**Racial Imbalance Advisory Council Meeting**

**Monday, March 4, 2024**

9:00-11:00am

Online Remote Participation (Zoom)

**Council Members in Attendance:** Matt Brunell, J.D.; Raul Fernandez, Ed.D.; Lateefah Franck, M.Ed.; Renée Heywood, Ph.D.; Laurie Hunter, M.Ed., Ed.D.; Julia Jarquin; Lamikco T. Magee, M.Ed., J.D., Ph.D.; Cleonie Mainvielle, MSW; Marieme Ngom; Monica Roberts; Jessica S. Samuel, Ph.D.; Darlene Spencer

**Welcome & Agenda Overview**

* February meeting minutes were approved with 1 abstention due to absence.
* The Board will be discussing the imminent search for the new Commissioner, which in the past has generally taken a year, at upcoming meeting this month. The Department is going to continue to work toward the educational vision, which Russell will be leading as the temporary Commissioner while the search is taking place.

**Research Presentation & Joint Q&A Discussion**

* Kelly Harrington, Senior Research Manager at Boston Indicators, presented the *Global Greater Boston* report and Ann Mantil, Senior Research Associate at the Annenberg Institute, presented the *Rising Number, Unmet Needs* report,
* Discussion
  + Procuring aggregate regional data on the South Coast is challenging, as several council members have noted that their work has been impacted in recent years with the influx of migrant families. A significant portion of sheltered children there are under 4 years old, affecting early childhood education due to the limited number of existing preschool and HeadStart programs.
  + Haitian families originate from a country with a robust education system. There will be a follow-up report that will examine district-level variations in the education levels and English Language proficiency of students newly placed in emergency shelters, which is a departure from past trends. Given the fast-changing immigration landscape, staying current with data is difficult. Disaggregated data is needed to meet the different needs in service of students and their families that bring new cultural knowledge and backgrounds.
  + In Concord, older students are transported back to their school of origin and the remaining have little English language proficiency. The majority are younger and there is not currently enough state assistance with early childhood education funding or support. None of the programs are currently servicing 3-year-olds and HeadStart has not come to Concord because of the previously low demand. Given the high COL in Concord, it’s unclear that families will be able to stay without more housing. Concord currently has the state’s largest shelter for 85 families and only 10 have been placed. The community is relying on the knowledge base of gateway cities like Framingham, Lawrence, and Boston regarding these issues.
  + Are there coalitions between education and housing that support migrants accessing permanent housing at their school community? It seems that there are informal networks in place.
  + These immigrant patterns compound the issue of teacher shortage. Oftentimes, student peers hold the responsibility of translating for newcomers.
  + The Department needs to undertake bold, large-scale initiatives. There's also a need for training for white educators to improve cultural competence and foster inclusive environments for BIPOC educators.

**DESE Data Request**

* Level of funding per students depends on C70 funding and local tax income.
* Councilmembers provided the following suggestions/questions:
  + It would be helpful to have this data format located on the DESE website somewhere.
  + Not all race and ethnicity data is fully available for students. The current spreadsheet does not include Asian, multi-racial, and Native students.
  + It may be helpful to have someone from data at the next meetings.
  + Council to categorize the schools based on racial imbalance designation. Ideally there will be information on Asian, multi-racial, and Native students. Someone from RIAC should designate this information.
  + Information around educator evaluation salary, evaluation data, and demographics should be included since this is tracked by DESE. The council would like to seek additional information around ELL students (in addition to newcomers, if this is different).
  + Is there information on teacher language acquisition? Or is this district specific?
  + Many African American families identify as white regardless of background due to the the systemic racism that is deeply embedded in American culture. Is there anything that can be done to disaggregate the white category?
    - DESE simply takes self-reported data so this is why language identification data is important to have as well as race & ethnicity.

**Next Steps**

* Announcements/Updates
  + DESE shared updates on hiring for the Teacher Apprenticeship and Accelerated and Advanced Learning manager positions. RIAC members should reach out to Darcy so she can provide an update to interested individuals later this month.
  + Working with an advisory group on currently applying for a $6M federal teacher diversification grant.
  + DESE had held internal DEIB-centered professional development for leaders and is developing this training to be applicable for agency-wide staff which will then ideally be shared with the public.
  + The Aspiring Principals Fellowship for BIPOC individuals will be launched this summer.
  + RIAC members are invited to attend the first annual Partners in Equity Leadership Conference on May 17th in Marlborough. This will be an opportunity to coalesce BIPOC leaders and allies from around the state. The event is free of cost.
* Next Steps
  + Council members to receive decks from both presenters.
  + DESE to follow up with data team on follow up data on missing student demographics as well as request for teacher demographics.
  + DESE liaison to extend the RIAC’s invitation to Ferdousi Faroque, EOE Secretariat Diversity Officer, to attend next meeting.
* Next meeting: Tuesday, April 2nd from 9:00-10:30am via Zoom