

**Equity and Inclusion Council Minutes**  
**Tuesday, March 16, 2021, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.**

Agenda:

*Continued Conversation of Hiring in Region 15*

*I. Welcome*

*II. Celebrations: Lifting Up Recent Examples of Work*

- Grade 8 ELA Unit: Power Perspective & Positioning Unit - Dr. Erin Birden  
An English Language Arts unit currently taught in Region 15 that asks students to read texts and analyze the roles of and relationships between power, perspectives and positioning. This was a culminating project at MMS. Shared the 'wordles' and posters the students created.
- STEM Professionals Panel: March 25, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.  
The community is invited to attend a STEM Professionals Panel that includes professionals from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds who will share their perspectives and STEM career paths. All panelists are Region 15 parents. Moderators include: Scott Grant, E&I Council Member and PHS alum and Ava Sedensky, current PHS student and Embrace Diversity Club member. Event will be recorded. To register:  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_YL6tWsieT5OgMuUGQJdFHW](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_YL6tWsieT5OgMuUGQJdFHW)

*III. Updates from the Last Meeting*

- EmbraceRace.org Seminar - Managing Racial Stress and Teaching kids to do the same, Report from Deb McCloghry. Shared information from the seminar re: what is racial stress and resultant physical and emotional impact and how to cope. Emphasis on the importance of self-care to then provide better care to those around us.
- NEMNET: Dr. Carrie Chiappetta shared NEMNET as a resource to assist schools in retention and recruitment in teachers and administrators; Region 15 administrative opening at Pomperaug Elementary School has been shared.
- RMS Wall of Gratitude: March is Gratitude month - Students at Rochambeau Middle School shared what they are grateful for and directed to not include material items. All learners, remote and current in-person students, and staff members wrote what they were grateful for and responses were shared at the school.
- Tribury Reads Together: First book has been selected for the first discussion following 45 responses to the



initial poll. For Adults: [Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood](#), by Trevor Noah; and for Youth: [It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood](#), by Trevor Noah. Currently creating discussion guides for families and groups. Additional information is available on their website: <https://sites.google.com/view/triburyreadstogether/home>

- Equity in Math & Science: Secondary Math & Science Departments, Grades 6-12, RMS, MMS, PHS, Planning in collaboration with: 4 Instructional Teacher Leaders, 6-8 Math Coach and 6-12 Math & Science Department Chair:
  - In Math:
    - Recently completed a staff survey re: feedback and their thoughts on cultural competence, equity, inclusion, etc and how that shows up in classrooms in Region 15. Specifically asking, how do these departments (math/science) use equity within their discipline?
    - Shared reflections from 3rd graders and their math identities as to whether or not they see themselves as mathematicians
    - Shared different models of mathematics re: identity and power in mathematics, “Is Equity Still a Useful Term”; collected data and what is your working definition of equity in mathematics classrooms.
    - Discussed what it means to be in an equitable mathematics classroom.
  - In Science:
    - Shared how using stories as contexts for coursework to learn science standards and examples how this was done from the book *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*; Grounding in phenomena and contexts as an equitable practice in the science classroom.
  - In both Math and Science continued conversations on making curriculum accessible to all.

#### *IV. Synthesis of the Work from the last Session (February)*

**When looking to hire someone to work in Region 15, what qualities and/or characteristics should this person possess?**

#### **A Region 15 candidate:**

- Is patient, empathic, compassionate, flexible, understanding, coachable, welcoming, humble, intellectually curious, open-minded, willing to listen, caring, a clear communicator, relatable, is a ‘people person’, resilient, persistent, has grit, is a life-long learner, unbiased, emotionally-available, good listener,
- Demonstrates grace and capacity for forgiveness and is not easily offended
- Represents/reflects all our students
- Sees the vision for the future of the position they are applying for
- Is an asset to the Region 15 community: Builds upon the strengths of the team
- Is a collaborator who will work with others in the building and other experts
- Is committed to what they do and to the people they work with
- Brings humanity to the content they teach
- Establishes a positive and collaborative relationship with families

### **Region 15 candidate demonstrates:**

- A growth mindset
- Willingness to listen to other perspectives and willing to learn from that and grow
- Ability to take feedback and constructive criticism and learn from it
- An effort to understand students and their perspectives; identifies and makes a connection with them
- Has a passion for education and learning
- Exudes positivity and enthusiasm - "It is their job, but also their joy!"
- Willingness to learn and participate in professional development
- Enthusiasm for student growth
- Willingness to take risks and make mistakes in the pursuit of learning and improvement
- An active role and passion for inclusivity, equity and diversity; Sees social justice, anti-bias, anti-racism as absolutely necessary
- Courage to speak the truth and the ability to express it in a way that builds consensus and community
- A willingness to have conversations about difficult topics in a space where students can deeply dig into complex and critical questions
- An awareness of student mental health, reaches out students and does not rely on students reaching out to them; recognizes students who are struggling (both academically and emotionally)
- An openness to learn from students
- An awareness of tone
- An ability to collect, analyze, and act upon results of data

### **A Region 15 candidate teaches / leads through:**

- Focus on strength based approach rather than what people/students can not do
- Prioritizes an emotionally safe classroom environment over teaching content
- Proactive rather than reactive responses
- Willingness and ability to look at curriculum with the intent to be equitable and inclusive
- Successfully responding to and handling parent concerns
- Creation of lessons, projects, opportunities to learn about multiple perspectives
- A desire /ability to use 'out of the box' creative techniques
- Willingness to collaborate with colleagues to develop authentic experiences for students
- Unique perspectives
- Willingness to do more than just their 'job'; wants to contribute to the community beyond school hours (chaperone a dance, go on a field trip, volunteer, etc)
- Valuing student perspectives - and invites those perspectives to enrich their classroom
- Modeling uncomfortable situations
- Stepping up and saying something to bias, prejudice, discrimination and harnesses teachable moments

## **SUGGESTIONS for Region 15 HIRING PROCESS**

- Region 15 should have clear statements about the district's priorities about equity in position description
- Candidates for all positions should have a specific question about the role that the positions plays in equitable access and success for all students
- For hiring rubrics should prioritize equity responses of the candidates
- Provide a brief case student around equity as it relates to student experience that the candidate should respond to
- The district should actively recruit faculty and staff of color
- If faculty have to teach a lesson, they should have to include an equity learning outcome as part of the lesson.
- Have a question around racial identity in interview
- What unique qualities do you bring to the team

*V. Small Group Work: Reviewed sample questions provided and as a group, chose approx 5 questions to be included in the Region 15 hiring process for a Region 15 administrator: [Possible Interview Questions for Region 15 Administrators](#).*

### *VI. Next Steps*

- Will share small group work with all Council members. Council members are asked to vote for your top five (5) R15 administrator interview questions based on our small group conversations at the March 16th E&I Council meeting. See email 3/22/21
- Additional meeting in the near future to review questions in preparation for the Region 15 administrator position. See doodle poll.

### *VII. Reminder of future meetings*

New Date (for short meeting) - per Doodle Poll in email 3/22/21  
6-7:30 pm Wednesday, April 21  
6-7:30 pm Wednesday, May 19