

Chippewa Valley Schools African American Parent Network Meeting

October 21, 2021

Vision Statement: To build an inclusive and diverse environment where all students are encouraged, developed and prepared to compete globally; both socially and academically.

Mission Statement: To drive processes, programs and curriculum within the district that are aligned and inclusive of all students and will educate, empower and energize our community.

Administrative Chairs Present: E. Smith

Committee Members Present: T. Addison, J. Bailey, L Battles, L. Early, K. Elms

CVS Administration Present: H. Weaver, N. Faehner

Guests: 22 participants

A. Call to Order at 7:05 P.M.

1. Welcome – Edrena welcomed those present and opened the meeting.
2. Review of Minutes – Jade provided a brief summary of the meeting minutes from September.

B. Guest Speaker – Mr. Ron Robert, CVS Superintendent

Mr. Roberts introduced himself and provided some background information regarding how the AAPN came about from the district lens. There were some foundational beliefs that led up to the founding of the AAPN. In 2019, there was a Strategic Planning Committee made up of 75 people. They identified 3 goal areas: 1. curriculum and instruction, 2. technology, and 3. **culture**. In all goal areas, professional development is provided to train staff, inform parents, etc. Culture is connected to the mission of CVS schools which revolves around student achievement. In order for students to achieve, they need to feel connected and have a sense of belonging. As a result, CVS brought in Dr. Jay Marks who works for Oakland Schools. He led 6 sessions in the district with a focus on cultural diversity. Mr. Roberts mentioned that Mr. Weaver will be working with teachers on November 2nd during their teacher in-service day. Mr. Roberts concluded by opening the floor up to questions. (see Section H for the Q & A session)

C. Administrator's Reports

1. Report from the Diversity, Equity, and School Culture Consultant – Mr. Harry Weaver

Mr. Weaver shared the challenges of living in such a segregated area (metro Detroit). He answered some questions from the audience regarding what a typical day for him looks like. Another participant asked if he has any involvement with affinity groups based on the Spirit Week issues at Chippewa Valley H.S.

2. Report from the Director of State & Federal Programs and Outreach – Ms. Nicole Faehner

Ms. Faehner shared information regarding potential tutoring sessions as well as homework help. NHS advisors can be contacted if students need tutoring help from an NHS member.

D. Committee Reports

- 1. Committee Positions** – There is still one open position that needs to be filled.
 - Chair – Mrs. La'Trise Smith
 - Administrative Co-Chair – Mr. Shawn Shackleford
 - School Ambassador Chair – Ms. Edrena Smith
 - Social Media/Website Chair – Ms. Sarah Mannan
 - Educational Programming Co-Chairs – Mr. Darien Belcher Sr. and Mrs. Johnessa Belcher
 - Alumni Chair – Mrs. Jade Bailey
 - Special Education Co-Chairs – Ms. Lisa Battles and Ms. Kimberly Elms (provided info)
 - Secretary – Ms. Shameeka Ward
 - Website & Marketing Chair – Ms. Sarah Mannan
 - Events Committee Chair – Ms. Tammera Addison
 - Treasurer – Mrs. La'Shuna Early
 - Fundraising Chair – TBD; the position is currently still open
 - School Ambassadors

*Descriptions of open positions are available on the [website](#) as well as the AAPN FB group.

If you are interested in any open positions, please contact La'Trise at (586) 709-6630.

- 2. School Ambassador Program** – Edrena shared the need for additional School Ambassadors. Their next meeting is Wednesday, October 27th. The School Ambassadors will be visible at upcoming district events.

E. Discussion Items – NONE

F. What's New

1. Johnessa is taking orders for AAPN polo shirts. They are \$25 each.
2. Edrena has \$20 T-shirts and sweatshirts for the AAPN School Ambassadors to purchase.

G. What's Next

1. The next Town Hall Meeting will take place on Thursday, November 18th. You can still submit your suggestions for discussion topics on the AAPN page of the CVS website using the link: <https://www.chippewavalleyschools.org/for-parents/aapn-african-american-parent-network/>
2. **13th Annual Suicide Prevention Walk** Saturday, October 23rd at Dakota High School
3. **PEN (Parent Education Network)** is run by Michelle Harris
4. **Delta Sigma Theta Open House** for 9th - 12th grade girls on Saturday, October 30th (11-12:30)

*For more information, contact Johnessa Belcher at (586) 610-6010

5. **AAPN Town Hall Meeting** on Thursday, November 18th from 7:00 – 8:30
6. **AAPN Meet Up** on Saturday, November 27th (locations and times to be announced)

7. Upcoming CVS Board Meetings November 1st and November 13th at Chippewa Valley H.S.

8. Call to Action – Edrena shared various ways that parents can get involved.

H. Audience Participation – Participants asked Superintendent Roberts the following questions:

1. What is the district doing to recruit Black teachers?

Mr. Roberts shared that CVS does actively try to recruit Black colleges, including Wayne State University graduates. However, recruiting teachers in general is difficult right now due to the challenge of staff shortages, regardless of race or ethnicity.

2. Has CVS actively tried to recruit teachers from Black colleges?

Mr. Weaver chose to respond to this question. He shared that at the time of his interview in the fall of 2019, this was a question that he asked the interview panel. They are considering this.

3. What about recruiting Black nurses, counselors, secretaries, janitors, etc.?

Mr. Roberts mentioned that he understands the importance of students of color seeing Black people in various roles in the district. The struggle at this point is the shortage of workers.

4. Is there any diversity or equity training provided to the CVS staff?

Yes, part of Mr. Weaver's role is providing building level cultural diversity training. He also does professional development for larger groups in the district.

Q & A Session:

5. Is there a letter that can be shared to help with corporate fundraising for the AAPN?

Ms. Faehner shared that there is a letter which was drafted last year. It was suggested that the letter be shared with the AAPN membership by adding it to the website so it can be accessed.

6. Are there activities or programs geared towards K-5 students?

Ms. Faehner shared the following list: March is Reading Month and "From Thoughts to Poetry", African American History Month, etc.

There are many activities and programs planned through the month of May. However, those dates are not yet confirmed. A calendar will be available once plans are finalized.

I. Adjournment

1. The meeting ended with closing remarks from Edrena. She reminded those present that there are many ways for them to get involved and show their support for the AAPN.

2. The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted by Jade Bailey (on behalf of AAPN Secretary Shameeka Ward)