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MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Board
FROM: Rebecca Feiden, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Proposal for Initial Steps to Elevate our Focus on Equity
DATE: August 28, 2020

Background

At the July 24, 2020 SPCSA Board Meeting, the Authority discussed actions that the SPCSA can take to support schools in their efforts to serve all students equitably and uphold the SPCSA's values of equity and diversity. During this meeting, numerous suggestions were shared by board members. While I expect that elevating our focus on equity will be an ongoing effort, I am proposing several initial steps that the Authority and SPCSA staff can take.

Proposal of Initial Steps to Elevate our Focus on Equity

Site Evaluations

- To ensure a holistic view of the school, the SPCSA will work with the school to ensure that focus groups are representative of the student population and include a statement to this effect in the Site Evaluation Handbook.
- To enable candid conversations about equity, as part of the Presentation portion of the Site Evaluation, schools will be asked to discuss efforts to embed culturally responsive practices into academic and organizational policy and procedure.

New School and Amendment Applications

- The SPCSA will revise application templates to include questions that directly ask about efforts to close opportunity gaps and address disproportionate discipline practices,

including the use of restorative justice practices. For applicants that already operate a school, the application will ask for academic and discipline data by subgroup. In addition, the application templates will continue to include questions on family and community engagement practices and SPSCA staff will convey the importance of this work in applicant trainings.

Renewal Application

- The SPSCA has revised the Renewal Application to include questions on restorative justice practices, plans to monitor for potential disproportionate discipline practices, and plans to address any opportunity gaps for specific student groups.

Annual Presentation on SPSCA Data

- Presentations to the Authority on student academic performance will include a heightened focus on understanding performance by student group. In addition, the SPSCA will present data on discipline by student group.

Focus on Schools

- This year's Focus on Schools series at board meetings will be dedicated to hearing from schools about how they are directly addressing issues of equity, including any specific efforts to combat systemic racism.

Growth Management Plan Working Group

- As the SPSCA reconvenes this working group, we will solicit input about how we can work with organizations across our state to elevate our focus on equity.