

PSCC “Bridging the Gap” Working Group Meeting Notes

March 17, 2009

Attendees: Mark B., Gabrielle G., Lisa S., Nora S., Sara B., Amy S., Ester M.-S., David May-Stein, Cora Wallace, Diane Condie, Constance O., Paul F.

DMS is reading “Courageous Conversations About Race” as part of his efforts to understand racial issues that may be affecting Colfax.

Constance is interested in exploring having the school bring in outside service providers to address academic achievement issues.

Funding is difficult for Colfax because it barely fails to qualify for Title I funding currently (Title I requires at least a 35% free-and-reduced lunch population, Colfax has 34.7% currently).

Amy and other parents are interested in exploring issues of exclusion and awareness. There are big issues to deal with at Colfax and we need to examine them as well as look at practical issues.

Mark is interested in setting up a system of volunteering which better organizes parent volunteers to perform specific tasks that are coordinated with the (for example, reading) lesson for that week. The program would be oriented initially toward reading and focused on grades K-2.

Lisa was interested in identifying students for possible volunteer intervention on the criterion of homework not being completed regularly.

Gabrielle & Lisa are interested in recruiting and focusing parents with grant-writing skills to apply for stimulus and/or other intervention money.

There was brainstorming about ways to engage parents.

There was discussion of one-to-one engagement at the child level, followed perhaps by one-to-one engagement with parents.

There was extensive conversation about how we reflect on our own prejudices and engage in conversations based upon the book “Courageous Conversations about Race.” More intensive discussion to follow at next working group meeting. Consensus developed about continuing broader conversation while continuing to work on more concrete steps to reduce gap.

Agenda for next week’s PSCC meeting, Thursday, March 26: 1) Report of this meeting; 2) School budget for next year; 3) Looping plans for next year; 4) Presentation on a possible on-premise childcare for next year.