

Islamic Center Community Conversation

Jan. 25, 2017

*What were some of the factors when you felt education really was working like it should?*

When you can build a relationship with the teacher.

People told us to go to Lakota because of its diversity.

There is a difference between toleration, and inclusion.

In order to get the most out of education, you have to have a successful community.

Having high standards. And the STEM courses are well appreciated.

When it instills self-confidence.

It created a sense of belonging.

Lakota works best when it doesn't try a cookie-cutter approach...when it meets kids where they are.

Between students, parents and educators, intolerance comes from the parents.

(Student): Kids know I'm Muslim. I love when they come and talk to me and want to know more about it. So many different kinds of kids have talked to me.

(Student): I feel kind of accepted. Growing up has been interesting. I was apprehensive about how others would treat me. But they didn't act any different to me.

Self-identity is important...you have to accept your own uniqueness.

Don't change yourself.

*Concerns:*

What we are teaching in schools about other cultures is vital, and often wrong. I'm Native American, and what we teach about that is completely false.

What's missing is general information. What's unknown is how many stereotypes are being perpetuated. We talk about Europeans a lot. We're still Euro-centric.

If you want your child to succeed, they have to understand the other person.

It's too Euro-centric. Other countries learn about all religions.

Even if it's just for business we need to understand other cultures.

The only way people come together is talking about it. But a problem is the whole colorblind thing. We need to talk about the elephant in the room.

*What requests would you make of school leaders?*

A community garden.

Solar panels, and other ways the schools could be greener.

Recognize that a melting pot is one concept of the country, but another one is more like a tossed salad.

I'd like to learn things you need to know for everyday life.

Field trips to different religious sites, to learn about different religions.

Busing for high school.

Hold discussions like this one in high school. Go deeper.

School calendars that recognize religious holidays.

Fewer mandatory requirements, more optional requirements.

Career panels for kids, with lots of diversity, to learn more about different opportunities.

To see tolerance and diversity maintained from millennial age into adulthood.

Teaching critical thinking and logic. Teaching how to interpret data and be aware of biases.

Better ranking for schools.