BARRINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Barrington Public School Administration Building

School Committee Room

283 County Road, Barrington, RI

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity Subcommittee

Minutes

May 21, 2019

6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Present: Gina Bae, Victoria Criado, Paula Dillon, Kelly Kaon, Doug Lane, Erika Sevetson, Stacey Siravo-Basin, Venus Tian, Ece Uzun

Absent: Cyara Cooper, Tracey McGee, Diana Siliezar, Nicole Varone

Community Attendees: Patricia Poitevien-Leblanc

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Old Business
   1. The group discussed and approved the meeting minutes from the previous meeting.
3. New Business
   1. Community Member Introduction and Overview
      1. Patricia Poitevien-Leblanc, a parent and community member, joined the meeting after being made aware of the subcommittee by Paula.
      2. Patricia introduced herself to the group, and Paula provided an overview of the subcommittee’s background and activities to date.
   2. Empowering Educators of Color Conference Recap
      1. Gina provided a recap of the conference, which was hosted by RI Coalition for Educators of Color.
      2. Highlights included:
         1. Keynote presentation by Dr. Raul Fernandez that covered topics such as universal design (i.e., creating systems that are accessible to everyone) versus accommodation.
         2. Breakout session by Shana White of Georgia Tech that focused on moving from diversity to inclusion.
         3. Breakout session by Melinda Lopez of Highlander Institute focused on managing difficult conversations.
      3. Gina suggested encouraging faculty and staff members of color to attend next year.
   3. Training for School Committee on Implicit Bias
      1. Paula mentioned that Theresa Moore had conducted training for the administration team with a focus on intent versus impact.
      2. Gina proposed the idea of partnering with the Town Council to extend this to School Committee and Town Council members.
      3. Action Step: Paula and Gina will add this topic to the agenda for the upcoming School Committee summer workshop / retreat.
   4. Addressing Concerns / Reports of Bias and Potential Discrimination
      1. Erica noted that a conversation with a parent prompted her to raise the topic.
      2. Paula described the current process for detailing with policy violations, and the group discussed various aspects.
      3. Members of the group shared personal experiences in this area.
      4. Key takeaways from the discussion:
         1. There are formal processes in place at both the school and administration levels.
         2. Paula is coaching principals on response times, expectations setting, and avoiding items falling through the cracks during vacation weeks, etc.
         3. Confidentiality requirements often limit how much detail can be shared, which sometimes leaves reporting parties dissatisfied.
         4. Erica and Patricia suggested a more formal follow up process that reiterates to the reporting party that they were heard and checks to see whether they doing well (even if confidentiality limits further information sharing about outcomes).
   5. SMART Goals
      1. The group discussed the need to develop SMART goals for the upcoming school year.
      2. Goals must be limited to 3 items that can be addressed in detail across 6 buildings during a 9-month school year.
      3. Following a suggestion by Paula, the group agreed that at least one SMART goal will pertain to policy reviews and updates.
         1. Paula mentioned that the current non-discrimination policy is not compliance with Title IX and that an updated version will be discussed by the School Committee policy sub-committee.
      4. Action Step: The group will brainstorm possible SMART goals and submit any proposals before or at the next meeting.
   6. Subcommittee Meeting Logistic and Membership
      1. The group agreed to hold an additional meeting on June 18 to complete the SMART goal work.
      2. Since the subcommittee is still early in its existence and gaining momentum, active DEI subcommittee members were invited to continue next year if interested.
      3. As there is a parent vacancy available, the group encouraged Patricia to join the subcommittee if interested and able, and she expressed positive interest.
4. Public Comment
   1. Patricia Poitevien-Leblanc actively participated in the group discussions recapped above.