

**Equity Committee Meeting
Eugene Public Schools District 4J
Virtually, Zoom Meeting**

February 11, 2021
4:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Bao Adam, Betsy Boyd, Gary Campbell, Ann Cole, Laura Dahill, Maya Rabasa, Eric Richardson, Thomas Anil Oommen, Members; Judy Newman, Anne Marie Levis, Board Members; Cydney Vandercar, Misael Flores Gutierrez, KC Clark, David Jacobson, Leila Schuck, Charis McGaughy, Karen Hardin, Oscar Loureiro, Brooke Wagner, staff.

I. Welcome and Centering Activity

Mr. Flores Gutierrez opened the 4J Equity Committee meeting at 4:33 p.m. He said that they would move approval of the minutes to their next meeting to save some time. Everyone present introduced themselves.

II. Welcome and Centering Activity

Ms. Levis shared that the sub-Committee interviewed firms to facilitate the conversation for the All Students Belong Committee. The choice was presented to the Board and they selected SeeChange. The sub-Committee would define the scope of work that SeeChange would work on with the Committee. They were looking to give more information to the Equity Committee later. Ms. Levis stated that the next step would be to start recruiting people to the All Students Belong Committee.

Ms. Newman said of the four groups they interviewed only two had the capacity to take on the work at that time. Both groups were great, but SeeChange had worked with Lane Education Service District (ESD) so they had already worked with and had knowledge about the Eugene community.

III. Anti-Racist Trainings Update and Black History Month Discussion

Mr. Flores Gutierrez said that next week they would begin district wide anti-racist professional development. There would be four trainings in 2021 with other trainings in the future. He said that anti-racist work was important and uncomfortable, but something they had to do. Ms. Levis stated that that was a huge priority for the Board.

James Baldwin, novelist and playwright, had a statement that Mr. Flores Gutierrez thought was appropriate to read. Mr. Richardson read out the statement which was a speech James Baldwin had given to teachers.

Mr. Richardson wanted them to question what they were doing locally to attract and retain people of color. He did not want them to lose sight of the work they had done so far but continue.

IV. 4J Key Performance Indicators

Mr. Loureiro said that staff presented this information every year to show key performance indicators (KPI) and how they had developed. He shared that KPIs evaluated progress on 4J's Vision 20/20 goals. From the 4J equity decision tool they drew on the elements of purpose, inequities, positive effects, negative effects, and evaluation. Their vision was to have every student connected to community and empowered to succeed.

The first goal was to have educational excellence with equitable access and outcomes for every student. They wanted to provide all students with high-quality, well-rounded educational experiences that were rigorous, culturally responsive, healthful, and engaging.

The second goal was to have multiple pathways to student success. They wanted to provide multiple pathways to student success, including instructional and career pathways to engage all students for post-graduate readiness.

The third goal was to have communication and connection with the community. They wanted to foster proactive and positive communication, engagement, and partnerships with stakeholders.

The fourth goal was to have a diverse world-class workforce. They wanted to ensure that every classroom had a high-quality, effective teacher, supported by high-quality, effective administrators and support staff.

The fifth goal was to have a stable, sustainable stewardship. They wanted to provide effective, efficient, and equitable stewardship of district resources to best support their instructional mission.

The KPI for the first and second goal were as follows. Graduation and completion rates (4 & 5 year), 40-40-20 progress (postsecondary success indicators), suspension & expulsion rates, attendance data, 3rd grade reading, 9th grade on track to graduate, and opportunity and achievement gaps in all indicators.

Mr. Loureiro stated that the 4-year graduation rate for the class of 2020 was 81.7%, which was the highest value they had ever seen. It was an increase of 3.9% from the class of 2019 and an 18% increase from the class of 2013. The graduation rate for the State in 2020 was 82.6%, the highest value ever seen.

Ms. Newman asked about the huge gap in graduation rates between the State and the District in 2013. Mr. Loureiro replied that there were two factors. First, there was a trend downwards. Second, back then they had a program for students to stay a fifth year. Those fifth-year students were not counted. He said that only explained 1.5% of the gap.

Mr. Richardson wanted to know the difference between the 2019 and 2020 numbers, specifically in the increase in African American graduates. He inquired into how policies last year affected graduation rates. Mr. Loureiro replied that policy might have been a factor. When creating that number, they looked at the percentage of those on track to graduate in ninth grade. Mr. Richardson asked if they tracked student's post-graduation work. Mr. Loureiro replied that they did, and they would talk about it next.

Ms. Cole asked when they started tracking 4J data. Mr. Loureiro responded that the data goes back to 2009. There was data available from before 2009 but they used a different method then. Data was clearer with the new format.

Mr. Campbell noted that graduation rates fluctuated regularly, and he did not expect the number to be high next year. Mr. Loureiro said that the number of students on track for graduation in 2021 was lower than in 2020.

Mr. Campbell inquired into if they could do a regressive analysis to see what specific factors helped certain groups graduate. Mr. Loureiro said 9th grade on track and attendance were factors in graduation.

Ms. Boyd said that graduation rates had grown at the same time 4J had been more fully funding high school. She said that they usually related attendance with a full schedule and wanted to know how that thought worked into their graduation rates. Mr. Loureiro said they were working on analyzing the data student by student and seeing how many classes they took and if that was a factor in graduation.

Another KPI for the first and second goal was 40-40-20 progress (postsecondary success indicators). Mr. Loureiro noted that the goal was discontinued by the State of Oregon, and the Oregon Department of Education had stopped providing data on it to districts.

The 40-40-20 goal was created in 2011 by SB253 and replaced by HB2311 in 2017. Mr. Loureiro stated that they wanted 40% of Oregonians graduating from 4-year colleges, 40% of Oregonians graduating from 2-year colleges, and 20% of Oregonians graduating only from high school. 4J contributed to the 40-40-20 goal by having the highest educational level by age 25 in the 4J class of 2006. He shared that 31% had a 4-year degree or higher, 4% had a 2-year degree, 1% had a post-secondary certificate, 46% only had a high school diploma, and 18% had unknown credentials.

The third KPI for the first and second goal was suspension and expulsion rates. Mr. Loureiro said that the number of suspensions and expulsions per 100 students for the 2019-2020 school year was 6.5. In 2018-2019 it was 10.3 and in 2014-2015 it was 8.

Mr. Loureiro showed the percentage of students with one or more major discipline incidents. He said that 15% of students were Native American, 14% of students were African American, 10% of students were multiple ethnicities, 9% of students were White, 8% of students were Hispanic, 7% of students were Pacific Islander, and 4% of students were Asian. In all cases over half the suspensions and expulsions were from male students.

Mr. Campbell asked if they knew when expulsion and suspension date would be updated. Mr. Loureiro replied that it would be soon, but the data looked similar. Mr. Campbell noted that the numbers disproportionally affected students of color. Mr. Richardson stated that who was in leadership roles was related to that issue.

Mr. Campbell ask if they had investigated having their own 4J 40-40-20 indicators. Mr. Loureiro replied that they could get their own numbers and could target people as far as seven years out. Ms. Newman thought that there was a County wide incentive to get that data. Mr. Loureiro told her that only counted Universities and Colleges in Oregon.

Mr. Richardson inquired into what infractions would look like since everyone was home. Mr. Loureiro responded that the dip they saw in expulsions and suspensions decreased because of COVID-19. Mr. Richardson asked for an example of what types of action in virtual learning resulted in an expulsion or suspension. Ms. Hardin replied that most cases were people were using Zoom inappropriately. Ms. Wagner added that it was using school technology to send messages to other students.

Ms. Boyd mentioned that at previous meetings they learned about disciplinary actions for K–2 levels. She asked when they looked at discipline and how it intersected with graduation rates if

they looked at elementary school infractions or just high school. Mr. Loureiro replied that when looking at graduation rates they considered attendance and infractions throughout a student's time in 4J.

Ms. Dahill inquired into if suspension and expulsion data was broken out for students with disabilities. Mr. Loureiro responded that they had that information broken down into groups.

Mr. Richardson was concerned with their tracking of graduating class of 2006 until they turned 25. About 50% were just high school graduates. He knew that in society there were not many stable jobs were available with those individuals. Mr. Richardson emphasized that they had to do more work around training children for the jobs that were available. Mr. Campbell said that with the incoming Student Success Act (SSA) they could put that money towards career and technical education (CTE) classes. More students would be able to get their degrees quicker with those skills and college credit. He wanted them to talk more about internal goals around CTE.

Mr. Loureiro presented that KPI 4 for Goals 1 and 2 was student attendance. They measured the percentage of students attending at least 90% of the school days. In year 2019–2020 they had 87% of students attending. He noted that attendance had been measured differently that year because of virtual learning. For the 2018–2019 school year it was 79.1%.

KPI 5 for Goals 1 and 2 was 3rd grade reading levels. They measured the proficiency rate in the 3rd grade language arts State test. They did not have any District or State data for 2020, but in 2019 it was at 49.5% for the District and 46.5% for the State. The 2019 students were the first 4J cohort of students that attended full-day kindergarten.

KPI 6 for Goals 1 and 2 was 9th grade on-track to graduate. They measured the percentage of students earning at least six credits in 9th grade. In the 2019–2020 school year that was 84.6% of 4J 9th graders. Mr. Loureiro mentioned that that school year was measured differently because of virtual learning. In 2018–2019 they measured 89% of 9th graders were on-track.

KPI 7 for Goals 1 and 2 was opportunity and achievement gaps in all indicators. They tracked the trend in four-year graduation rates. In 2020, 81.7% of the District graduated, that was up from 64% in 2013. Mr. Loureiro showed a chart which broke down student groups and their graduation rates from 2013 to 2020. Superintendent Vandercar shared that it was only four years ago that they started tracking students through high school.

V. General Discussion

Ms. Adam stated her displeasure with the District for saying they were doing everything they could for their students. She had reached out to the school and done what she could for her child without having anyone reach out to her. Ms. Adam said that her child was falling in the cracks and found it hard to understand how parents with less time on their hands were helping their children. She emphasized that she had been looking for help since her child was in 6th grade and continued to have teachers and counselors not work with her. Ms. Adam said that she was using her case to show that they still had a lot to work on if they wanted to reach all families and students.

Ms. Dahill shared a situation she had when her child transitioned into high school. Many people in the system recommended that he take a certain class to help him with the transition. When it was time to create a schedule, they were forced to pick between band class and the other class.

She stated that this meant not being able to take the class which would have benefited her child a lot.

Ms. Newman stated that they still had a lot of work to do to get to a place where all students and families were being reached. While it was hard to hear stories of where the system went wrong, they should learn from those experiences and try and fix what they could.

Mr. Campbell wanted to see an update on how representative staff was compared to their students. Superintendent Vanderkar said that they planned to share information on that soon.

Ms. Newman thought it might help their small kids if they had pictures of teachers in their classrooms since everyone would have a mask on. It would make the room feel more inviting and would help them know their teacher more. Ms. Dahill knew that a teacher had pictures of their students at their desks to make it feel more normal. Ms. Wagner said that over the next few weeks they would be figuring out what a normal day for students would look like.

Ms. Hardin wanted to hear more about what the Equity Committee was thinking around consistent leadership. Mr. Oommen had seen leadership transitions and said it always made it hard to find stable ground. He said that it takes at least a year to settle into a roll and start making changes. If they were not allowing for time to settle in and make connections with students and staff, then they could not expect change. Ms. Adam added that there were elementary school students who had to leave class to get extra help and it made it difficult when counselors kept changing. This meant having no connection and having to explain their situation time and time again. Ms. Boyd thought there should be practices in the school that created an environment of inclusivity so that if there were staff changes there were no big changes.

Mr. Richardson had heard of a situation at North Eugene around curriculum. There was a piece of literature which was not being allowed in a classroom. Ms. McGaughy would follow up on the situation and ask Mr. Richardson for more details after the meeting.

VI. Closing & Updates

Mr. Flores Gutierrez adjourned the meeting at 6:24 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Lydia Dysart)