Update on Equity & Inclusion Work in Region 15

Dr. Carrie Chiappetta
Assistant Superintendent
Board of Education
May 10, 2021
This Evening’s Agenda

1. History of the Equity and Inclusion Work in Region 15
   a. How/Why it Started
2. The Work This Year
   a. TIR Position & Examples
   b. Global Citizenship & Character Advisory Committee ➔ Equity & Inclusion Council
3. Why This Work is Important
4. “Thank You” to the E&I Council Members 🙏
History of the Work
Reason for the Initial Committee

The *Global Citizenship & Character Advisory Committee* was established during the 2017-2018 school year.

- Isolated events affecting some students over past years
- 21st century learning expectations
- Population/Demographics Changes in R15

Started out with a committee of 20 members
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>October 2007</th>
<th>October 2020</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.24%</td>
<td>0.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latinx</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.14%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 or More Races</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.82%</strong></td>
<td><strong>16.85%</strong></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>October 2007</th>
<th>October 2020</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learners</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free/Reduced Lunch</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
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Four Areas of Focus

To ensure that students:

- feel welcome in the schools
- are safe in the schools
- have opportunities to participate
- have opportunities to learn

Development of a Three-Year Plan
With Goals and Action Steps
Advisory Committee 3 Goals:

1. To nurture, **in students**, lifelong respect and compassion for themselves and other human beings regardless of *race, ethnic origin, gender, social class, disability, religion, appearance, or sexual orientation*.

2. To nurture, **in staff**, lifelong respect and compassion for themselves and other human beings regardless of *race, ethnic origin, gender, social class, disability, religion, appearance, or sexual orientation*.

3. To revise curriculum to reflect a broad range of knowledge and information which illustrates varied and diverse contributions to history, the arts, science, mathematics, and literature.
A Few Examples of the Work From 2017-2020

- Anti-Bias Training for select staff
- Evening presentation on the importance of multiculturalism
- Initial meetings with community members
- Restorative Practices Training for Elementary/MS staff
- RULER Training for some schools
- “Becoming an Ally” Training for MS students
- MS Presentation on Bias
- Numerous conferences, training on Equity, Inclusion, Bias
- Training on Bias for R15 Administrators
- Revision of curriculum/creation of courses at HS
- “Strengthening the Bonds of Our Community” meetings
Timeline Up Until Last Spring

- **2017-18**
  - Establishment of Global Citizen & Character Advisory Committee

- **Fall 2019**
  - Idea for the Teacher in Residence for Cultural Competency & Diversity

- **April 2020**
  - Late April, R15 Budget Approved

- **May 2020**
  - 3rd Week In May: Interview and selection of Teacher in Residence
  - May 25, 2020: Death of George Floyd
My name is __________, and I am a Pomperaug High School Class of 2016 alumna.

I am extremely grateful for the education that Region 15 School has given me. However, I feel it failed to teach me and the rest of my community about racism, intersectionality, and privilege in the United States.

I am writing to you to demand the implementation of programs that promote race-awareness learning and anti-racism in our school district, including:

1. Add diversity, compassion, and anti-racism to the core curriculum of the Region 15 School district as a course or otherwise
2. Increase diversity training for and the diversity of teaching staff, administration, and disciplinary figures
3. Hold students who say or do discriminatory or offensive things accountable for their actions

Please do your part in creating a better educated, more compassionate community.
Teacher in Residence for Cultural Competency & Diversity
Role of TIR

- Assists teachers in Grades PK-12 in developing their cultural competence and also in developing/delivering lessons through this lens
- Assists curriculum committees in the design and development of curriculum so that it is inclusive and addresses diversity
- Assists with the overall training of diversity initiatives and programs and develops strategies for improvement
- Assists in the planning of the Advisory Committee on Global Citizenship & Character and the “Strengthening the Bonds of Our Community” meetings
- Develops ways to foster community participation/support for the work
- Acts as a resource to classroom teachers in the implementation of cultural competence within the classroom
- Works with teachers individually by school, by grade level, by department, or as a entire group to provide practical supports, strategies, and instruction on inclusivity
TIR Work: At A Glance

- Classroom collaborations:
  - 66 staff members
  - 108 classrooms
    - Multiple collaborations throughout the school year with many of these classrooms
    - If 20 students were in each class, approx. 2,160 students

- Professional development sessions with > 300 staff members

- 657 total engagements to date
Staff Professional Development Examples

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) New Hire Series
- Anti-Bias & Anti-Racism 5-Part Series: All paraprofessionals, secretaries, general assistants
- Music Department: DEI in Music Education, Diversity in Secondary Music
- Math, Science, & Equity Department Meeting Sessions: 2 with each middle school & high school department, total 8 sessions
- Representation Matters: Inclusivity in Read Alouds & Mentor Texts: Elementary Classroom Teachers
- Pop-up professional learning sessions on Wednesday ½ days
- Gender Inclusivity: PHS PE department, Inclusive Health & Puberty in Education Practices Grades 6-12 PE
High School Collaboration Example

10th Grade, US History & Grade 4, Social Issues Book Clubs (ELA)
Middle School: Classroom Collaboration Example

Global Communications

Article 26, Right to education:

1) You have the right to go to school. Primary schooling should be free and required. You should be able to learn a profession or continue your studies as far as you can.

2) At school, you should be able to develop all your talents and learn to respect others, whatever their race, religion or nationality.

3) Your parents should have a say in the kind of education you receive.
“When I was younger, I never understood that every place is different and everyone is different. I mostly thought that kids can always have the access to go to school and learn but, growing up I've realized I am very fortunate to be able to do school everyday and learn. I also would take things for granted and now from experience I've learned never take anything for granted, be grateful but you can’t count on everything always being there.”

“I value education but I don't value it enough because there are some children in the world that don't have the opportunity to have a education, so I think I should be more grateful that I have access to education.”

“I just would like to let you know I really enjoy your class. I was talking to my mom about it and it made me realize how much I want to be a public speaker and help people all around the world with global issues.”
Elementary Collaboration Example

No one is born knowing math and no one is born lacking the ability to do math.

Scientific evidence suggests the difference between those who succeed and those who don’t is not the brain they are born with…

- but their approach to life,
- the messages they receive about their potential,
- And the opportunities they have to learn.
Global Citizenship Becomes Equity & Inclusion Council
Region 15 Theories of Action

* Particularly ToA 1 & 3

Engagement and Achievement
Trust, Collaboration, Communication, and Transparency
Welcoming and Inclusive
Post High School Preparation

Creating coherence to foster school improvement and student success
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Region 15</th>
<th>Theories of Action</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. If we foster schools that are welcoming and inclusive to all students, then students will feel valued and they will be better able to access their learning.</td>
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<td>2. If we improve our ability to align assessments to curriculum, improve our data culture, and increase our analysis of student learning, then we will be more equipped to provide meaningful student engagement and increased achievement.</td>
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<td>3. If we embrace communication, transparency, and collaborative relationships within ourselves and the community then we will improve trust and participation in supporting our students.</td>
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<td>4. If we increase and promote access to career pathways, curriculum, and shared instructional experiences then our district will prepare students for the world they will enter after their time with us.</td>
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Diversity

Includes: race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, size, socioeconomic status, ability, language, etc.

Equity

Truly inviting all; ensure all are & feel welcomed; participating fully in decision making & development of organization

Inclusivity

Promoting just and fair inclusion, and creating conditions in which everyone can participate, prosper, and thrive

(National Equity Project, 2020; NCCJ, 2021)
Cultural Competence: ability to understand and effectively be in community with people across cultures.
Updated Goals

1. For Region 15 students
2. For Region 15 staff
3. For members of the Middlebury and Southbury communities

to respect and have compassion for all aspects of diversity: race, ethnicity, gender, social class, ability, religion, appearance, and sexual orientation.
Some Work THIS YEAR by the E&I Council

- STEM Panel
- Tribury Reads
- PHS Embrace Diversity Club
- PHS Freshmen Meeting for BIPOC
- MS Ally Training
- Pilot of HS mentoring program at 1 elementary school
- DEI Training for R15 New Hires
- Multiple Training Sessions for R15 support staff, PK-12
- Teacher Residency Program
- E&I Monthly Newsletters

- Posters hung in MS/HS Bathrooms explaining where students can get help (worked w/SMART)
- Print, bind, laminate book from a HS students & provide copy to all elementary schools
- Developed interview questions related to equity & inclusion for admins and R15 staff
- E&I Website (coming soon)
Middlebury and Southbury Equity & Inclusion Council

DIVERSITY INCLUSION

Our Mission: For members of the Middlebury and Southbury communities, encompassing our students and staff in Region 15 Schools as well as our neighbors, to inspire, respect and encourage compassion for all aspects of diversity: race, ethnicity, gender, social class, ability, religion, appearance, and sexual orientation.
Why is This Work Important?
● Safety/Mental Health:
  ○ “Hurt Kids Hurt Kids…” and then grow up into adults
    ■ Article: How Bullied Children Grow Into Wounded Adults
● Colleges and Universities
  ○ Some admission essays have students write about the importance of diversity and inclusion
  ○ Requiring training related to diversity for their leadership, faculty, staff, and students and some require students to take a certain class/classes
Economic
* Companies:
  - Ensuring the representation of diverse talent
  - Strengthening leadership & accountability for inclusion and diversity
  - Ensuring equality of opportunity through fairness and transparency
  - Promote openness and tackle microaggressions
  - Foster belonging through unequivocal support for multivariate diversity
    - Investing millions of dollars in training their employees in cultural competency
    - Taking actions to strengthen both inclusion and diversity

According to the McKinsey Report, “Companies in the top quartile for both gender and ethnic diversity are 12% more likely to outperform all other companies in the data set” (p. 24).

We heard from 2016 R15 graduates who said they entered a diverse world that they were not ready for.

We all owe it to the students to prepare them for the world they enter.
Diversity is a fact.
Equity is a choice.
Inclusion is an action.
Belonging is an outcome.

-Arthur Chan
In Closing...
Eight Steps To Successful Change
- John Kotter

- Establish a sense of urgency
- Create a guiding coalition
- Develop a clear shared vision
- Communicate the vision
- Empower people to act on the vision
- Create short term wins
- Consolidate & build on the gains
- Institutionalise the change
Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

— Margaret Mead