

## **Special Equity Committee**

Wednesday, May 24

Members Present: Mariam Khan, Kevin Shea, David Asbery

Meeting Called to Order: 6:05 PM

Additions to the agenda: None

Public comments on information items: None

### Information Item: Review of the Equity Professional Learning for the 2022-23 year

Dr. Tamika Lasalle-Finley and the administration presented a slideshow titled “Hamden Public Schools Equity Work 2022-23.” This included an overview of the work since 2019, development of the diversity statement, the district equity group, school-based equity teams, and integrated data systems (Devereux Student Strengths Assessment, School Climate Survey Suite, School Wide Information System).

David Asbery: Are teachers leading professional development?

Dr. Tamika Lasalle-Finley: Yes, I develop the general topics and presentations. Teachers redeliver professional development after they are trained.

Erin Bailey: The group also identified teachers and staff who are interested in pursuing equity work.

David Asbery: How will you share this information with parents? Where does our current data stand?

Dr. Tamika Lasalle-Finley: Developed short videos summarizing data sheets. Creating one-page “state of the district” to be shared publicly.

Gary Highsmith: Data for this school year will be analyzed in the summer and presented at a Goals and Evaluation meeting; there has not been one yet this year.

David Asbery: Can students comment on teachers?

Dr. Tamika Lasalle-Finley: There is a subscale for peer-adult relations.

Mariam Khan: The slideshow was not posted publicly prior to the meeting; important community members have access to information and can follow along.

Is this equity-based professional development mandatory for all educators?

Dr. Tamika Lasalle-Finley + Gary Highsmith: Yes.

Mariam Khan: How do you deal with resistance or conflict?

Gary Higs Smith: Resistance is expected but there is a way to deal with issues head-on without ignoring them. There has not been outright disrespect against the equity work and most pushback is silent.

Dr. Tamika Lasalle-Finley: Safety is not-negotiable, but discomfort is expected. Before starting each PD, there are guiding norms and expectations.

Mariam Khan: Students should also have a stake in these conversations and teams. How does professional development evolve with the experiences of students?

Dr. Tamika Lasalle-Finley: Dynamic process by creating a scope of work and centering in on certain issues. Creating a guide for educators to engage with students in regards to difficult events.

Gary Higs Smith: Spent the past few years straightening out structures for adults that would then allow students to join.

David Asbery: How do we raise awareness of the equity work being done?

Dr. Tamika Lasalle-Finley: Include projects such as equity forums to involve communities and students. This continues to be a goal.

Adjourn: 6:58 PM

Motion: Kevin Shea

Second: David Asbery