

Diversity Advisory Committee Minutes
May 19, 2015

Welcome and introductions - Tahmina Watson and Simmi Kher to our committee.

Dr. Plano shared an article *Are You Racist? The Science is beginning to unmask the bigot in your brain* by Curtis Mooney. Following collaborative discussions with the Mercer Island Parent Edge group, the article was shared with Dr. Plano. Dr. Plano and the Parent Edge group also by the Mercer Island Parent Edge group also discussed co-sponsoring a race related speaker to the island.

Dr. Plano shared his debrief about an event recently attended by three DAC members. Dr. Plano, Rev. Wayne Perryman, and Ivy Suzuki-Jaecks attended a meeting titled: Achieving Racial Equity Through Policy and Beyond. Coming out of that meeting, the group discussed bringing in a speaker for staff on the October Professional Development Release Day. Dr. Plano also shared that a School Board Policy would be introduced to the School Board in order to help monitor progress over time.

Ruth shared her perspective on how the perception of racism has changed over time and that parents need support and education on what is "typical" or "normal" behavior among children versus what could be perceived as racism. Eunyong and Sophy also contributed comments about the difficulty of breaking into groups within the community, especially for new and immigrant families. Mark shared that similar discussions have been taking place with the Instructional Leadership Team, in particular, that all families struggle to gain access to sub groups in this community and sometimes it is perceived as being due to race.

Dr. Plano shared some piercingly insightful 5th grade poetry that Island Park students recently wrote about the way they are perceived. The DAC was very impressed and touched by the writings and felt that they should be shared more broadly.

Dr. Plano went on to share the updated School Commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. He shared that the building leadership group had made some minor improvements to the document and have been very supportive of this work. Dr. Plano described how several pieces were coalescing to build both the idea and vision that DAC has been building. The group shared their insights and thoughts on the commitment document and a couple of improvements were made. The group approved the document so that the buildings could begin to establish the building level initiatives needed to complete the document for each building.

The committee further discussed how to attract and bring appropriate attention to having Pedro Noguera speak in the community to both parents and staff.

We also discussed adding a June meeting as an evening meeting. The committee was open to this and would schedule over the next couple of weeks.