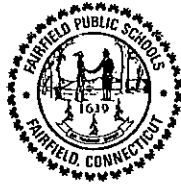


FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

David G. Title, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



Phone (203) 255-8372
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The Education Center

September 20, 2010

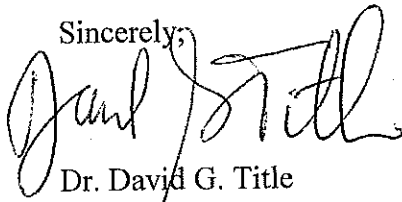
Dr. Mark K. McQuillan
Commissioner of Education
State Department of Education
P.O. Box 2219
Hartford, CT 06145-2219

Dear Commission McQuillan:

The Fairfield Public Schools is in receipt of your letter of April 12, 2010 identifying McKinley Elementary School as being racially imbalanced. Attached you will find the 2010 Addendum to Fairfield Public Schools' Plan to Address Racial Imbalance (approved by the Board of Education on August 14, 2007) in response to your requirement to submit an amended plan which addresses the racial imbalance at McKinley Elementary School. The 2010 Addendum was approved by the Fairfield Board of Education on September 14, 2010. Although racial imbalance statistics showed a downward trend for years 2007 and 2008, the racial imbalance spiked back up in 2009. We believe the action steps outlined in the 2010 Addendum will address the racial imbalance that we are currently experiencing at the elementary school level.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the 2010 Addendum. We look forward to hearing back from you with the Connecticut State Board of Education's vote on this addendum.

Sincerely,



Dr. David G. Title

Fairfield Public Schools

2010 Addendum to the Plan to Address Racial Imbalance September 2010

On October 3, 2007, the State Board of Education approved Fairfield's plan designed to reduce racial imbalance at McKinley Elementary School. Two key components were outlined in that plan: (1) take immediate steps that would lead to a corrective effect on the racial imbalance numbers; and (2) establish a broad-based community planning task force. The implementation of the two components have yielded many results including but not limited to:

- Offering McKinley students an option to Opt-Out to a limited number of elementary schools (based on space availability);
- Offering to other elementary students the option to Opt-In to McKinley Elementary;
- The establishment of the Cultural Diversity Task Force;
- Distribution of a parent survey related to interests and feedback on specialized programming that may attract families to Opt-In to McKinley;
- The establishment of a second preschool at Burr Elementary School;
- A five-year strategic plan addressing diversity as one of six major areas of focus in the district; and
- Regular analysis of racial imbalance statistics and student achievement results.

As represented in the chart below, the trend of the racial imbalance statistics at McKinley Elementary School experienced a decline in 2007 and 2008.

Year	Absolute Racial Imbalance at McKinley
2000	14.92%
2001	18.05%
2002	19.82%
2003	20.21%
2004	22.97%
2005	22.22%
2006	28.74%
2007	27.40%
2008	25.45%
2009	28.70%

Based on an analysis of racial statistics across the district, we have found that although the school district is becoming more diverse in general, the rate of increase of a population with diverse backgrounds at McKinley is growing faster than at other schools. Therefore, after consideration of these statistics along with the district's previous efforts to reduce racial imbalance, the Fairfield Board of Education recommends the following future actions in further efforts to reduce racial imbalance at McKinley Elementary School.

1. Expand Opt-In to McKinley Elementary School to all Fairfield elementary students

In the Fairfield Public School's Plan to Address Racial Imbalance initial steps are outlined for the offering of Opt-In to McKinley Elementary to students at designated elementary schools (Component 1:D4b as found on page 7 in the plan). For the 2010-2011 school year, this offering will be expanded to allow *all* students at the other ten elementary schools to Opt-In to McKinley. Transportation will be provided to students to and from school. In an effort to get the word out, central office administrators and the McKinley Elementary School principal attended a PTA meeting at all elementary schools in the spring of 2010. A presentation was made about McKinley and parents had an opportunity to attend an Open House specifically designated for Opt-In. Additionally, all local area preschools were provided information which was followed up with a phone call reminding them that Opt-In was available to all incoming kindergarteners for the 2010-2011 school year.

2. Expand Opt-Out of McKinley Elementary

For the 2010-2011 school year, McKinley Elementary School students will have the option to attend one out of four other elementary schools in Fairfield. In previous years, students were offered an option of three schools. These decisions are made based on space availability at each school. Students who Opt-Out of McKinley are offered transportation to and from school.

3. Request technical assistance from the Connecticut State Department of Education

During the 2010-2011 school year, the Fairfield Board of Education will request the Connecticut State Department of Education to provide additional assistance in order to plan future action steps in an effort to reduce racial imbalance.

4. In collaboration with the William Casper Graustein Memorial Foundation, conduct a community conversation on diversity

Since 1997 Connecticut citizens have come together in community-wide conversations to discuss educational issues of importance to them thanks to funds provided by the William Casper Graustein Memorial Foundation. Last year, McKinley applied for and received a grant through this foundation in order to conduct a community conversation on the topic of diversity in the town of Fairfield. The conversation will include various stakeholders in the town and will be held during the 2010-2011 school year.

5. Charge the Cultural Diversity Task Force to analyze the conditions contributing to imbalance

The Cultural Diversity Task Force will further investigate the conditions in the town of Fairfield that contribute to the racial imbalance at McKinley Elementary School and

report these to the Fairfield Board of Education to consider when developing future action plans.

6. Re-administer a parent survey and conduct focus groups to identify what parents would like in a magnet school or program

Although a parent survey was developed and administered in 2008, an additional survey will be administered during the 2010-2011 school year. This effort will attempt to improve the participation rate of families, seek more specific information from families about programs of interest and solicit feedback about current efforts to reduce racial imbalance. Efforts will be made to get feedback from parents in small group forums held throughout the district as well.

7. Make a presentation to PTA Council with options and receive feedback

As follow up to conducting a survey and talking with families in small group forums, a presentation will be made to PTA Council which is composed of the leadership of all school PTA groups throughout the district.