

Diversity Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

May 6, 2016

Dr. Plano welcomed everyone to the Diversity Advisory Committee (DAC) meeting, including the representatives of the School-Based Diversity Action Teams. Dr. Plano reviewed the agenda with the group.

This was followed by the members watching a Ted Talk by Angela Duckworth – [Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance](#). There was discussion on growth mindset and motivating teachers to come out of the fixed mindset. Discussion included comments about how kids who know that failure is not permanent are likely to persevere, and how learning from each other, sharing best practices and spreading them throughout the district would be the way to go forward.

Review of Changes in Instructional Practice

Dr. Plano sought clarification regarding several of the draft suggestions and will clarify those in a document to be shared with the DAC at its first meeting in the fall of 2016.

School-based Diversity Teams

Representatives of the school-based Diversity Action Teams shared information about their respective activities regarding diversity.

Lakeridge Elementary School

- The staff has been studying some articles together. Simple interventions boost esteem, something as simple as, study of white and black students writing down values.
- Professional development about engaging all teachers has taken place.
 - Teaching kids to share using “pair share,” etc., e.g. agree and disagree.
 - Making thinking visible – strategies for teachers, making sure they are reaching every student.
- Taproot theater came and presented on bullying.
- A Project ‘We are same and different’ is being undertaken at school level.
- Ben Ibale’s training for staff on May 18 will focus on implicit biases.

Island Park Elementary School

- Taproot Theater came and presented on bullying about a little boy who talked about empathy.
- Ben Ibale did his training on cultural competence, showing how different we are.
- Working on diversity mural which is nearly complete.
- ‘The reason I jump’ – this will be the book for the book study next school year.
- Reading ‘Beyond Measure’ as a school team by Vicki Abelis.

West Mercer Elementary School

- All staff meeting hosted by the Diversity team last week which focused on ‘five ways to become an Ally.’
- Ben Ibale’s training for staff will focus on implicit biases on May 11.
- Creating a welcome system for new parents and students at West Mercer so that every new parent and student have a wonderful experience.
- Working on a Jigsaw at the school; all working together to become more humane.

Mercer Island High School

- In March the diversity action team did three activities on privilege. This caused:
 - Uncomfortable and discomfort leading to growth
 - Pushed out and dropped out activity
 - Student profile around equity
- The process of reflecting on the year has started, and we have had some tough conversations.
- Last BRIDGES lesson the diversity team came up with a lesson on the deaf community.
- The diversity action team is working on the plan for next three years.

Islander Middle School

- The school has had lots of staff and student training on diversity.
- A proactive and culturally competent group for next year.
- Starting the school next year in more welcoming mode for students and parents.
- The middle school would like to team with high school, so that high school students can mentor middle school students and they in turn can mentor elementary students.
- Next school year we would like to focus on more parent involvement and education.
- Include more student voice, the school is starting a social justice class, and a social justice club as an after school activity.

New Family Event

The District will plan its Welcome New Families Event sometime in the fall, likely in October again. It was suggested to invite community partners like the Boys and Girls Club, PTA’s and the Mercer Island Schools Foundation (MISF) to this event. The school-based diversity action teams will continue to plan their own welcome events next academic year. Dr. Plano invited members of the DAC to help plan next fall’s all-district Welcome Event. Several DAC members responded and a doodle poll will be sent out to find a suitable time for a June meeting.

Setting Dates and Membership

The meeting ended with a discussion about next year’s times and dates for meetings. Dr. Plano will send out a Doodle Poll to help identify times/dates for meetings next fall. Regarding membership on the Committee, he plans to publicize seats on the DAC for next fall. He noted

that some members attended one or no meetings this year. He will come with a draft document to gather DAC input on how membership might look in the future.

Dr. Plano thanked the committee for their time and commitment to our collective efforts for improving the quality of our education. He wished everyone a pleasant summer.

Present: David D'Souza, Sophy Yang, Julie Ogata Ciobanu, Ivy Suzuki-Jaecks, Erin Battersby, Mark Roschy, Alex Hart, Robin Wilt, Dr. Gary Plano, Wayne Perryman, Simmi Kher, Aisha Jumaan, Jenny McAlaine, Tiffany Savoy-Vindell, Aimee Batliner-Gillette, David Hoffman, Nina Kitchen, Karen Glantz-Salesky, Kathy Bledsoe, Erica Hill and Kathy Shaner.

Absent: Eunyoung Kim, Ana Simoes, Qian Wang, Ruth Saunders, Jolene Cook, Tahmina Watson, Steve Pellerine, Ed Holmes, Kimberly Frederick.