

# **WATERBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **Crosby Turnaround Committee**

#### **August 27, 2014**

#### **1. Introductions; Committee composition and duty – Paul Whyte**

Welcome and introduction of committee members and invited guests. Paul is very excited about future prospects at Crosby and happy to report a successful school opening with the newly appointed Interim Principal, Mr. Ziogas. Although Mr. Ziogas regretfully could not attend, he will have a place on future agenda items and plans to serve on the Turnaround Committee. Also noted was the “Calmness” of the building.

Dr. Ouellette welcomed all in attendance and is happy to have a team made up of former and new members. Dr. Ouellette looks forward to rich conversation regarding the turnaround plan and is excited about the possibilities. Dr. Ouellette is also thankful for the support of the State Commission and BOE.

The duty of the committee is to come to a consensus and create a turnaround plan acceptable to the CT State Department of Education. We look forward to having lively discussions that will ultimately improve life outcomes for students. All will have a bi-weekly commitment to the committee moving forward so that a plan can be put together and submitted to the BOE by November 2014 in order to move into the next phase. It is hoped that the plan will be submitted to the CSDE by January 2015. Committee meetings are public but discussions will be held to committee members and invited guests. It was decided that future meetings will take place bi-weekly on Wednesday from 3:00PM – 5:00PM.

#### **2. Research on HS Redesign – Dr. Steven Adamowski**

Dr. Adamowski will serve as a resource and consultant, doing so with experience in high school redesign. Dr. Adamowski will bring practices to the fore in design and will work along with the committee to put together a proposal for submission to the CSDE. During this introductory meeting there was a brief review of research on high school redesign. Dr. Adamowski will orient all about what changes in our school are supported by research with the goal of raising student outcomes. As a committee, we will review data to see what has worked in other schools in CT rather than just implementing good ideas. We will begin to discuss ways that will work at the next meeting in two weeks.

Dr. Adamowski presented the committee with a PowerPoint presentation entitled, “Review of Research on High School Redesign”. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is attached for reference. Dr. Adamowski stated that all students need to be college and career ready. How do we do this? Based on 10 years of research, there is a need for urban areas to redesign their comprehensive high schools. How do we change the high school to one that is working for all students today? Through Rigor, Relevance and Relationships (PowerPoint may be referenced for details of the aforementioned).

Morgan Barth, Director of the State Turnaround Office, has gotten to know Crosby over the past year and believes that the school can be an excellent school. It has a great reputation and pride and there are many parts that are still worthy. Morgan also noted that there are many things not where they need to be and that the school needs to evolve to a school of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Morgan feels

# **WATERBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **Crosby Turnaround Committee**

#### **August 27, 2014**

that Crosby can be one of the best schools in CT and is happy to be a part of the process in aiding to bring forth funding and inspiration.

#### **3. Performance Indicators for Crosby improvement – Paul Whyte**

Paul Whyte reviewed Crosby Data Points in the following areas: AP Score, SAT, PSAT, 4/5 YR Graduation Rate, College Attendance, Student Attendance, Student Chronic Absenteeism, Staff Attendance, OSS, ISS and Expulsion. A copy of the Crosby Data Points is attached for reference.

A goal is to have a higher participation rate for students taking the SATs. In order to accomplish this, arrangements have been made for testing to take place in school on October 15<sup>th</sup>, eliminating the barrier of not being able to attend on the weekend. The District has arranged for the administration of the SAT to the juniors/seniors and PSAT to sophomores free of charge.

Cheryl Gatling asked about incentives to students in order to have them take the test that day. Many agreed that incentives need to be offered to students. Dr. Ouellette offered many suggestions such as PBIS system, rewards, and free access to dance/sports events, etc. Dr. Adamowski suggested that the issue be brought up to the Principal at the next meeting and that incentives can be explored to promote 100% participation.

Matt Corcoran expressed concern about low test scores and the many contributing factors behind this (i.e. notification of testing, timeframe to administer test, controlled settings, non-controlled settings).

Dr. Ouellette suggested the student mobility rate and cohort data be collected. The cohort refer to students who start at Crosby and remain versus those who transfer in at different points.

#### **4. Review of the application – Eldrin Deas**

A draft of The Commissioner's Network Revised Turnaround Plan for Years 2 and 3 for P.L. Dunbar School of Bridgeport Public Schools was provided to the committee. A copy of the application is attached for reference.

The Plan is divided into the following categories: Talent, Academics, Culture and Climate and Operations (T.A.C.O.). There was some discussion regarding the Partner that Dunbar School chose to move forward with. Morgan emphasized the importance of the committee putting together a plan to meet the needs of the school and that once a plan is agreed upon the budget will be discussed in order to implement such plan. Dr. Adamowski pointed out that it is important to design first without thinking about the money and that the best design is one that conforms to research, with the goal of best outcomes for students. If the budget for said plan exceeds the funding available we will need to prioritize and implement the plan in stages. Paul Whyte would like to see us prioritize if necessary in the following order of importance: 1. Academics, 2. Culture and Climate, 3. Operations, 4. Talent.

#### **5. Introduction of Project GRAD resources and services – Tycene Edd**

Tycene Edd made a presentation and passed out information regarding Project GRAD. A copy of the Project GRAD packet is attached.

# WATERBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Meeting Minutes

### Crosby Turnaround Committee

#### August 27, 2014

Project GRAD has been selected by the CSDE as the State Partner and is recommended for High School Redesign work. The question was asked as to how the Partner was selected. Morgan Barth stated that the Partner was selected through a State RFP as they were looking for a Partner to

support high school Turnaround and School improvement grant (SIG) schools. Project GRAD was selected based on their track record and strong results, experience in consulting a school through redesign and versatility in the programs that are offered. The question was asked with regards to teachers having a say into who the partner would be just as Walsh had the opportunity to. Morgan made it clear that the State would not impose any sort of plan on Crosby. If Crosby doesn't want a partnership they do not have to have one and that there currently is not a Partner in place.

#### 6. Other Turnaround Matters

Next step will be to focus on the Academic portion of the Turnaround Plan and what we will need from any entity to be included in the proposal. Tycene Edd stated that Project GRAD can assist with the Freshman Academy by implementing a College and Career Access Center, adaptive learning lab and campus family support. Dr. Adamowski reiterated that the graduation rate is a big concern at 64% and can be addressed with the College Access Center and asked that the committee members give thought to academics between now and the next meeting.

Paul Whyte concluded with thanking all those in attendance and mentioned the following:

- a. Future Committee Meeting will be on a bi-weekly schedule on Wednesday afternoons from 3:00PM – 5:00PM
- b. Outlook invites will be sent for future meetings
- c. Meeting minutes will be emailed following each meeting as well as agendas for the next meeting.