



MacFarland Community Cabinet Meeting Notes

September 15th, 2015

6:30 – 8:30PM

Petworth Library

Presenter: Anjali Kulkarni

Support: Andrew Katz-Moses, Cassandra Sanchez, Allison D'Aurora

Notes:

Agenda

| Time | Agenda item | Key questions |
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| 6:30 – 6:45pm | Dinner/ Mingling | |
| 6:45 – 6:50pm | Welcome | |
| 6:50 – 7:20pm | Icebreaker: A Penny for your Thoughts | <ul style="list-style-type: none">What experiences bring you to this work?What connections do you have to other members of the CC? |
| 7:20 – 7:25pm | Break | |
| 7:25 – 7:50pm | Norm-setting/ Expectations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">What is the purpose of the CC?What are the expectations of you as a CC member?What are the norms we should follow to make these meetings as productive as possible? |
| 7:50 – 8:00pm | Meeting commitments | <ul style="list-style-type: none">What is DCPS committing to in order to ensure the efforts of the CC are successful? |
| 8:00 – 8:30pm | Updates/ Questions | |

| PARTICIPANT QUESTION/COMMENT | DCPS RESPONSE |
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| | Anjali: Norm setting, reviewing Community Cabinet FAQ document, responsibilities of Cabinet members. |
| Not every community has a Cabinet, when does this Cabinet get disbanded? | It's a bit of an experiment for us. My hope is that this community cabinet evolves throughout the process, opening and beyond. Once this school has a principal and we're through the planning years we'll likely step away and let them take over. |
| What decisions does DCPS make vs. the school principal? | We have not yet decided what our timeline is for hiring a principal right now. We're playing around with a number of ideas about how we plan to do that. Once we have a principal we'd like for that person to take the lead and have these conversations. We'd ultimately like you guys to have input on whether that person's the right person. |
| So are there decisions you'll wait for the principal on? | Not really, some key ones like staffing and stuff we'd never make those decisions. I'll give you an |

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| | <p>example of Eastern. They were ahead of the game and hired a principal really early, for Brookland a principal wasn't hired until February. When we're making major programmatic decisions we involve the superintendents who are over the principals.</p> |
| | <p>AK: Norms and review of group purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory committee weighing in on programming and other elements of school planning • Not a decision-making body, but open to the ideas that are set forth and contributing to a healthy discussion • Members will be representing their communities and should work to communicate updates to them as well as gather their feedback to bring to meetings – stewardship • Differs from the School Improvement Team (SIT) which will focus on key decisions re: facility design for the new building <p>Norms. Operate with a generosity of spirit. Stay engaged. Maintain a respectful tone. Be mindful of air time. Disagree but commit (ok to disagree, but commit to group consensus). Begin and end on time. Anything you don't see or want to add?</p> |
| Might dovetail with air time. Step forward step back – if you've spoken a lot challenge yourself to step back, if you haven't spoken challenge yourself to speak up. | |
| | <p>Role of DCPS in these meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes – We will always record minutes and post them on our blog after the meetings. This will allow you to share them with your stakeholders and allow folks that cannot be here to remain informed. • Agenda/key questions – We will send out key questions 1.5 -2 weeks before the meeting to allow you some time to gather feedback from the groups you are representing. • Tight facilitation – It is on me to facilitate smoothly to allow us to get to all agenda items. • Chancellor communication – We will share these notes after every meeting with those making programming decisions – the |

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| | <p>Chancellor, Chief Davis – Chief of Schools, Chief Pick – Office of Teaching and Learning, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open communication – We will commit to being transparent about new information we learn, and we invite you to clarify any rumors you hear with us to get accurate information. |
| | <p>DCPS updates:</p> <p>We want to give you some details on the Dual Language Program at MacFarland – you have the letter we put out to DL families, but we want to ensure you have all of the information you need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received a lot of anxiety from parents who didn't have a Ward 4 stand-alone MS option, in particular the DL families, over the past year • Capacity of the Roosevelt building only allowed for a small population of middle school students to allow for separation (constraints) • Decided to start just a 6th grade dual language program next year – projections for about 60 students but will open some lottery seats for non-DCPS families who can test at appropriate level of Spanish fluency • Will feed Roosevelt DL program sooner while avoiding disruption at neighborhood feeder schools until we can transition all students from middle grades • Building out schedule for students now and then staffing • Lottery process – must sign up during round 1 of lottery by March 2nd, but DL 5th grade students from DCPS are guaranteed a seat; also must test for Spanish proficiency if not a DCPS student • Expect to have answers re: space, school leadership, extracurricular activities, courses, etc. in the next month or two |
| <p>If it's in the lottery, if folks are applying from all over the city. If a parent wants their kid to be a dual language program but they're not now, what happens?</p> | <p>That's not how the DL model works. It typically begins in first grade and you stay with that programming throughout. There won't hopefully be too many citywide seats open because we want to get as many of our DCPS DL kids as possible. Those other seats will be for kids who can test at Spanish proficiency. We're going to want to share</p> |

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| | with parents what that means, DCPS students will not have to test. These will likely be native speakers and charter school families part of another DL program. |
| Boundaries for MacFarland, in bounds is that going to be essentially...Is there going to be a priority for ward 4 kids? | The priority will go to...Our projections put MacFarland far past capacity in 5 or so years. We actually think that will put pressure on us to open another dual language school or to provide other options. It's not entirely convenient for Tyler families to go all the way. There is a DL program being considered east of the river now. We know at middle schools there's an ideal size to them, so we don't want to go and make it this gigantic middle school of 1500 kids and have kids on top of each other. It's also a question of kids who are in boundary who don't currently go to a DL school but are in boundary. They might get some additional weighting before kids who have no affiliation with DCPS. |
| On one hand it's great because it builds community, but for kids who come in in the middle of that process it's isolating. You have these dual language kids who are here from 6 th grade then all of a sudden it's 2018-19 and the school is much bigger and you have all these non dual language students. | The nice thing is we know where the DL kids are coming from. So we're engaging families from West as well as dual language schools. It's similar to kids who come from a small school and go to a larger school. |
| So it's not on the table to open both neighborhood and DL track? | No. We don't have the space for that. |
| | Part of the logic here is that we lose DL kids at a much higher rate than other students, so we want to be able to hold on to those students for as long as possible. |
| Are we considering IB? | There's a lot of mixed feelings in central office on IB right now. If you look at our IB data it's not great. Our staff struggles with it, our completion rates...so we're taking time to look at it right now. I would say there are equal camps right now arguing for 'should we put it into Roosevelt and MacFarland or should we not'. There are a lot of good arguments for both, and a lot of ways to build in that same quality of programming. A lot of times we have one school leader who's really into it and then there's a new school leader or a staff revolt and the program dies. It's on the table. |
| What is IB? | IB stands for International Baccalaureate. It's sort of a package deal program, its theme is global studies education. It takes a pretty prescriptive approach to it. There's a language component, you |

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| | have to have x languages. Tend to start in 10 th grade. |
| You mentioned in the transition years you won't be giving by right access to the DL program. Students who speak Spanish at home from West for example, would you consider that by right? | Yeah, we could certainly look at our numbers on that. We want to make sure there's enough space. |
| Kids from the programmatic feeders would have higher priority than kids who are in boundary? | Yeah, that's just part of how the dual language feeder process work. That was the spirit behind the dual language feeder. |
| At the elementary school level, do any of our feeder schools have ELL programs? | ELL serves any student who is not an English language speaker. Teachers are trained to work with any language, doesn't have to be Spanish. Don't think every school has an ELL program. |
| | We can find out, I don't know what the academic standard is. These are great questions for you guys to bring to us. |
| I know Roosevelt has their Community Cabinet. I'm wondering if at some point we'll have a conversation about how Bancroft parents would be willing to come to MacFarland when they feed into Deal and Wilson. | For those of you not familiar we're launching a re-envisioning Roosevelt project to bump up the quality of the programming at Roosevelt, that will include global studies and some dual language programming. I think you're right, it's gonna take some time to sell people on Roosevelt, I think it will take some time to sell people on MacFarland. I can't tell you how many requests we've gotten to change the name MacFarland for example. We want to bring back the folks who are in this neighborhood. |
| Is changing the name on the table? | I would argue that it's, I wouldn't say it's off the table. We've wrestled with this a little bit. It's still in the same location. It's not off the table, I don't think anyone would protest. We're going to start marketing the dual language program. If you guys can find some support for that. I'd also ask you to think about the history of the school and neighborhood. |
| We're struggling with that issue at Marie Reed because we've had that reputation for so long. But it's on community members to get behind it and say this is where we are now. | Yeah, I think about Powell for example. We didn't have to change the name there to change the reputation. It's on the table. |
| I just think, there's not a lot online about the history. He was the former superintendent. He was one of the three commissioners in about 1900. | Just so you know, having tried to name a school in the past there are a thousand parameters about who to name the school after. There's all this approval, it has to go through council, it's a lot. Something to think about. |
| Can we get more information about the name and some of the parameters for changing the name? | Yeah, I have that. |

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| The thing about Powell, Powell never closed. MacFarland closed. | |
| I was thinking about changing just the name of the programming, maybe MacFarland global and peace studies. We could maybe just add something. | Yeah, there are ways to do it without going through a really elaborate process. We'll send out the information, someone just sent me a book on this. |
| It would be a good idea to change the name. Secondly, dual language programming... | Let me be clear on the dual language front. Middle school dual language isn't all that involved. They take two content courses in Spanish the rest is middle school. The dual language part will be planned in terms of what those courses are. We have toyed with the idea of having a separate dual language group that meets every so often and having this group noodle on the neighborhood and programming so DL doesn't dominate this conversation. One concern is that dual language can segregate a school, so we're looking to not have that happen at Roosevelt or MacFarland. Also the population at MacFarland and Roosevelt will be insanely diverse. The Spanish speaking population will just be one of many many different cultures. |
| Would you start a MacFarland with any kind of global features with a 65 student group? | That's gonna be tough, we're playing with models about what MacFarland will look like for these kids. We're looking at what's gonna be planned for 18-19. A small middle school is a bit of a constraint, they can take advantage of the resources and staff that Roosevelt has. We're going to try to give them as much of a middle school experience as we can. |
| The Roosevelt proposed curriculum I've seen – so that's it? | Yeah, there's no major decisions that have been made on this. That's a proposal. |
| So what you're proposing for MacFarland should fit in to... | It should lead into Roosevelt, middle school is a little bit simpler because it's kind of right down the line in terms of what we offer but we'll add global elements to it. |
| But the plan is to only have them there for one year? | They'll be there at Roosevelt for two years. |
| In terms of marketing, how are you going to market the dual language. How is that going to happen? | We're putting a lot of thought into the marketing. This year and next we'll exclusively market to dual language programs. But after that we'll want a full on marketing campaign for MacFarland. Our success has been to target particular communities and what they want to see. Luckily there will be a principal at that time so they can go out and deliver that message. Us with marketing materials is great but people really want to see a principal in place. |

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