Audit and Risk Management Advisory Committee
Jefferson County Public Schools
May 20, 2020
Zoom Video Conference
Minutes

ARMAC Members Present: Chairperson James Rose, Vice-Chairperson Rhonda Mitchell, Dr. Sarah Moyer, Pedro Bryant, Dr. Keith Davis, Dr. Vicki Phillips and Dr. Lois Adams-Rodgers

Public Present: None

JCPS Staff Present: Dr. Marty Pollio, Amy Dennes, Dr. Dena Dossett, Dr. Carmen Coleman, Dr. John Marshall, Jimmy Adams, Dr. Aimee Green-Webb, Dr. Marco Munoz, Kim Chevalier, Joe Leffert, Robert Moore, Sylena Fishback, Jodell Renn, Chalynn Comage, John LeMaster, and Shari Mattingly

Board Members Present: none

Mr. Rose called the meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Advisory Committee (ARMAC) to order at 2:00 pm. A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Rose requested a motion to accept the minutes of the January 22, 2020 meeting, which was made by Dr. Lois Adams-Rodgers and seconded by Dr. Keith Davis. The minutes were approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Introductory Comments

Mr. Rose noted that Dean Dorton was selected as the external financial statement auditor. A firm in St. Louis, Brown Smith Wallace, LLP, was selected to assist with Internal Audit primarily in the IT space while Strothman will support Internal Audit on local efforts. He also gave a brief overview of today's meeting agenda.

Vision 2020 In Action Key Metrics – Dr. Dena Dossett, Chief of Accountability, Research and Systems Improvement

Dr. Dena Dossett gave an overview of the District metrics evolution over the past couple of years, where it is now and where it is headed going forward. JCPS has created systems for reviewing key performance indicators routinely over the year at the school level, the assistant superintendent level and at the board level. The February board level material was presented today. Last year, a closer look was taken at learning and culture/climate key indicators. This year, at the assistant superintendent level, three rounds for each of these key indicators was planned and two rounds were completed before remote learning began. We now have a good understanding of where we were just prior to NTI. By separating out the key indicators, the data was aggregated by student group and by trend. Next year, the same template used for assistant superintendents will be used at the school level.

The board report has been organized around the three pillars of success, which are Backpack of Success, Climate and Culture, and Racial Equity. Dr. Dossett discussed the key indicators within each of the pillars. She noted that schools have been continuing the Backpack of Success skills learning during NTI. Data

around attendance and referrals/suspensions was discussed, along with a strategy implemented this year of sending reminder notes to students who are approaching being considered chronically absent. Identifying Gifted and Talented students of color has improved. Over 2000 more students of color have been identified by building staff capacity to recognize gifted and talented students in multiple categories. The next stage is ensuring the wrap around services are available to these students, along with increasing staff levels of teachers and administrators of color.

Ms. Mitchell requested clarification on what criteria is used to define an absence (excused or unexcused). Dr. Dossett explained that any absence is counted regardless of reason. A 10% absentee rate or 17 days (10% of 175 school days) is considered chronically absent by the state. She went on to explain that there is a lot of research that supports the impact absenteeism has on student proficiency. For example, after day 6 away from instruction, data shows a decrease in proficiency. Student Assignment is looking at providing more options for students that could keep them closer to home, with one potential positive impact being improved attendance.

Dr. Davis asked what initiatives are in place to the address racial inequity. When remote learning was begun and devices were distributed to students, the need was significant where there are higher rates of free and reduced lunch and lower income areas in the district. Dr. Adams-Rodgers asked about students that are frequently absent and how the district addresses this. Under the leadership of Dr. Marshall and Dr. Coleman, the district began looking at the Code of Conduct book and the behavior codes. Making the behavior codes more explicit and creating progressive discipline codes to slow out of classroom and school suspensions are strategies that have been instituted. Mr. Rose would like to see a sense of proportionality in the reports. Dr. Dossett said this was done in the assistant superintendent and school level vital signs reports.

Dr. Phillips asked about the breakdown of hires, between the staff of color ratio of males and females. Dr. Dossett reported that information is known at the school level but has not been aggregated at the District level but they would consider adding. Dr. Phillips suggested it would be a good idea to consider aggregating the data by race, gender and grade level.

Mr. Rose would like to see what the levels are of 5th, 8th, and 12th grade backpack defense numbers are; are they 50% of last year, or are they staying at the same levels with NTI? And where we are on Transition Readiness. Dr. Dossett will be able to provide this information. We have seen a decline in the defenses and one reason may be because the data hasn't been uploaded to the dashboard yet. Many schools are keeping them going though. Transition Readiness data will be harder to get because a lot of the data is counted through industry certification, which was suspended when NTI began.

Dr. Davis asked when looking at recidivism, some of the students must be in multiple groups, and Dr. Dossett confirmed this is correct. Dr. Adams-Rodgers believes this is an important area of discussion with the community for their involvement, and how these students can be supported. Mr. Bryant, in regards to repeat suspensions and referrals, believes the top two or three reasons should be conveyed to the community to help broaden their understanding of exactly what is going on. Dr. Marshall is working with teachers and adults to ensure there is clear understanding of issues and to recognize that they have a role in this, not just the students.

Teacher Development – Jimmy Adams, Chief of Human Resources

Mr. Adams introduced four presenters to speak on different aspects of the teacher development process, Dr. Aimee Green-Webb, Executive Administrator Personnel and Dr. Marco Munoz, Associate Employee Retention, Mr. Joe Leffert, Assistant Superintendent Elementary Zone 3 and Ms. Sylena

Fishback of Specialist Diversity, Equity and Poverty.

Teacher Recruitment

Dr. Green-Webb explained that Human Resources coordinates the staffing needs of the entire District. She shared data that shows the decreasing trend in teacher preparation enrollment that is experienced nationwide and impacts JCPS's recruiting efforts. As a result, the District has to be creative and do more than to recruit college students majoring in education, which is done with high quality online recruiting, hiring fairs, etc. JCPS is also reaching out to students in other majors within the Arts and Sciences such as Speed School and this helps increase the supply of teachers in high need STEM areas. Another initiative is growing our own by working with support staff to expand their opportunities and our own JCPS students with Educators Rising, apprenticeship programs, and certification programs. HR restructured this year and now has specialists for elementary, middle and high school levels, to provide support by working with the principals and hiring managers with respect to diversification. The partnership with Simmons College and working with retirees is another way JCPS is filling the open positions.

Teacher Retention

Dr. Munoz provided an overview of the teacher retention initiatives. He explained that there are three basic principles guiding this work, along with seven strategies for retaining new effective teachers in AIS schools. Retention is something that begins when a teacher is hired. Teachers are advised immediately of support that is available to them. Data shows that a positive climate and culture, working with peer teachers and mentors help them envision a long-term career in education. Retention must be intentional, not an afterthought. Social bonding is critical, especially for millennials, along with principal support.

Teacher Coaching

Mr. Leffert walked the committee through System 6, which is designed to provide instructional feedback and professional learning. The purpose is to promote continuous instructional improvement, and when implemented effectively by observing and coaching teachers throughout the entire year, this improves instructional practices and informs professional learning. JCPS believes that System 6 will improve student achievement.

Teacher Residency

Ms. Fishback presented an overview of the Teacher Residency Program. The program was developed to increase the number of teachers ready to be in the classroom and to make sure JCPS is developing and equipping teachers to ensure their success. The program was designed to produce a diverse teacher pool and is focused on people with a non-education bachelor's degree, putting them through the Masters of Education program at University of Louisville and a providing them a full year of field experience at JCPS. Upon completion the participant will have a Master's in Education and their Education Certification in Kentucky, as well as first-hand experience of some of the challenges within JCPS.

JCPS has partnered with Academy of Urban School Leadership which has a proven record of creating schools of excellence by developing highly effective teachers and administrators in highly distressed urban communities.

Four schools have been identified to pilot the Teacher Residency Program which is set to begin 2020-21 school year: Semple Elementary, Slaughter Elementary, Western Middle School, and Waggener High School. There will be five to ten residents at each school, working with master teachers and a resident coach to ensure their success.

Mr. Rose opened the floor with a question to determine how many schools and to what degree has System 6 been implemented and what metrics have been developed to measure where teachers are in each phase of the system. Mr. Leffert responded that it has been implemented in every school, and every teacher receives the one-on-one coaching. Each school knows where the teachers stand in their buildings and that is not something that has been collected at a District level. Mr. Leffert emphasized that the most important part of System 6 is continuous improvement and to provide guidance to teachers and adult learners. He further shared that while there are phases built into the system, depending on the situation a person could be in and out of the different phases because there is not necessarily one path that is followed.

Dr. Phillips inquired about what feedback loops exist to obtain feedback from teachers regarding their experience. Jimmy Adams shared that exit surveys are requested when teachers leave the District, and they have developed surveys specifically for new teachers on their new hire and on boarding experience. Dr. Munoz is a "go to" person for new hires and he stays in touch with teachers, along with the HR Specialists as they hear of any teachers who are leaving or struggling. It's is a comprehensive wrap around program.

Dr. Adams-Rodgers asked how all the information from the various points in the process (i.e. coaching, surveys etc.) is shared. Mr. Leffert explained that within the school the information is regularly shared among the coaches and principal through the calibration meetings at the beginning of the process (i.e. what information are they looking for) to the results that are discovered during the observations. Collectively, goals and objectives are set for the next coaching session for individuals.

Dr. Adams-Rodgers asked how long time teachers are used as support new teachers. Dr. Munoz explained that coordination and being strategic, along with a focus on foundational skills is used to ensure new teachers will come back. New hires should be shepherded, otherwise they can be easily overwhelmed. Mentors and retention strategies are designed to retain new teachers.

Principal Development – Dr. Carmen Coleman, Chief of Academic Services

Dr. Coleman introduced Mr. Robert Moore, who gave an overview of the principal development program. Every action made with leadership is in support of the prior two topics discussed, whether it's looking at the district metrics or the hiring and retention of quality certified teachers. The ultimate goal is to have a positive impact on student achievement.

Mr. Moore referred to a RAND study that rates the Emerging Leaders Program through New Leaders as one of the most effective principal preparation programs available. There are currently 22 participants finishing up this week with mock interviews and receiving feedback so they'll be prepared when going before an interview panel.

For the upcoming cohort, an effort was made to increase males of color in this program because there were zero males of color for the first cohort, however, there were 7 women of color. Mr. Moore actively recruited and for the upcoming cohort, there are seven to eight males of color applicants for the program. JCPS is working with Spalding University, University of Louisville, Western Kentucky University and Eastern Kentucky University. He is working with Glenn Baete at Spalding University and several others at JCPS on co-designing an Aspiring Leaders Program, which involves course work and a lab (field work) for participants. Dr. Coleman added that by intersecting with the Wallace work JCPS has great momentum to seeing results and have already seen great work using the seven domains.

Mr. Rose inquired Dr. Coleman to provide a bridge of where JCPS was a year ago and where they are now since there seem to be some changes from the last time she presented to ARMAC. Dr. Coleman walked through the process that began with researching the Aspiring Leaders program based on recommendations from Dr. Devon Horton, Chief of Schools and Dr. Felicia Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning who were both very familiar with the program. Due to the cost associated with the Aspiring Leaders program and learning about the Emerging Leaders Program it was decided that the program was a better path for JCPS. A small pilot program began last spring and continued through this school with very promising results. Working in partnership with multiple universities is the best of the best and allows a district to customize the experience their candidates get. There is no shortage of interest in these programs and one partner could not handle all of the interest. We are not limited to just state universities, however there is a loyalty to local partners.

Mr. Rose asked how JCPS will show all of the great work that is being done and which is having an impact and how will it be tracked. Ms. Dennes agreed that it is a challenge, but there is data that shows the leader of a building makes a huge impact. She added that if we can get the leader right and get both our teachers and leaders to reflect our students, student achievement will happen.

CAP Update – Amy Dennes, Chief of Staff and Dr. Dena Dossett

Ms. Dennes presented a brief status of the Corrective Action Plan as of April, which shows that there are only a handful of indicators left not fully implemented. She went on to summarize the results from the evaluation of revenue options which has led the Board to request increases to bring the tax rate in line with surrounding counties and will provide the necessary revenue to support the District's needs. JCPS provides lots of wrap around services to students, and we want to rework student assignment which will require new schools in the west end to address the equity concerns. More magnet schools are also needed. We have several end of life buildings which we need to invest in improving. Our athletic fields require improvement. This week the District will be begin holding community meetings to discuss the proposed increases and are part of the steps required. It is anticipated that there will be a referendum on the November ballot.

Ms. Mitchell believes it's a great idea to have community input, and that a lot of voters who don't have kids in the JCPS system are not aware of why they should support the school system. JCPS must push to get the message to these voters why it's important that they support the District; people outside the school realm must be educated.

New Business

At the next meeting, the committee will discuss the 2020-21 Internal Audit Work Plan. Ms. Mitchell would also like to discuss the District's plan for school opening this fall in light of the COVID-19. The meeting will be held Wednesday, July 29, 2020 in the Superintendent's Conference Room, VanHoose Building.

Adjournment

Dr. Lois Adams-Rodgers made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Dr. Keith Davis seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:17 pm.

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