

**Equity Committee Meeting
Eugene Public Schools District 4J
200 N. Monroe**

January 11, 2018
4:30 p.m.

PRESENT: David Abramowitz, Laura Dahill, Nicholas Kaasa, Ingrid Koch, Crystal Persi, Surendra Subramani members; Alicia Hays, ex-officio members; Gustavo Balderas, Kevin Boling, Morgan Christensen, Deborah Dailey, Rebecca Ledbetter, Oscar Loureiro, Charis McGaughy, Karen Pérez-Da Silva, Cydney Vandercar, staff.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Pérez-Da Silva called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m. She asked everyone present to introduce themselves, which they then did.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes

Ms. Pérez-Da Silva moved to accept the December 14, 2017 minutes, Mr. Abramowitz seconded. The motion to accept the minutes passed, with one minor revision.

III. Review of Purpose and Community Agreements

Ms. Pérez-Da Silva reviewed the Committee's Purpose and Community Agreements. No additions or amendments were made. She explained that Equity Committee meetings moving forward will also include an update on past topics.

IV. Introduction of Our Problem of Practice

Ms. Pérez-Da Silva introduced the Problem of Practice, ensuring guardians and/or unaccompanied youth know their rights to McKinney-Vento and migrant education in the enrollment process.

Ms. Dailey shared handouts on the McKinney-Vento Act and data on 2016–2017 4J homeless students. She explained eligibility for McKinney-Vento and mentioned that high mobility students can lose three months of academic progress in one move.

Mr. Abramowitz asked what trend the data show.

Ms. Dailey responded that there has been progress housing families, in part due to increased awareness and better training.

Mr. Balderas asked on average how long a family might have to wait for secure housing.

Ms. Dailey explained that if a family follows protocol exactly, they would still wait one year to be housed.

Mr. Boling asked if children who are not living with their guardian but are living in a house (i.e. with a family friend) would qualify for McKinney-Vento.

Ms. Dailey replied that children in this situation would be eligible and that they would be considered unaccompanied youth.

Mr. Loureiro shared that the Great Recession saw an increase homeless youth and these numbers have not decreased as the economy has recovered.

Ms. Dailey said that an inadequate supply of affordable housing is likely one reason for this trend.

Ms. Dailey shared her experience working with families during the enrollment process. She said that people are frequently overwhelmed, causing them to skip the last page of the packet, which includes special services. She also said that the district struggles to identify migrant students, which has been addressed by adding a new form – which adds to the stress of the process.

Ms. Dailey mentioned that increasing staff training for registrars might help catch some families who skip the special services page, which is not mandatory.

Mr. Subramani asked if staff are trained to evaluate students for abusive situations.

Ms. Dailey answered that all staff are mandatory reporters and always looking out for the wellbeing of children.

Ms. Pérez-Da Silva outlined some improvements that are already in progress, including intake training for staff and making a copy of enrollment forms to be collected and evaluated monthly to ensure they get to the appropriate staff. She also said that she would like to develop a protocol for what to listen for and ask students to help align families with all the services they are entitled to.

Ms. Persi asked what a family living in car writes as a home address.

Ms. Dailey shared that families can use the schools address and registrars are trained to know this.

Ms. Persi suggested a check box early in the form for families to mark if they are experiencing homelessness.

Ms. Pérez-Da Silva invited members to write on the Student Enrollment form and return them to her to share with the committee working on updating it.

Ms. Pérez-Da Silva shared that they are working on adding some questions on services for guardians to update at conferences. She said that the district recently realized there was a large group of unidentified migrant students after cross-referencing files with Lane ESD.

Mr. Abramowitz shared that he used to help families fill out forms frequently and agreed they are often hard to navigate and require a lot of documentation.

Mr. Balderas mentioned the district hopes to provide multiple avenues to complete forms in the future and have student information carry over grade levels. He explained that families should only have to input items once for the information to populate in other forms.

Ms. Dahill said that would be very helpful, especially since she has twins.

Ms. Ledbetter stated she would like to have this form come to her, as a counselor. She suggested that families who wanted extra help filling the form out could come to a counselor's office.

Ms. Koch proposed having information on McKinney-Vento available at school choice and kindergarten round-up. She said this would also help educate families and open up a conversation.

Mr. Kaasa arrived at 5:15 p.m.

Mr. Bowling recommended moving the services page to be the first page of the form.

Ms. Persi mentioned adding a box to check for not have a consistent address

Ms. Pérez-Da Silva proposed adding a checkbox up at top of the form to indicate if they are staying at someone's house.

Mr. Boling echoed that an intake interview with a counselor seems like a good idea.

Ms. Persi agreed. She expressed that it is a valuable opportunity to connect with families.

Ms. Dailey added that it often takes an agency to help families understand their child can be enrolled. She also explained that a new law mandates that students in foster care who are placed in a new home, must stay at their home school.

Ms. Hays commented that this will be particularly impactful for rural districts.

Ms. Pérez-Da Silva described that undocumented students often do not have a formal rental agreement. She explained that if they turn in an informal letter, it is often double checked, which causes anxiety for the parent.

Ms. Dahill asked if the district provides training for agencies, such as DD services case managers.

Ms. Dailey replied that she can provide training, but the district is not invited to agencies.

Mr. Abramowitz asked how many unaccompanied youth the district sees. He said that it can be difficult for kids to have to keep returning to their parents for documents.

Ms. Dailey said that the district saw 260 unaccompanied youth in 2016–2017. She explained that high school enrollment is mostly done with a counselor, which catches many kids in this population. She added that the district’s policy is enrollment without documentation.

Mr. Abramowitz asked what age unaccompanied youth typically are.

Ms. Dailey responded that it is mostly teens, but she has seen all ages.

Mr. Balderas asked how many students in Springfield/Eugene qualify for Title X.

Ms. Dailey estimated that Eugene has 750, Springfield has 600, and Bethel has 500.

Ms. Vandercar shared that buses run routes every day to Corvallis, Salem, Creswell, Junction City, Springfield, Blue River, and Cottage Grove for McKinney-Vento and SpEd.

Ms. Dailey reviewed what she heard from the discussion.

Ms. Dailey also mentioned that homeless families are not often able to attend school functions, like kindergarten roundup.

Ms. Pérez-Da Silva said that McKinney-Vento conferences should be scheduled early so that these families are able to choose from an open schedule.

Ms. Dailey shared that Lisa Hollingsworth, Ruth Mann, and herself are working on a proposal to removing barriers to enrollment. She said that they are also looking at how other districts handle parental situations. Ms. Dailey also mentioned that 4J needs to modify the process for students living in shared housing, which currently causes a back and forth in the district.

Mr. Balderas stated that the goal is to get students enrolled as quickly as possible, and then gather more data.

Ms. McGaughy said that she is excited to see the proposal and encouraged Ms. Dailey send it to Cheryl Linder.

V. Update on Attendance Work

Mr. Christensen presented a PowerPoint on 4J Systematic Interventions to Engage Students to Attend School.

Mr. Loureiro provided a handout on Trends in Attendance Rate from 2014–15 to 2017–18 (so far). He shared that the attendance gap is shrinking for race and socioeconomic status.

Mr. Christensen stated that the district's goal is 95% or higher attendance for students.

Mr. Loureiro shared that the district is transitioning to a new data warehouse, which will allow staff to look at data in real time and create tables and graphs more quickly.

Mr. Christensen shared some current attendance supports including: school-based initiatives, attendance campaigns, student recognition for improved attendance; support teams, attendance lesson plans; family/parent communication; shorter, more accessible surveys; and questionnaires when there is an attendance issue. He also outlined the attendance support interventions.

Mr. Christensen introduced an activity to brainstorm barriers and solutions to attendance and asked members to share their feedback in small groups.

Each group shared one responses and handed their sheet into Mr. Christensen.

VI. Reflection

Mr. Balderas reminded the group of all the work the district is doing to implement systems and accomplishments that have already happened based on committee feedback. He shared that developing K–12 alignment will be a big step for the district. He also stated that the McKinney-Vento process needs to be improved so that it is seamless. He thanked the group for their feedback.

I. Public Comment

No public comment was heard at this meeting.

Ms. Pérez-Da Silva adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Recorded by Dana Shinnors