. Paul Padron: (spoke in Spanish): “I have a school with 15-20% Spanish speaking students who cannot understand English and who give their teachers a look similar to the one you all were just giving me...” He also has an additional large population of students who are also English language learners, though English is primary language due to lack of strong English Language Arts foundation (“We need help”)
- Ms. Beckham added: We need teacher collaboration. Teachers are extending themselves as much as possible, though many have numerous outside demands including second jobs. We need to look at high schools in terms of hands-on instruction and support.

**“If we’re going to hit these targets, we need to (keep, consider, stop) doing\_\_\_\_\_.”**  
**Name a “keep,” a “consider,” and a “stop.”**

- Mr. Paul Padron: expressed:
  - 1.) “I am keeping my staff accountable, and trust me, that if I send someone in front of you that they should not be teaching any child.”
  - 2.) “We need to focus on behavior “(support for PBIS):
- Ms. Wanda Sheats: agrees and how teachers will fit in, and how will poor performers fit into this?
- Mr. Grimm: high expectations, communicate success, stop being divisive, accountability for all
- Mr. Antonelli: stop ineffective *educators* (all categories)
- Ms. Vaughn-Brandon, Mr. Bedford: keep high expectations, consider extending the school year, stop allowing ineffective teaching
- Ms. Vaughn: high expectations, best teachers, extension of school year
- Ms. Beckham: consider wrap around, stop placing ineffective educators in school, allow principals to make decision
- Ms. Price: high expectations, consider reading interventionists, stop ineffective teachers, and stop sending them back
- Mr. Bragg: high expectations and keep funding with students who transfer under *No Child Left Behind*, look at achievement gap as a whole including top performing students, review urban school district accountability

- Ms. Sheppard: keep reading, consider year-round/extended day, Title I funds that follow the child, stop ineffective teachers in front of children
- Mr. Parler: keep academies and literacy programs
- Ms. Coker: keep academies and literacy focus, consider Task Force recommendations about alternative education routes and continue programs after 3—4 years (do not discontinue support after two years), consider extended school year, consider flexibility for doing what's best, stop changing our minds all the time (ie. literacy; if that's it, then stick with it)
- Ms. Coker and Ms. Price expressed current need for 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy (said a number of 6<sup>th</sup> graders come to Ms. Coker unable to read). Ms. Price said 6<sup>th</sup> grade Academy serves as a catch-all for those who come to middle school unable to read.
- Mr. Grimm expressed that year-round and extended day would reduce need, over time, for the academies. He has 17 students that are new to the district.

### **Wrap-Up and Next Steps**