KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Local School Board Members Advisory Council (LSBMAC)
SUMMARY

MAY 24, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT:

David Webster, Diane Berry, Brandon Rutherford, Ruschelle Hamilton, Larry Dodson, Joanna Freels, Brenda Rose

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Linda Duncan, Christina Dressler, Julia Fisher, Rajiv Johar, Carl Wicklund, Charlie Wise

SUMMARY

Agenda Item: Welcome, Roll Call

Presenter: David Cook, Director, Division of Innovative Learning, Kentucky Department of Education

Roll Call
At-Large members/term through 2024
Review of Agenda

Agenda Item: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

Presenter: Damien Sweeney, Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, Office of Teaching and Learning, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Sweeney introduced tools that the Division of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) are utilizing in Kentucky.

Resources from KDE's website were shared visually: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

The terms DEIB are clearly defined on KDE's website. The term belonging was added,hoping to "inspire a trend not only in Kentucky, but Nationwide" because "the goal of diversity, equity and inclusion is to create a sense of belonging," said Sweeney

Data from Kentucky's School Report Card and Equity Dashboard was discussed to help show what the division does when they visit school districts. Data is important because it:

1. Helps identify patterns in how schools and districts are serving students;
2. Data builds capacity of community members by creating a common understanding of the challenges students and schools systems face; and
3. Data supports and enhances local advocacy effects focused on closing achievement and opportunity gaps.

Data from 2020-2021 shows:

11% of our students are African American, 2% are Asian, 8% are Hispanic or Latino, 5% are two or more races, and 74% are White (Non-Hispanic). Other students represented are American Indian or Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander at 0.001%.

The data collected shows a few discrepancies in terms of demographic data as it pertains to race and ethnicity.

Teacher data from 2020-2021 shows:

94% are White (Non-Hispanic), 3% are African-American, and 3% fall into the "other" category.

Other ethnicities represented for teachers (number of teachers):

18-American Indian or Alaska Native

201-Asian

1,441-African American

395-Hispaanic or Latino

36-Two or more races

36-Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

40,399-White (Non-Hispanic)

The state data "Our Who" shows:

61% are economically disadvantaged

5% are emergent bilingual

16% are students with disabilities

3% are homeless

1% are in foster care

0.5% are migrant

13% are gifted/talented

An Equity Dashboard has been created to have data all in one place that is easy to read and easily accessible. The categories represented are: Students with Disabilities, Chronic Absenteeism, Out of School Suspension, and In-School Suspension. The dashboard can show an underrepresentation of students or an overrepresentation of students in each category. For example, one area shows that African-American students are almost three-times more likely to be suspended out of school than their non-black peers in Kentucky. When looking at students with two or more races are almost 1 ½ times as likely to be suspended out of school than their non-two or more races peers.

Discussion:

Damien Sweeney: What are your reactions to the fact that although African American students make up only 11% of the school population, they are three-times more likely to be suspended.

Larry Dodson: Our district tries to avoid the suspensions for any student by placement in an alternative school for a few days. Does that count as suspended out of school?

Damien Sweeney: No, that doesn't count as suspended out of school. That type of data is not captured in this particular data set.

Larry Dodson: That situation could change the outlook for some of those categories.

Damien Sweeney: There have been conversations about including alternative programs in this data in a separate way. Will definitely keep this in mind, and take your feedback to the team, for future dashboards. The out of school suspensions represented those students who were sent home.

Larry Dodson: How many of these kids are coming from homes in a crisis? Maybe their home life contributes to their "acting out". Should we be checking on these kids to see if their families need help and resources?

Damien Sweeney: All educators should be trauma informed. This data allows each district to access their individual data and see who the students are who are being suspended and then try to find a solution. If there is trauma, we can see how we are addressing it.

Larry Dodson: When a child acts out, they are needing some type of attention which they may not be getting at home. We definitely need to pay extra attention to these students.

Damien Sweeney: 100%! We definitely need to know our students and dig deep to understand their trauma and how it has affected them, and how we can work with them to overcome those obstacles.

Larry Dodson: One of the things we've done is to have mental health professionals to support our students.

Damien Sweeney: Our office is tracking how counselors are using their time as well as any mental health counselors that's inside a school. We want to ensure that these professionals are using their time directly and indirectly with students. Our goal with that data is to ensure that the workers are spending at least 80% of their time; 60% with direct student services and 20% with in-direct student services.

Larry Dodson: Our workers are doing home visits and it helps.

Damien Sweeney: We've recently found that several districts are doing home visits which creates trust with educators and families and allows us to be trauma informed.

Larry Dodson: The home visits allow us to see so much more than we can see at school. Once inside the home, you really see the big picture.

Joanna Freels: We made the home visits as a teacher and you learn so much about how that child thinks and how the parent thinks.

Larry Dodson: Data is great, I cannot deny that. The problem I have is that it's hard to serve every kid without all the facts. The data tells us areas we might want to look at, but there's more.

Damien Sweeney: The equity dashboard is just one piece of data. There are other types of data to collect and we do have to look at different types of data.

Slideshow continuation:

Proficiency data data shows many underrepresented groups are not scoring as high as their non-historically underrepresented peers. We're also seeing this in gifted and talented and advanced coursework. We're not seeing it with career and technical education (CTE) coursework, but we spoke with educators in Northern Kentucky and they had a great point. They said participation in CTE is really important, but we also think you should show completions. So it's important for all students to have access and participate in this coursework.We have a discrepancy with CTE with our Hispanic and Latino or Native American and our Pacific Islanders and students with two or more races.

Student voice is very important as well as teacher perception. The data collected shows the culture and climate feedback. One area of the chart shows students from this school respect students' differences (gender, culture, race, religion, ability). 80% African American, 87% Latinx, 83% two or more races, and 87% white. Adult responses show 87% African American, 94% Latinix, 94% two or more races, and 96% white.

Another survey shows teacher perception:

1. In response to events that might be currently happening in the world, how comfortable would you be having conversations about race with your students?

22% feel extremely comfortable, 41% feel quite comfortable, 25% feel somewhat comfortable, 8% feel slightly comfortable, and 4% feel not at all comfortable.

2. How often do adults at your school have important conversations about sensitive issues of diversity, even when they might be uncomfortable?

9% almost always, 28% frequently, 40% sometimes, 16% once in a while, and 7% almost never.

Looking for improvement in these areas.

This information is what we take to individual schools and with this information; their equity dashboard; what is considered "at risk," where there are opportunities to celebrate, and then walk them through the data analysis protocol with guiding questions:

1. Where are those opportunities to grow?
2. What evidence based programs can you use to identify potential interventions?
3. How to assess that over time?

A plan is developed moving forward.

Looking at Root Cause Analysis data which challenges assumptions. This is a process used to investigate and categorize the root cause of community needs. The root cause is the highest-level cause of a problem.

Out of school suspensions were discussed and the "Five Whys" template was reviewed with a problem statement and supporting information about the root cause. Suspensions for African American student whys: trauma lens for all educators, teacher experience/retaining experienced teachers, poverty, homelessness, geographical location, lack of training in terms of self-awareness of educators. Goal: become trauma informed, plan on retaining experienced teachers, and train teachers on self-awareness.

We've identified three ways that we can address this issue and potentially improve this data. We could really target some interventions that could create change and a better school experience for our black students. We use that equity dashboard and find three opportunities to celebrate and find opportunities for growth.

Brandon Rutherford: Districts "try to recruit minority teachers, but then as soon as they graduate, corporate America comes in and just snatches them up." This creates an issue because their pay cannot be matched.

Damien Sweeney: One suggestion, creating a "grow your own" program through the CTE Pathways & Learning. You get students that are 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade that are in the teaching and learning pathway and learning to become teachers. They have access to dual credit scholarships so they're basically getting up to a free semester (or more) of college in high school and they're on their way. So you are constantly talking to them about coming home, right? So you utilize a grow your own model.

Think about the experiences of your most historically underrepresented students and what a day in the life of that student would be in a school building. This tool on the screen, the Teacher to Student Interactions: Tracking Tool, allows you to track those interactions. It allows you to see whether those interactions were positive, negative, or neutral. It also allows you to know how to track the gender, ethnicity of the student, and then make notes. But this will really give you just a good glimpse of what a day in the life of a historically marginalized student's day entails. When coupling this data with other data you can plan on how to improve the school experience for all students.

Celebrations from KDE's Division of DEIB:

1. New staff members Statewide.
2. Network meetings.
3. [Advanced placement & international baccalaureate fees](#)
4. [Governor's School of the Arts-2nd campus](#)
5. [New website & resources](#)
6. [Equity dashboard with toolkit/dashboard](#)
7. Relaunch of [Kentucky Academy for Equity in Teaching](#)
8. Training regional DEIB coordinators utilizing [A4 modules](#)
9. Safe spaces course
10. Calming spaces grant
11. Three communities of practices: District DEIB officers, Regional DEIB coordinators, KDE internal DEIB team.

12. Statewide counselor cadres with Regional Educational Cooperatives/School Counselor Advisory/Individual Learning Plan (ILP) Advisory
13. ILP/street data book study
14. Summer retreat in Covington, KY

Agenda Item: Commissioner's Update, Open Discussion and Feedback

Presenter: Jason E. Glass, Ed.D., Commissioner of Education and Chief Learner, Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

We came through the legislative session with technical funding & full-time kindergarten funding. There's also funding for an increase in transportation. Good increase in funding at the state level for facilities that will support lots of school districts around the state and an increase in Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) funding. Funding is hitting districts differently in regards to teacher raises. Enrollment has been on a two-year freeze and now that's going back, so some districts that have been in declining enrollment really feel the drop off after having been frozen for two years. So I know that there's variability in how that's how that's impacting anyone.

Feedback:

The SEEK formula is out of date and needs to be changed. Could KDE push to have the SEEK issue adjusted?

Glass: We and the State Board of Education had as a priority to increase the SEEK formula across the board. There are conversations around adjustments to the structure of it. "But I think the underlying problem is you have a couple of years where there really wasn't anything previous or nothing substantial and given the funds that were available this year." We're grateful for what we've got and we do not want to go in reverse again.

Glass discussed finding the picture of each county and how that looks different for each district.

Brandon Rutherford: Having a hard time finding teachers in Madison County.

Glass: We should be looking for different ways to get people certified and to make sure that their teaching certificate means something. We were able to expand another option that our co-ops are running for teacher certifications; up to nineathways now.

Rutherford: Possibly adding Fire Science to the certifications so they can graduate and go to work immediately. This can recruit specific teachers as well. Also, teachers leave Madison County for Fayette County towards the end of their career to get a higher retirement amount.

Glass: There's an opportunity with the Legislature coming up to talk about the status of the teaching profession. There are great conversations to have with them.

Rushelle Hamilton: Going back to the topic of finances; 10 years ago in Breathitt County we were barely making contingency, and one thing that really, really upset me was that we are required to do a bus fleet turnover every year and I just could not understand that with our low contingency, and low tax base, why we were required to purchase buses every year. Felt like that

was money that could have been used more appropriately elsewhere. Feel like the buses could be used for a longer period of time.

Glass: Kentucky had some of the highest standards in the country for school buses after the Carrollton and crash and that really caused a revolution around bus safety.

Rutherford: Is there any way in any ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief) funding that you can release to the districts?

Glass: 90% of ESSER funding went to the districts and 10% set aside at the state level. Right now all of the state money is obligated for the next three years. However, as we close out every year, if there are additional funds available, we can look at those and then release those to districts.

Appreciates the board focusing on the students and what is best for them.

Suggestion to have an orientation of new school board members to make them aware of SEEK and what their responsibilities are as a amember. A one day orientation.

Glass: Maybe collaborate with KSBA in this endeavor. Great idea!

The direction we're taking as a state with the United We Learn agenda. Through the listening tours, we gathered information about what people liked about the educational system and what their aspirations were. We had a group of citizens in Kentucky that evaluated the information and conducted more interviews and created a report called United We Learn. The three big ideas are:

1. Better experiences for students to prepare them for the future. Deeper learning experiences;
2. Innovation, specifically testing and rating of districts. Focus on the work around persistence, collaboration, and creativity; and
3. Go big with community involvement; collaborate involvement with all people.

Rutherford: We found that we need more hands-on people in our community such as laborers, electricians, plumbers, etc. So specifically focusing on industrial maintenance is a definite need for us with career centers.

Glass: CTE is really important and we are making some nice improvements. Also thinking about how you can make all learning experiences beyond a transfer of information by having projects designed around deeper learning. That's the kind of thing I think we wanna support bringing the scale across the state. The most powerful learning experiences some have are outside of school or may have been in art, or band, or a sport. I think part of our thinking, our work, is how we can make learning meaningful from bell to bell.

Diane Berry: Concerned about the dual-credit. When a student is awarded their two-year degree, which is wonderful, are they mentally ready in college as a junior or sophomore going in? Wondering if they are prepared. Is there a program that can be brought forward to support these kids?

Glass: I agree that's a huge benefit for kids. It's always a struggle to make sure the credits are equivalent and it's something a district has to focus on all the time.

Closing: The conversation being held statewide is what do you think about that profile/portrait and is it something that should be formally introduced or by district? This is something that we will discuss at a later date.

Future Meetings:

- September 2022
  - March 2023