

AFRICAN AMERICAN ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Date: July 7, 2021

Time: 5:38 PM – 7:26 PM

Facilitator: Dr. Robyn Fisher

In Attendance

Julius Austin, Ravyn McCullough, Nakeisha Thomas, Kim Williams, Conrad Crump, Brit Irby, Alicia Williams, LaToya Ramsey, Denisha Fletcher, Malachai Smith, Terrence Gladney (39% of membership)

Excused Absence

Toni Tinker, Cassandra Jennings (7% of membership)

Unexcused Absence

Mel Assagai, Benita Ayala, Lynn Berkeley, Ursula DeWitt, Kenya Martinez, Cecile Nunley, Salena Pryor, Darryl White, Matt Wallace, Noah Hayes, Safiya Neal, Thomas Rose Bolden, Franschelle Brown, Rashida Dunn-Nasr, Sonia Lewis (54% of membership)

Welcome and Introductions

Chairperson Julius Austin welcomed everyone to the meeting. He shared “wonderful” news with everyone that Dr. Robyn Fisher, CEO/President of AAREA, would be the AAAB’s Facilitator. He spoke of how she began with the AAA Task Force as its facilitator and brought “great experiences and knowledge” to the Task Force members. Austin complimented Fisher a job well done. He then turned the meeting over to her to facilitate the agenda. Fisher thanked Austin for the complimentary remarks of her, then reviewed the District Core Value statement and Guiding Principle. She then reviewed the “ambitious agenda” for the meeting. She stated that she anticipated all AAAB members would be on the same page, moving in the same direction and holding the District accountable.

District Team

Fisher introduced the District Team, which has supported the AAAB from its inception. The District Team includes Vincent Harris, Chief, Continuous Improvement and Accountability; Steve Ramirez-

Fong, LCAP/SPA Coordinator; Dr. Ed Eldridge, Director, Strategy and Innovation; and Malinda Chambers, Administrative Assistant. Harris was in attendance and facilitated the PowerPoint slides.

Current Facilitation Team

Fisher introduced the current AAAB Facilitators including herself and Dr. William Ellerbee. (Additional Facilitators were introduced later during the meeting.) Both individuals began with the inception of the SCUSD African American Task Force. Their role will be to provide support of the AAAB's efforts.

SCUSD AAAB Milestones Recap

Fisher referenced the many milestones reached by the AAAB since its inception. She referred to PowerPoint Slides #8 and #9, which delineated a timeline of events that have taken place from September 27, 2018 through July 2021.

Placement within the District

Fisher reminded the AAAB that the AAAB was not separate from the District. Instead, it is part of the District's operational committees which provide ongoing service and information to the Superintendent and District Board. Space has been allotted on the District's website (<https://www.scusd.edu/aaab>) to reference and save important information relating to the AAAB. It was noted that this website for maintaining all of the AAAB's decisions and pertinent information may change in the future.

SCUSD Black/African American Students Are ...

Fisher reminded the attendees of data relating to the District's Black/African American students. More specifically, she stated what they most likely and least likely will do. She also reminded the members that the AAAB exists because of Black student disparities within the District.

AAAB Purpose

Fisher reminded the AAAB of its purpose as delineated in two statements. *(See statements listed on Slide 12 of the July 7, 2021 AAAB Agenda PowerPoint.)*

Agreed Upon Group Norms

Fisher asked the members to review the six (6) norms which had been previously developed and agreed upon by the AAAB. She asked the members to share their thoughts on one or more norm that resonated with them. Conrad Crump and Julius Austin shared their thoughts on two (2) separate norms. A thumbs-up consensus of those present indicated all were in favor and supportive of the norms and were committed to "make sure they happened." *(See the groups norms listed on PowerPoint Slides #13 and \$14 of the July 7, 2021 AAAB Agenda.)*

AAAB Committee Case Studies/Committee Reports

Several items were listed on the agenda under the above heading; however, initial attention was devoted to the incident at Kit Carson IB school and the debrief SUSD Board of Education Meeting. Austin shared that he had been contacted by Superintendent Aguilar and apprised of the horrific incident relating to a Kit Carson teacher making racist comments to her students. He subsequently shared the information with the Executive Committee which created an initial AAAB response to the incident. It was his intent to seek input for next steps of the membership. The Executive Committee developed speaking points which were later shared with the District School Board (District Board). Additionally, he stated he was made aware a proposed press conference that was organized and scheduled by a community member to denounce the racist teacher's comments and the District's position on the matter. He and other AAAB members joined the efforts to attend and present the AAAB's position during the press conference. He also stated this was not an official AAAB event, but felt it was important to participate. A copy of the AAAB's demands were distributed to those at the press conference. Additionally, a more detailed letter was drafted by AAAB members expressing additional concerns relating to district racism and necessary steps to stop it within the district.

Austin also stated Ravyn McCoullough will send to the AAAB members all articles and other pertinent information relating to the Kit Carson teacher incident. No further comments or questions were expressed.

Fisher followed by acknowledging Superintendent Aguilar, who was in attendance at the AAAB Meeting. She thanked him for attending the meeting and revised the agenda to accommodate his time. She then invited him to share his thoughts and concerns about the teacher incident. He provided the following thoughts:

- He was also in attendance at the press conference.
- He is in solidarity with the AAAB and community regarding their concerns with the Kit Carson teacher's remarks.
- He contacted several Black organizations and representatives besides Julius Austin, AAAB Chairperson, and the AAAB to apprise them of the negative teacher incident.
- He apologized for the teacher's behavior, which he said will not be tolerated in the District. He added that the incident is unacceptable. He further added he will not tolerate racist actions and comments as evidenced by the Kit Carson teacher.

- The teacher has been removed from the classroom and will no longer be with students.
- Because this is a personnel matter, he cannot speak of all the steps the District has taken.
- The issue will be resolved at the District level.
- He is seeking an external employment-related investigation of the matter.
- He is concerned with structural racism in the District.
- The District is proposing two (2) Professional Development Days (PDD) during the next school year which will focus on structural racism.
- The additional days for PDD have to be negotiated with the labor partners. Attendance would be mandatory for employees who would be paid. The 2 PDD would be additional work days.
- Two of the four (4) topics to be shared during the PDD would focus on anti-racism
- He is working with an organization called EPIC-N (EPIC-Network) to provide the training districtwide.
- In August 2021, the District Board will begin training in the anti-racism

- The Superintendent's Cabinet has already participated in two (2) training sessions.
- The District's Principals began the training with the EPIC-N training earlier this school year and will continue into the 2021-22 school year.
- He would like EPIC-N to work with the AAAB regarding the training needs of the District
- He will be looking at one-time funding for the additional days needed for PDD.

Several insightful questions were asked of Aguilar by the following individuals: Julius Austin, Terrence Gladney, Kim Williams, Nakeisha Thomas, Alisha Williams, Brit Irby, and Conrad Crump. The following represents their questions (abbreviated) and the Superintendent's responses:

- 1) How will you deal with teachers opting in/opting out of the PDD? – The PDD training will be mandatory for ALL to attend. If approved by the bargaining units, there would be an increase of 2 days to the teacher's work-year from 181 days to 183 days, of which 2 additional days would be for PDD, paid work-days.
- 2) Is the Superintendent open for recommendations related to the training? – Yes. Will work with EPIC-N and have them involved in conversations with the AAAB.
- 3) What is the plan relating to alignment of Board and Cabinet accountability to reduce racial disparities in the District? – Interested in a crosswalk of the AAABs recommendations and the EPIC-N's training matrix, with the intent of looking at "from Board to the classroom" and potential trainings. Does not want to just check it off that training took place. Training should be for improvement.
- 4) Are the specialized schools like the IB Program required to have inclusive training relating to anti-racism? All schools should be held accountable, not just specialized schools. These kinds of negative behaviors are unacceptable at all schools. District will hopefully be able to use one-time funds for the PDD, which will cost the District about \$2 million for one (1) day. PDD will cut across all schools in the District. We'll be reviewing the financial support needed for each specialized school this year.
- 5) What level of support is being provided to the students who were subjected to the teacher's racist comments? Superintendent Aguilar will be asking Victoria Flores to provide an update on the specific services needed and being provided to the students and staff of Kit Carson. A response team is already in action. The students need healing space. Additionally, 22 new school social workers will be hired with additional one-time funding, There will also be additional elementary counselors brought on board. Cancy McArn from Human Resources, is working with her counterpart at Sac State to identify and hire new personnel to provide services to our students.
- 6) Will there be any priority in hiring people of color in those new positions? Yes, this is important, and there will be targeted recruitment (within the Proposition 209 guidelines) to fill these new positions.

Following the sharing time with Superintendent Aguilar, the discussion shifted to the additional case studies as listed on the agenda, which included the following brief reports:

Facilities Master Plan Committee – Terrence Gladney stated this district committee was focusing on equity issues relating to school sites. The committee had met with an outside consultant and probably will be presenting a report to the District Board within one month.

Significant Disproportionality Committee – No report given.

LCAP – Vincent Harris stated the work of this committee is continuous. He congratulated Denisha Fletcher for being appointed to serve on this committee as a representative from the AAAB. He

further encouraged others to complete their applications and become part of the pool of potential applicants.

Update of Letters to SCUSD Board of Education – Julius Austin stated an additional letter will be drafted by AAAB to send to the District Board. This letter will highlight broader issues, which are aligned to the AAAB recommendations.

Potential Barriers to Successful Implementation

Fisher reviewed seven (7) barriers identified by the AAAB members early on to prevent a successful implementation of the AAAB's recommendations and other concerns. No questions or concerns were asked. *(See barriers listed in PowerPoint Slide #20 of July 7, 2021 AAAB Agenda.)*

Capacity Building Proposal Elements Submitted and Approved for CARES Funding

Fisher explained that a proposal had been submitted to the District to hire AAREA for the purpose of coordinating several elements to support the work of the AAAB. The proposal and funding were approved by the District Board.

Six major elements are included in the approved proposal. *(See PowerPoint Slide #20 of July 7, 2021 Agenda for the proposal outline/details.)* A Facilitation Team will include Dr. Robyn Fisher, Dr. William Ellerbee, Ms. Cloteal Thrower Herron, and Dr. Elson R. Perry. These Facilitators will help support the implementation of several activities and processes within the AAAB from July 2021 through May/June 2022.

A few noteworthy questions were asked by Brit Irby, Nakeisha Thomas and Terrence Gladney. Below is a summary of their questions and Fisher's responses:

- 1) How will the listening sessions be determined? The AAAB will determine the needs of the community and listening services. There is an urgency to build the infrastructure. We hope to have the committee report back on August 4th with suggestions for the listening sessions.
- 2) What is the student recognition event? It's an opportunity to recognize the achievement of the District's Black/African America students. We earmarked funds for this special event. The event will be held in May/June.
- 3) Can the student recognition effort be student-driven and led by students? Yes, most certainly. We want to engage our students.

Additionally, Fisher stated there was a need to hire someone to record the work and activities of the AAAB. This is a paid position. If anyone is interested in this paid position or knows someone who may be interested, please contact Fisher. This position must start immediately.

Additionally, Fisher stated there will be a new Google drive where all pertinent information about the AAAB will be housed. All will be expected to use Google Docs for communicating information about the AAAB's work (i.e., committee decisions, committee minutes, special events, announcements, etc.).

Framing the Work Ahead

Fisher reminded the AAAB that Committee Assignments would be next on the agenda, and that monthly meetings of the AAAB will be held during the months of August, September and October, then the AAAB will transition to quarterly meetings.

Working Committee Descriptions

Fisher identified five (5) AAAB committees that need to be launched, which include the following Parent Engagement Committee, Communications Committee, District Accountability Committee, Governance Committee, and Recommendations Committee. Some of the committees may change as their work is completed or extended. Initial committee meeting dates/times were listed and members were encouraged to sign up for one or more committees. Each committee will meet during the month of July with a report-out during August 4, 2021 AAAB Meeting. Fisher encouraged the members to sign up for at least one committee.

She further stated the committees are intended to be held monthly and are designed to do the work of the AAAB in a meaningful and structured manner.

The committees will determine their future meeting dates/times; however, the initial meetings of each committee should be held on the dates as outlined in the PowerPoint Slide #22. Each committee will select its own leader/chair. An AAREA AAAB Facilitator will also be assigned to each committee for support.

Ravyn McCullough will send a poll via Genius Sign-up to each AAAB member to sign up for one or more committees. (Following the July 7th AAAB meeting, the members can expect to receive the poll.)

Terrence Gladney asked if the committee meetings would be open to non-members. Fisher encouraged the group to hold their first meeting with AAAB members only, primarily so they can organize and develop a clear pathway of the committee, and ensure it is aligned to the purpose and objectives of the AAAB. Follow-up meetings of each committee thereafter may be an opportunity want to consider holding open sessions. Fisher, however, felt this question should be sent to the Governance Committee for review and a recommendation. Julius Austin stated he is expecting each committee to report out during the upcoming monthly and quarterly meetings.

Conrad Crump suggested it would be a good idea for AAAB to work alongside the Black Youth Leadership coordinator as it relates to the end-of-the-year student recognition event.

Open Discussion

Members did not have any items to share during this section of the agenda.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Fisher again thanked and praised the AAAB Members for attending the meeting. She reminded them that **August 4, 2021 (6:00-8:00 PM)** is the next meeting of AAAB. She reminded the

members of their preferred meeting time, which means the meeting will start at 6:00 PM, not 5:30 PM.

Having no further business for the July 7th AAAB Meeting, Fisher ended the meeting at 7:26 PM.

Next AAAB Meeting

Wednesday, August 4, 2021

6:00-8:00 PM via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. William Ellerbee, Facilitator