
**CITY OF MESA
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)
January 23rd, 2019 Minutes**

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on January 23rd, 2019 at 6:00pm in the Upper Level City Council Chambers at 57 E 1st St.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cliff Moon, Chair
Colleen Byron, Vice Chair
Amy-Lyn Faatoafe
Alvaro Gonzalez
Joseph Holmes
Nadia Khalighi
Jared Smith
Mark Tompert
Louis Wade
Ron Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT

Silvia Stanford

STAFF PRESENT

Andrea Alicoate
Ruth Giese
Cisco Luzania
Tara Hall

GUESTS

Dr. Michael Garcia

1. Chair's Call to Order.

Dr. Moon, called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

(1a) Announcement of excused absences.

There were no excused absences.

2. Items from Citizens Present. *

There were no citizens present who wished to speak to the Board.

3. Approval of minutes from the December 5th, 2018 Board meeting.

It was moved by Mr. Tompert, seconded by Mr. Williams that the above-mentioned minutes be accepted as written.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES- Dr. Moon, Dr. Byron, Ms. Faatoafe, Mr. Gonzalez, Mr. Holmes, Ms. Khalighi, Mr. Smith, Mr. Tompert, Mr. Wade, and Mr. Williams.

NAYS- None

4. Discuss and make recommendations on Mesa Police Department Monthly Community Engagement Report.

(4a) Updates on Diversity related police incidents and activities.

Ms. Tara Hall, Police Community Partnership Administrator, was present to give an update. Dr. Moon asked if there was any further information from the Police Department concerning the incident involving four Mesa PD officers and the subsequent investigation. Ms. Hall responded by

stating she had checked with the legal representatives who confirmed that the case is still currently under investigation. Ms. Hall assured the Board that as soon as more information can be released, she would do so. Dr. Moon asked if there were any other incidents that had occurred that the Board would have interest in. Ms. Hall said there were no new incidents to inform them of at this time.

(4b) Updates on scheduling of upcoming Police Advisory Board meetings.

When asked about community updates, Ms. Hall stated that the community forums had started for 2019 and that information had been sent out to community leaders(chair) individually. There are two new initiatives that are being introduced. There is a pilot class by Community Engagement Academies in February and will include volunteers, non-profits and community forums. They look to launch the first class in April. The February meeting will be held in the library in Fiesta in the community room. The pilot class in February will be “A Day in The Life of an Officer” in order to increase the understanding of a police officer’s daily responsibilities. Including more information, laws during arrests and how internal affairs investigates officers. The goal is for the attendees to have a better understanding of what an officer does and for police officials to answer any questions the attendees might have.

Ms. Hall brought up that while overseeing the Youth Development Team (YDT), which is housed at Greenfield and McDowell, she began a dialogue about moving them and their programs to more accessible locations. YDT is looking to partner with Eagles Community Center and Save the Family to assist with event locations where kids can be transported to those facilities in order to utilize the gym and other equipment. Ms. Hall stated that there is an increased focus of community engagement by being able to go out into the public as opposed to have them come to offsite locations. Ms. Hall stated that it is in her intended five-year plan to have a Mesa PD Youth Development Center. Ms. Hall stated that that kind of facility would be a first in the state of Arizona and that the City of Atlanta, which is of comparable size to Mesa, does have a structure in place through partnerships and are able to have such a site. They got funding through foundations and corporate sponsors. Dr. Moon commended Ms. Hall for her efforts to enhance the community engagement by Mesa PD.

(4b-1) Updates on a meeting of the LGBTQ Community Forum.

Ms. Hall stated that one of her interns had formulated the survey, on Survey Monkey, and paid an extra fee to alleviate the ads. The survey is still currently under evaluation still. Ms. Alicote stated that the survey had been sent out for review by the planning committee.

5. Hear and discuss presentation from Mesa Public School regarding their ‘Strides towards Equity’.

Dr. Michael Garcia was in attendance to present on behalf of Mesa Public Schools (MPS). Dr. Garcia stated that his department deals with equity for student on many different aspects, not just academic. Dr. Garcia has 16 years of experience working with MPS both in the classroom and at the district level. Dr. Garcia shared that it is the goal of MPS to have every student known by name, served by strength and need, and graduate ready for college, career and life. Dr. Garcia stated that it is the plan of the new MPS superintendent to achieving this by focusing on learning in all classroom environments, building collaborative teams and focusing on results. Using data to make decisions has become a high priority for the district. The district plans on doing this by adhering to MPS’s core values. These include making sure that each student is made to be important, learning

is the focus and priority, collaboration and innovation are indispensable, sound fiscal stewardship is essential, diversity increases our opportunities and success is expected and celebrated. Dr. Garcia stated that the new superintendent is highly supportive of new ideas.

Dr. Garcia then began to assess how his department increase opportunity and achievement throughout the entire district. He started by stating that MPS is an AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) district. This is a college predatory course that seeks to apply leadership and instructional best practices to increase college enrollment to four-year universities. Dr. Garcia stated that over 50 schools within the district are currently implementing the AVID curriculum. The research behind AVID has been done over 38 years and have shown a consistent record of success. The district continues to promote the program year after year in order to continue the mission of college readiness. Within the district, 99% of AVID students graduate on time, 80% percent of AVID students are in at least one AP course or other course of rigor and 68% of AVID graduates enroll in 2- or 4-year colleges (national rate). Additionally, there has been an increased focus on making Advanced Placement (AP) course more accessible. In MPS, participation in AP courses is up 83%. This has been achieved in part because of the district helping identify those students who should be taking AP and encouraging them to enroll and by removing barriers from AP participation that may have previously existed i.e. cost.

In response to a question from Dr. Byron, Dr. Garcia explained that AVID is an elective and that even though AVID influences the overall curriculum and instructional support, only the students in the program are considered AVID students this would average out to 9.8% of all middle and high school students. This falls in line with the national recommendation that 10% of the student population is in the AVID elective. Dr. Bryon asked a follow-up if that the previous statistic of a 99% on-time graduation rate was for all students or just AVID students. Dr. Garcia stated that that is only students that had completed the AVID curriculum. Mr. Holmes asked for specifics as to which barriers had to be removed from students taking AP courses. Dr. Garcia said that some of the previous barriers have been minimum scores in classes, applications for the test, even pretests. The College Board, who administers the test, is responsible for setting the cost of the test which come to around \$89. In response to the high cost for some students, MPS has offered reduced price to those qualified students at a rate of \$13. Dr. Garcia stated that it his mission and the mission of the district to make sure that money is not an issue for students to take AP exams.

Another initiative that Dr. Garcia is heading up is a focused on is Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), a Mesa centric training now required to be taken by all MPS staff. Some of the issues the course focuses on are confronting personal biases, being aware of student diversity needs, equity in opportunity and social and emotional support. In response to a question from Dr. Moon, Dr. Garcia responded that all staff took the training after its conception and all new employees are required to take this training. MPS is building follow-up course that are projected to be ready by the summer. There has also been a shift in counseling priorities by shifting school counselor time to 40% academic needs, 40% on social emotional needs and 20% on other tasks. This was done in part that MPS is currently running a ratio of 900 students to every 3 counselors. By using some Title I funding, the district hopes to make sure that every school has a counselor on staff. Red Mountain and Skyline are increasing their dual enrollment through MCC so that students can take up to 22 credit hours. There is also an increased focus on boosting FAFSA completion from 38% from last year to 45% this year. So far there has been a 19.1% year-over-year change. The district has seen

noted improvements by helping boost FAFSA completion, Dr. Garcia stated that ASU applications are up 48% compared to last year.

Dr. Garcia then went on to expand on the GEAR UP grant that is a partnership with ASU to increase post-secondary enrollment. The grant will cover an entire cohort of 7th graders from Kino Junior High and will follow those students through to higher education. The funding will continue to follow these students to assist with any needs as they seek higher education. Additionally, the district is increasing Social and Emotional Learning by focusing this year on building self-awareness and self-management. In order to assist this the district has added seven full time social workers to work at each high school and have partnered with an organization named Everybody Matters to provide social workers to 15 high-need elementary and junior high sites.

Dr. Garcia then went on to overview that next steps to increase opportunity and achievement in MPS include more equity-based funding, support and staffing. This will be done by evaluating site needs and by creating three new positions; Director of Equity, College and Career Coach and a Social and Emotional Learning Coach.

Board members then took turns asking Dr. Garcia questions, to which he provided appropriate responses. Dr. Moon thanked Dr. Garcia for his presentation and work. Dr. Moon also stated that it would be a benefit to perhaps have principals from MPS to present the success of such programs to the board, Dr. Garcia agreed.

6. Discuss and take action on creating a recommendation to Mayor and Council on providing City services to individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues.

Mr. Tompert stated that he has yet to receive any new information on this issue from Mr. Ward from Mesa Fire and Medical. Ms. Alicoate said that if he had not heard back from Fire, she would reach-out to make sure they fulfilled that commitment of meeting.

7. Discuss and take action on meeting with various educational institutions to assess strides being made to address diversity issues within schools.

Dr. Moon reiterated his interest in having principals from MPS come to present to the board as to how they are addressing equity within their schools and more specifically how they are addressing the influx of a growing immigrant community. Ms. Alicoate asked if there was any particular school that they would like to present. Dr. Byron suggested that representatives from Kino Junior HS would be effective and also referring to Dr. Garcia to see which schools he would suggest or if it would be prudent to wait until there is more data for a more comprehensive presentation.

8. Discuss and take action on the development of community fairs and events such as, but not limited to the Women's Empowerment Event and Youth Peace Building Summit.

Dr. Byron stated that there was a productive meeting at MCC concerning the planning for the Women's Empowerment Summit which is slated for March 9th, 2019 hosted at the MCC Main Library. Dr. Byron urged all board members to RSVP quickly. Mr. Williams asked how many years this event has been held, Dr. Byron stated this is the second year and there are plans already to put one on again next year. Mr. Williams then asked what the objectives of the event are, to which Dr. Moon responded that it covers topics that adversely affect women and come up with some effective

solutions to these problems. Dr. Moon stated that this is a new event to Mesa and that he looks forward growing it.

Ms. Khalighi and Dr. Moon agreed to formulate a time and place for a meeting to begin the planning process for the Youth Peace Building Summit. Mr. Gonzolez, Dr. Byron and Mr. Holmes agree to assist with the event. Ms. Alicoate stated that city staff would look to reserve space for the meeting and follow up with the board. A meeting was set for January 31st at 6pm.

9. Discuss and take action on proposed Arizona State Legislation HB 2586.

Ms. Alicoate gave the update that there has not been a new bill akin to HB 2586 so far this term. Mr. Wade asked if this item can be left on the agenda for further discussion and implored board members to reach out to their elected representatives to lobby for this type of bill.

10. Discuss and report on new engaged community partners

Mr. Gonzolez stated that it would be of interest to the board to have a member of the organization that he works for to come and give a presentation on the work they are doing to address the influx of immigrant communities.

11. Scheduling of future agenda items, general information, and Board attendees at upcoming meetings and events including those set forth below.

(11a) Next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 27, 2019 at 6PM in the Lower Level City Council Chambers (57 E 1st St).

(11b) Hear reports on conferences and/or meetings attended.

Dr. Moon attended the MLK parade and festival and invited board members to attend the "Defamation Experience" on February 19th, 2019 at 4pm. Ms. Khalighi also gave a review of the MLK festival and some of the presenters. There was a news media clip shown to the board about the MLK parade and festival as well.

(11c) Take new board photo for website.

Board members took a new member photo for the website.

12. Hear reports on conferences and/or meeting attended.

Ms. Khalighi advised of the next Zen Nights event to be held on Friday, January 25th, 2019 at 6PM.

13. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34PM.

***Members of the audience may address the Board on any item. The Arizona Open Meeting Law (ARS § 38-431 et seq.) limits the Human Relations Advisory Board to discussing only those matters listed on the agenda and other matters related thereto.**

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Si necesita asistencia o traducción en español, favor de llamar al menos 48 horas antes de la reunión al 480-644-2767.