

Diversity & Equity Committee Meeting Minutes

April 6th, 2020

In Attendance: Angela McQuinn, Amber Mylnczak, Rose Carr, Isaac Matzek, Dawn Lueck, Idellann Larson, Karla Winter, Sarah Knutson, Dr. Annette Freiheit, Dwayne Voegli, Dave Chapman

1. Minutes- Approved as Written (Move by Chapman, Second by Idellann Larson).
2. Old Business- DEC By-laws, Guidelines and Membership, Racial Equity Leadership Conference, Links to documents from conference.
3. New Business- By Laws- “conditions we aim to address” was boxed for emphasis as requested. Approved as written (Move by Chapman, Second by Dawn Lueck). Need to get Open Meeting notification for our next meeting. Discussed sharing our recorded meeting with interested participants. We are not an official School Board committee, so we can conduct our business without announcement of a Public Meeting.
4. 3 Year Planning Matrix- Committee Commitments were added to the document. Discussion on the use of the “Action Card” format versus a standard document. Not enough space on the standard document. Action cards are more consistent with the rest of the district on how planning is done. Under Learning Work: Need to have statements that address Equity and opportunities to excel included in the document. Our district is attempting to track our diverse groups with regard to their participation in Honors and other advanced courses. It was discovered that not all families identify with being part of a diverse group so they do not identify accurately their racial background meaning our record keeping is not accurate either. Because MCAs are suspended for this year, we will not have any World’s Best Workforce data. Pillar 3-Achievement Gap goal. Cultural Competency and Professional Development are also included in this area. Inclusive curriculum and instruction are an ongoing examination. Under Implementation Work, we included Restorative Circles. AVID would also be included under this item.
5. Understanding and Meeting Our Social Emotional and Competency needs. Site based supports. W-K is a work in progress while over sites need to develop an infrastructure for each site. Working on alignment working toward discipline disparity. Addressing policies and Code of Conduct. Cultural Competency and Curriculum Development are in progress. Professional development activities have been offered an implemented over the last several year. Restorative Circle training available this summer (four days). Discussed what kind of data we use to determine (DIRS) concerns, discrepancies to reporting and be able to identify concerns. Look at 28 different behaviors with the 29th being “Other”. Only 5% of behaviors were related to weapons or drugs 95% included “Other”. Admin is doing a book study on this as well. No 9th and 11th grade data is available from the Minnesota Student Survey 2019. System of Accountability engaging stakeholders including personal work as well as district wide work. Implementing safe and secure schools looking for a research based survey to assess school culture (Dr. Freiheit). Currently using a liaison to reach out to Native American and other groups to develop better relationships with students and families. Continuing partnering and engaging parents, students and community is an ongoing initiative. Securing and managing our resources including Grant Writing, Community Partnerships, District funding and time allocation for Equity work. Discussion on the utilization of sub-committees to approach each identified task or initiative, getting them documented on an Action Card or do we do the work as an entire committee? Should we clump it as smaller groups by level? Also suggested Begin with District goals and then break it down by levels (District Actions Card). Dr. Freiheit felt that focusing in on a few strategies is better than having too many initiatives, not knowing then, which one made an impact. All this being said, we still need to ensure our compliance with our agreement with the Department of Human Rights. We want our system to do the work we intend to do and what makes an impact. Dr. Locust suggested developing an award to recognize Equity efforts in our staff but also in collaboration with Winona State. Angela posed the question: Can we table this and save the discussion for our May meeting. Consensus was to table it.
6. Life Journey Training out of Mankato- Dr. Freiheit explained that the Greater Diversity Council in Mankato has a Online Module called Life Journey involving Self Reflection, Small Group discussion and large group discussion. Looks at Internal Bias. Administrators have participated and now the faculty will be completing it over the next three years. \$179 per staff person, 12-16 weeks. Dr. Freiheit is thinking the DAT would do the training, then DEC committee and then trickle down to staff. Mankato, Eden Prairie and St. Peter all speak highly of it. Dr.

Freiheit is thinking this is where we should begin. These district's School Board members have not participated yet, but these districts are thinking this is necessary.

7. Professional Development –Staff and students will need to be trained on Implicit Bias and Discrimination, this Fall; staff in the first 30 days and students by the end of first semester in compliance with our agreement with the Department of Human Rights. This will be a good “first step” toward walking our Equity journey. Dwayne Voegli mentioned using our own students to utilize their “Our Voices” presentation. Need to make sure there is a parent communication component as part of this training. Dr. Freiheit will reach out to legal to establish what parameters are necessary and/or recommended for this training and involving students in it.
8. Dr. Locust was not available to attend our meeting but wants to be a resource to us on how to pursue these goals and intentions. John Casper might be a good addition to our DEC committee as well as Engage Winona and recruiting additional community partners (parents).
9. Meeting adjourned.
10. Next meeting is Monday, April 27th, 2020 from 3 to 5 PM (two hour meeting).

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Chapman

DEC Committee Member