

**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES COLLABORATIVE COMMISSION**  
**MEETING NOTES – JANUARY 9, 2019**  
**CITY HALL, SISTER CITIES**

**ATTENDANCE**

Councilman Canek Aguirre  
Julie Crawford  
Rose Dawson  
Laura Durham  
Kate Garvey  
Amanda Hazelwood  
Bryana Head  
J Glenn Hopkins

Kurt Huffman  
Jamica Littles  
Tammy Mann  
Bruce McKenzie  
Kelley Organek  
Maile Organek  
Brian Orrenmaa

Javan Owens  
Stephen Parker  
Isra Shuster  
Michelle Smith-Howard  
Heather Thornton  
Brittany Williams  
Malka Zeefe

**Excused Absent**

Jacinta Greene

Peter Kallin

Mike Mackey

**Unexcused Absent**

Ameena Ashraf  
Edward O'Keefe

**Staff**

Stacy Hardy-Chandler  
Noraine Buttar  
Robin Crawley  
Chelsea Eickert

**Guests**

Gwen Mullen

**Speaker**

Dr. Gregory Hutchings, Jr.

**WELCOME**

People introduced themselves. Welcomed new and returning members.

**NEW BUSINESS - SUPERINTENDENT'S LISTENING TOUR, DR. GREGORY HUTCHINGS, SUPERINTENDENT, ACPS**

ACPS Superintendent Dr. Gregory Hutchings, provided an overview of his first few months as Superintendent. He walked the Commission through his 100-Day Entry Plan. Using the six goals from the ACPS 2020 Strategic Plan, he determined what his steps would be and where to narrow his focus. He was able to accomplish every step in his 28-page plan.

On January 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM at T.C. Williams High School, Dr. Hutchings will be sharing his findings, as well as recommendations for how to tackle challenges. People will walk away with a knowledge of how ACPS plans to tackle some of the challenges.

Dr. Hutchings then covered highlights from his first six months as Superintendent:

- ACPS has opened two schools and soon a third.
- The High School Project: Inspiring a Future for Alexandria.

The High School Project is a huge endeavor that aims to resolve the capacity issues at the high school level while redefining the high school experience. TC Williams High School currently has about 4,000 students and is projected to grow to another 5000 students in the next 10 years. While enrollment has slowed since last year, the recommendation is to address capacity issues (additional 1000 seats).

A final presentation to the School Board will be given on January 10<sup>th</sup> and a vote will be held on the 24<sup>th</sup> to address high school capacity. The choices are to open a second comprehensive high school, or build out a connected high school network.

The Superintendent values collaboration, stating that collaboration is key. “If we don’t collaborate, we’re not going to see our students succeed.” He went on to say that a barrier to work through is ACPS relationships. He works directly with the City Manager, meeting on a weekly basis. He also has open communication with new mayor. “If everyone believes in our children and public schools, then we need to make sure to collaborate with community organizations and work together.”

One key area where collaboration is key is safety and security. ACPS is working closely with Alexandria Police Department to ensure they have the planning and training to respond effectively. Another area that requires partnering with community organizations is afterschool programming. Increases in enrollment means increases in after-school needs. Collaboration with the Recreation Centers and community partners is key to making sure kids have afterschool experiences and to not address issues in siloes.

Dr. Hutchings described *Measuring What Matters*, a publication that highlights the incredible talent ACPS students have that may manifest in many different ways. Our community needs to realize that a test score doesn’t determine a kid’s future. Exposure to new experiences also shapes a young person’s future. ACPS offers a diversity of experiences that is above and beyond what most students get in high school. “We want our kids to grow up embrace and love who they are and their culture and embrace other cultures as well.”

### **Questions from the Commission**

**Question:** You talked about students attending NOVA classes. Will students be attending classes at Virginia Tech?

**Answer:** We're still in the planning phase and working through the logistics, including the amount of space needed at Virginia Tech and if the focus will be on computer science. We want to make sure we offer smaller learning opportunities where students can spend the whole day.

**Question:** If you have children who are participating on a satellite campus, how would additional classes fit into their schedule?

**Answer:** Some students go to morning sessions and then return to TC in the afternoon. We have access for students to go back and forth. Blended online learning approaches. For kids who are in NOVA's Early College program and on a set path for getting their Associates Degree, they want to be on a community college campus for their entire school career because they signed up for college level experience.

**Question:** What do you see as the Commission's role in what you want to accomplish?

**Answer:** Advocating for children. We need to have the courage to say that no child should be left behind. Be adamant about that; that can help get the work done.

**Question:** When it comes to satellite campuses, how does enrollment work?

**Answer:** We make sure to connect students to resources and ensure they know what is offered. We begin to prepare kids in 6<sup>th</sup> grade by establishing pathways and supports to help them make decisions once they get to high school. The NOVA Early College program is reflection of student demographics. We start to see the gap widen in Middle School. The high performing kids from underrepresented schools scores go down as they stop believing in themselves.

**Question:** Looking at data in achievement gaps compared to rest of the state, how do you plan to use grants from the state and federal level to narrow the gaps and make sure businesses want to come because of workforce?

**Answer:** Every school needs to have an improvement plan to maintain and increase success and use data to improve their goals. The Quarterly meetings across 21 schools give us an opportunity to monitor the progress of our kids. If we have challenges, we know them in advanced and can plan a response. These meetings help to narrow the achievement gap because we're strategic in how we provide resources at each school, based on needs and equity. We're meeting people where they are.

**Question:** Are there any other focus areas to develop as a community as we explore the network of schools?

**Answer:** We start by asking, "What are the leading professions of the future?" In doing outreach with the business community, we found leading careers and skills they're looking for. Work has already been done in ACPS to create those pipelines. ACPS offers over 400 courses. Students

have access to pretty much anything that they want. We need to do a better job of making sure students know what we offer.

**Question:** We have a lot of great resources but people don't know about them, so the Commission is discussing the creation of a resource guide having to do with health, safety, school. Have you seen anything that can help put together a guide where parents are well informed?

**Answer:** Some of the outreach done in my previous job was non-traditional - partnering with religious organizations, community centers, setting up booths at grocery stores at the beginning of school year to provide literature to parents - to find ways to reach parents who can't attend Back to School Events. The Family and Community Engagement Center (FACE) started so that we can have a strategy to increase community engagement throughout the City and parent liaisons. FACE Team members can attend the CYFCC to share out the innovative things they're working on and to learn new things. We're making sure that we know the populations we're serving in each school so that as they walk into their school, they see things reflected in their culture.

#### **DISCUSS FEBRUARY ORIENTATION RETREAT – WILL BE MOVED TO MARCH.**

The CYFCC will have a retreat to gather and exchange ideas about what has been done and its future as it evolves with issues. The Chair wanted to use this time as a brainstorming session on facilitators, how to structure retreat, questions to consider, etc. The meeting will be longer for the retreat (6:00-9:00 PM). Food will be provided. New members will receive orientation binders with the Snapshot included.

It was asked if the Commission could get a briefing from someone on process of altering charters of commissions. Maybe the Commission doesn't need to be focused on the CYMP any more. Perhaps the charter can be modernized and the size of the very large commission can be reconsidered. The Commission needs a strategic plan every year.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

##### Proposed Calendar Events

- i. February 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting – Racial Equity Presentation, Jean Kelleher, Director, Office of Human Rights
- ii. March 13<sup>th</sup> – Retreat

#### **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF DRAFT NOVEMBER MINUTES**

Corrections to the Minutes were made and the Minutes were approved.

#### **ADJOURNMENT (8:15 PM)**