

UNITARY STATUS ADVISORY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
2011-12 ANNUAL REPORT

A Settlement Agreement between a class of Plaintiffs and Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) was signed on October 12, 2010 ending desegregation litigation which had lasted for almost 40 years and provided a framework for further obligations by the Orange County School Board. As part of the agreement three areas were identified that needed further monitoring including: recruitment of OCPS personnel; disclosure of extracurricular activities for middle schools and high schools; and the construction, renovation, replacements, closing and utilization of OCPS facilities, including portables.

As a result of the Settlement Agreement, the School Board of Orange County Florida adopted Policy BDF, Unitary Status Advisory and Oversight Committee (USAOC), which outlines the committee composition, the election of a Chair and Vice-Chair, terms of service, purpose and annual reporting. OCPS Policy JJ, Extracurricular Activities was amended and Policy GCE, Recruitment and Retention of a Diverse Employment Staff was developed to include information supporting the Settlement Agreement.

The USAOC is comprised of one representative appointed by each School Board Member. Four meetings of the USAOC were held on October 19, 2011, January 23, March 1 and May 14, 2012. Since this was the first year of monitoring and reporting under the Settlement Agreement, the meetings were designed to be informational and educational. At its first meeting on October 19, 2011, the USAOC elected Kran Riley as its Chair, and Marlin Daniels as its Vice-Chair. OCPS General Counsel then reviewed Sunshine Laws and District Policies with the committee during this organizational meeting.

At the meetings that followed, one of each of the areas identified for further monitoring by the Settlement Agreement was discussed in detail. Notebooks containing reports and other supporting documentation on recruitment, extracurricular activities and facilities were distributed for each USAOC member. Those same resources were posted on the OCPS website.

At the January 23, 2012 meeting, the 2011-12 Annual Recruitment Report was provided to USAOC members. The Recruitment Report indicated there should be a continuance of the employment of a staff reflecting broad diversity of backgrounds and experiences. It was suggested that hiring authorities from departments or learning communities are part of the recruiting team allowing a wide diversity of applicants to be reviewed. In the areas of administration, it was recommended that within Professional

Development Services the Management Leadership Academy and Aspiring Leaders Program target and mentor Hispanic/Latino and African American candidates for application into promotional pools.

At the March 1, 2012 meeting, the 2011-12 Annual Report of Extracurricular Activities was presented. The Extracurricular Activities Report displayed a sample of the online and hard copy information collected from each middle and high school. A full collection from each school may be found in the office of the Senior Executive Director, School Support Services. Recommendations for the monitoring of extracurricular activities in the future include collections of web matrices after every grading period, written lists of activities that should be submitted at the beginning of the school year and at the end of the first semester, and written lists to incorporate some form of a newsletter or other communication with an explanation from administration.

At the May 14, 2012 USAOC meeting, the third monitoring report for the 2011-12 school year was provided regarding facilities. The report was a PowerPoint presentation indicating the schools completed, under construction, in design, in planning and those not funded. The presentation focused on those schools which are identified in the Settlement Agreement. A tracking log was shared indicating where each school addressed in the Settlement Agreement was in the facilities process. Eleven schools which were not named in the Settlement Agreement and are currently in the planning phase were also discussed in relationship to the terms of the Agreement.

Additional steps for compliance have also been undertaken by the Office for Legal Services. On May 12, 2011 and again on January 12, 2012, attorneys within the Offices of Legal Services met with school principals in each learning community to discuss the Settlement Agreement expectations and the monitoring which would take place to assure Orange County Public Schools continues to maintain its unitary status. The USAOC has also been apprised of the efforts by the legal office to monitor and ensure compliance.

The Unitary Status Advisory and Oversight Committee has reviewed this report and the recommendations herein, and all reports and relevant documents have also been shared with the Orange County School Board.