

Re: Equity Plan Concerns-Sept. 18th, Meeting and Vote

Sunshine

Tue 9/18/2018 5:00 PM

To: Houchen, Diedre Faith <diedre@ufl.edu>; Karen Clarke <clarkekd@gm.sbac.edu>;

Cc: Donna Jones (Dir/Sec Curr) <jonesdm@gm.sbac.edu>; valerie freeman <freemavd@gm.sbac.edu>; akoterba@aol.com <akoterba@aol.com>; , <diyonne.mcgraw@gmail.com>; certainte@bellsouth.net <certainte@bellsouth.net>; James Lawrence <jlawpsalms46@gmail.com>; Simmons, Gwendolyn Delores <zoharah@ufl.edu>; Prof. Jacob U'Mofe Gordon <jgordon07@gmail.com>; sisterspace15@yahoo.com <sisterspace15@yahoo.com>; paulson@gm.sbac.edu <paulson@gm.sbac.edu>; griffin@gm.sbac.edu <griffin@gm.sbac.edu>; rob.hyatt@gm.sbac.edu <rob.hyatt@gm.sbac.edu>; roy@gm.sbac.edu <roy@gm.sbac.edu>; carlee.simon15@gmail.com <carlee.simon15@gmail.com>; Pam Korithoski <president@accpta.org>;

Dear Ms. Clark and School Board of Alachua County,

I am writing to request the vote on the Equity Plan be delayed until the School Board of Alachua County has created an enacted a plan for full community engagement and review of the proposed Equity Plan.

No announcement was made to the larger community or even by "Robo-call" about the vote tonight and the board has not invited any further citizen comments beyond the Equity Workshop on August 14th.

I request the school board do its due diligence to engage the community and that an independent steering committee comprised of community members be established to ensure an equitable process for evaluating the plan and developing appropriate goals.

Please note the following board member and community comments as described in the minutes from the August 14th "workshop."

Mr. Hyatt recommended 'bullet point' adaptation of the Plan, to be widely distributed. (This has not happened)

Dr. McNealy expressed The Equity piece in every school is critical and important, but involving citizens is even more so. A steering committee must be established for oversight of this Plan; it cannot be District only. A procedure for making selections must be put in place immediately. (This has not happened)

Ms. Roy Agreed that community support is vital. (No action has been taken to engage the community in evaluating the draft of the plan)

Dr. Paulson felt parent and community feedback is very helpful in order to move forward. (Agreed, yet the board has not created the opportunity for community feedback beyond the workshop meeting where several members expressed concerns).

Many community members expressed dissatisfaction at the meeting format, time allotted for citizens input, limited community involvement, and that the information, ideas, and procedures suggested by the Gainesville for All Committee were not incorporated into the School Board Equity Plan. There was an expressed and explicit request that the process have more diverse participation.

Furthermore, the goals of the Equity Plan do not reflect the urgency with which our community must address the fact that 73% of our Black students scored below grade level on the FSA.

The plan calls for us to raise the achievement of black learners in reading by 3 percentage points annually. It would take 16 years to close the achievement gap if we were to accept this plan. This is an entire generation of children! We can and MUST do better than this!

As reflected in the minutes of the August 14th Equity Plan workshop, the community DOES NOT support this plan and has attempted to work with the superintendent and board to establish an equitable process. Ignoring the request for an independent steering committee and moving forward with a vote without addressing core issue raised about the process of plan development is not aligned with the sentiments expressed in the “workshop” and is not equitable.

I request the vote be delayed, an independent steering committee be established, and a process for community engagement be developed and enacted before any further action is taken on the Equity Plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sunshine Moss

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From: Houchen,Diedre Faith
Sent: Tuesday, September 18, 2018 3:08 PM
To: Karen Clarke
Cc: Donna Jones (Dir/Sec Curr); valerie freeman; akoterba@aol.com; ,; certainte@bellsouth.net; James Lawrence; Simmons,Gwendolyn Delores; Prof. Jacob U'Mofe Gordon; sisterspace15@yahoo.com
Subject: Equity Plan Concerns-Sept. 18th, Meeting and Vote

Hi Karen and all,

I am writing because I noticed that the School Board members are to vote on the Equity Plan at tonight's meeting. I am concerned. When we met last week—Diyonne McGraw, Anne Koterba, myself, Donna, Valerie and you, Karen—we talked at length about reworking the equity plan to include an independent steering committee as a priority **before** voting on a plan. You agreed and said you'd be talking with the Board regarding this. I agreed to send you some thoughts on how an IDC could be structured this week.

I know that the Black History Task Force also voiced their concerns with the plan and they too support of an independent steering committee. I don't see that reflected in what is up for a vote.

Can you help to understand why this is up for a vote this evening?

Especially as this language is in the plan: "For the 2018-19 school year, a District Equity Leadership Team (DELT) will be established. The DELT will be comprised of leaders from district departments and meet monthly to ensure meaningful communication and collaboration. The Director of the Office of Education Equity and Outreach and Goal Managers will report progress towards each goal to the District Advisory Council (DAC) semi-annually. The Director will compile mid-year and end-of-year reports that address progress toward the benchmarks in each of the plan's goals. These reports will be presented to the Superintendent, the School Board, and the community, and will be posted on the district's website."

This is a very different vision from what we discussed. I'm hoping that you will delay the vote considerably and that a group of us can meet and think about a structure for a steering committee that is inclusive, equitable and invites everyone to the table.

Best regards,
Diedre

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