

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
Wilmette Public Schools**

INFORMATION ITEM

Date: August 29, 2016

To: Members, Board of Education

From: Raymond E. Lechner, Ph.D.

Subject: Response to the Community Review Committee (CRC) Report

BACKGROUND

The Community Review Committee (CRC), a subcommittee of the Board of Education, draws participation from District 39 parents, community members, teachers, and administrators. Each spring, this committee generates a report on a topic of community interest, resulting in implementation recommendations supported by research, thinking, and discourse. The Superintendent and the administrative team review and consider the CRC documents. In August, the Superintendent presents a formal response regarding implementation of CRC recommendations. This year's CRC report, "A Year of Reflection," was an audit of its own form and function.

SUMMARY OF THE CRC AUDIT PROCESS

For more than four decades, the Community Review Committee has united stakeholders around an expansive set of initiatives and supported transformative growth of District 39's mission. The members focused on identifying sound qualities of a report and determining the role and structure of the CRC that best serves District 39. Reflective discourse was guided by the following essential questions:

- What is the purpose of the CRC?
- Has the CRC conducted its business effectively?
- How should the CRC select its research topics?
- What are the best practices of a research report?
- Does the CRC have a protocol for self-assessment?

From approximately 130 reports, three were selected as a representative sample of the disparate forms:

- 2004 - 2005 Teaching Tomorrow's Leaders: Creative Learning Environments
- 2005 - 2006 Gender Similarities & Differences in Learning, Development, & Performance
- 2008 - 2009 Green Schools

Subcommittees selected a report and followed a three-step evaluation. The process involved the use of an audit rubric to evaluate quality of reports, key stakeholder interviews, and an extensive review of Board of Education minutes, superintendent reports, school improvement plans, and other relevant documents. As a result of this work and the reflective discourse on the essential questions, the Community Review Committee (CRC) proposed recommendations.

SUPERINTENDENT'S RESPONSE TO THE CRC

The Superintendent reviewed the current CRC report and noted two completed actions along with three recommendations.

Actions

- The Community Review Committee refined the purpose statement with more concise language. The members confirmed its advisory capacity to the Board of Education through this refinement. The revised purpose statement is as follows:

The purpose of the CRC is to advise the Board on specific strategies that help fulfill District 39's mission. The CRC generally will select and research one topic of focus each year among suggestions solicited from District 39's Board of Education, faculty, staff, community, and CRC members. The CRC will also periodically audit past reports to assess implementation of recommendations by the Board. The CRC will present a formal report of its work and recommendations annually to the Board.

- The CRC created a report template, monthly workflow, and established a reporting cycle including audits.

Recommendations

- The CRC recommended continuation of the one-year cycle of research and report. However, the CRC *may* recommend to the Board of Education a multi-year review cycle, if needed based on given topic.

- The CRC recommended a three-year audit cycle to determine the impact of previous reports. An auditing protocol and rubric were established.
- The CRC has requested that the 2016-2017 CRC “road test” these recommendations as they return to the traditional CRC focus of advising the Board of Education on specific strategies to support the District’s mission.

The Superintendent and administration supports these recommendations and agrees that this work will guide future Community Review Committees toward a more focused, productive, and impactful endeavor. The reflective approach taken in improving the committee’s form and function is one to be admired, respected and repeated by other District 39 committees.

CONCLUSION

The Superintendent and the administrative team commends the 2015 - 2016 Community Review Committee members for the comprehensive work involved in the audit of the committee’s form and function. The Superintendent values and appreciates all the years of CRC’s valuable research as it contributes to the strategic planning process and ensures that District 39 remain current in best practices. District 39 continues to support the work of the committee and looks forward to future reports.

Respectfully submitted for presentation to the Board of Education,



Raymond E. Lechner, Ph.D., Superintendent