

Dayton Unit NAACP – Education Night Summary notes from Community Forum Meeting January 22, 2018



NAACP *21st Century Game Changer*

Education

- *A free, high-quality, public education for all.*

Every child will receive a free, high quality, equitably-funded, public pre-K and K-12 education followed by diverse opportunities for accessible, affordable vocational or university education.

“Where There Is Unity, There Is Strength”

During the community forum meeting, participants formed groups, to share and write their responses to three guiding questions on sheets of poster papers. The responses are compiled and organized under each of the 3 guiding questions. The responses to question 1 are grouped under categories.

Question 1

What issues/problems/questions do you have with this proposed closing?

COMMUNICATION/MARKETING

- Media campaign
- Prioritize marketing needs
- Delayed communications
- Conflicting messages
- Websites

DISTRICT SYSTEMS/POLICIES/PRACTICES

- Levies
- Gentrification – look at impact on schools
- Share projected 5-year plan with total community
- Inadequate teacher pay
- Quality education/every school
- Safe schools
- Geographic locations of schools recommended for closing
- Hold leaders accountable
- Accurate data
- Superintendent should live locally
- Challenges of students succeeding within negative environments
- More real-life lessons/minority business programs for students
- Consider how instructional resources will be distributed.
- Consider potential effect on property values
- Consider the existing structures/systems that foster decreasing student enrollment

ENGAGEMENT

- Task Force: huge problem; lack of community involvement
- Parents cannot read; challenged with supporting students
- Lack of communication and community inclusion in decision making process
- Be proactive – wake up
- Increase parent involvement

FINANCES

- Learn from DPS history/previous experiences
- Closing schools – waste of money
- Title 20
- Closings based on economics or something else
- Need financial audit

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Lack of males (role models)
- Need quality teachers/principals
- Proper vetting of new hires
- Stop hiring out of desperation
- Too many substitutes; need properly educated staff
- Negative DPS staff
- Expand teacher recruiting nation-wide
- Avoid new hires who lack cultural sensitivity/understanding

STUDENT SERVICES

- Too much testing; punishes students – one time testing
- Loss of extra-curricular activities
- Look at enrollment vs. building capacity by schools
- Large class sizes lead to discipline problems; smaller classes are good
- Transportation (for students from closed schools)
- Inequity: quality instruction needed on both east/west
- Use to have strong leaders to keep students focused
- Classroom discipline – major issue
- Expand vocational skills

Questions 2 & 3

What are the alternatives? What recommendations would you offer?

- Students should have more real-life lessons/minority business program/mock businesses
- Classes for parents
- Counseling
- Remove principals and teachers who cannot get the job done.
- Stop using poverty as an excuse for students not learning.
- Achieve the first promise – quality schools for all.
- Visit schools and monitor the principals and teachers.
- Revive the barber college at Ponitz
- Include performing arts in all high schools
- Use available spaces to house programs that meet needs of students/community
- Implement annual community survey

Questions from participants

- Why have parents pulled schools from DPS to charter schools? To other schools?
- Why have so many people moved from the district? Where are the children?
- Who holds parents accountable?
- How can we keep kids in DPS?
- 7th/8th graders – are they ready for high school?
- What will be done with students who are affected by school closings?
- What is the real issue with enrollment?
- Why these schools?
- Are students in the juvenile system included in the count?
- What is the teacher/student ratio?
- Has there been any consolidation of schools?
- Where do the members of the Task Force live?
- Why is 70% the desired occupancy? What does this represent?
- What is the quality of service?
- How will enrollment trends be impacted by closing schools?
- Who is responsible for the state of affairs in DPS?
- How will district quadrants be impacted by closings?

- Why were new schools built if enrollment was projected to be low?
- Who will make the final decision?
- Is there a plan to improve administrators?
- Did we try to fix what was not broken?
- Is Pre-school Promise needed?
- With school closings, will there be duplication of services?
- Can we close charter schools?
- Will parents be allowed a school choice?
- If the schools are closed, what opportunities will be lost? Gained?
- How will potential closings impact the middle school/k-8 design?
- If the schools are closed, what opportunities will be lost? Gained?
- How will potential closings impact the middle school/k-8 design?
- What are the plans to accommodate the potential future increase in student enrollment?

In summary, the community members openly expressed and demonstrated their appreciation for the opportunity to participate in this forum. They proposed the following:

- Keep schools open and students in their neighborhood schools
- Provide additional information about the specific needs of failing schools and leadership
- Access to the formula used to identify schools in need of closing
- Implement a system that will promote ongoing community involvement
- Operate with transparency, respect and trust between school district and community
- Create a culture that value educators
- Enhance and make the curriculum more relevant to prepare students for the future
- Train leaders to create and sustain safe schools where teachers can teach and students can learn
- Implement strategies that work to recruit and retain quality teachers from around the nation
- Retain only leaders and teachers who are able to impact growth for our children
- Hold students and parents accountable for attendance and learning
- Learn from other schools/systems that work
- Commit to making every school a quality, desirable school where educators want to work and students want to learn

Closing Statement

Acting Superintendent Lolli has recommended to you to “right-size” each school.

On behalf of the Dayton community, I implore you to understand that true right-sizing is...

- Keeping our promise to every child and parent in this district to guarantee a quality, equitable education.

Right-sizing is

- Placing effective, professional leaders in **every** building who know how to develop teachers and implement systems to promote student achievement.

Right-sizing is

- Showing respect for the teaching profession and hire only teachers who are knowledgeable, caring and capable of making certain each child grows to the next level after 10 months in schools.

Right-sizing is

- Guaranteeing that every class in every building has a teacher from the first day to the last day of school.

Right-sizing is

- Making right choices for all students no matter the zip code, socio-economic status, creed or culture.

Dayton Unit NAACP Oversight Committee on DPS (5703) Facilities

Mary Burns, President & CEO – Miami Valley Child Development Centers, Inc.
Fred Cox, President – Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Theta Lambda Chapter
Rev. Rodney Cranford, Sr., Senior Pastor – First Baptist Church of Ridgewood Heights
Derrick L. Foward, President – Dayton Unit NAACP
Clayton Luckie, Former Board Member – Dayton Public Schools
Derrick Malone, Community Activist
Mattie White, Social Action Activist
Lauretta Williams, Chair – Dayton Unit NAACP Education Committee

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