

Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity Committee Meeting

[WAPS Webpage for the DEI Committee](#)



Meeting Date:	Tuesday, November 28, 2023
Meeting Time:	6:00 P.M.
Meeting Location:	WSHS Learning Commons
Membership List:	<u>DEI Membership</u>
Members Present:	Diptanshu Roka, Marci Hitz, Mariyah Rumpca-Veronese, Wendy Harward, Heidi Monson, Kelly Fluharty, Maurella Cunningham, Brad Berzinski, Michael Hanratty, Adele Jacobsen, Luke Madsen
Members Absent:	Rose Carr, Tina Roloff, Stephanie Kraus, Stephanie Smith, Theresa Rusert, Pete Watkins
Other Attendees:	Alexandra Retter

<i>Our Vision:</i> A safe and inclusive community of compassionate, curious and resilient lifelong learners..	<i>Our Mission:</i> Inspire, curiosity, empower resilience, engage community.
<i>District Belief Statements:</i> • We believe that public schools should serve and engage students, families, staff and the community. • We believe learning and teaching is maximized in a safe, respectful and inclusive environment. • We believe every individual's diversity and experience is valued. • We believe healthy relationships are crucial for the success of our schools. • We believe that every student can achieve to the best of their ability. • We believe all decisions should be focused on students and their success.	<i>Core Values:</i> • Safety: Everyone's physical and emotional well-being is a priority. • Integrity: Everyone does the right thing and makes positive choices, even if it is difficult. • Inclusivity: Everyone belongs, is valued and is heard. • Equity: Everyone has the opportunities, access, information and support provided in the individual way they need it. • Respect: Everyone's differences are recognized, acknowledged and celebrated.

Committee Collective Commitments:

1. Raise hand for turn to speak.
2. Be comfortable with discomfort.
3. Receive the experiences of others and believe that it is true for them.
4. Regularly provide time to check in with members on what they are experiencing or have shared with them.
5. Free flow (no need for Robert's Rules)
6. Be specific in what you are speaking about in terms of identity, difference, and other terms/concepts; ask for clarification if you need it

<u>Agenda Item:</u>	<u>Type:</u> • Procedural, • Information, • Brainstorm, • Recommendation <u>(Minutes)</u>	<u>Discussion/Action:</u>
Call to Order	Procedural	Called to order by Michael Hanratty at 6:02pm Review Committee Collective Commitments: 1. Raise hand for turn to speak. 2. Be comfortable with discomfort. 3. Receive the experiences of others and believe that it is true for them. 4. Regularly provide time to check in with members on what they are experiencing or have shared with them. 5. Free flow (no need for Robert's Rules) 6. Be specific in what you are speaking about in terms of identity, difference, and other terms/concepts; ask for clarification if you need it. Committee Guidelines
Assign notetaker	Procedural	Kelly Fluharty assigned as meeting notetaker
Public Comment	Information	Individuals interested in addressing the DEI School Board committee are allowed up to 3 minutes for their public comments. The following speech will not be allowed: slander, defamation, profanity, personal attacks, or revelations of private data. No public comment
WAPS' responses to	Information	No public comment at 10/24/2023 DEI meeting

public comment		
Group Discussion	Information	Wendy Harward - SPED advisory council, next meeting 12/5th at 6pm, birth to 22 change of services, wanted to invite the community into this meeting to talk about the landscape of disability services in the community, Wendy invited the committee to also join.
DEI Committee Meeting Minutes	Procedural-Recommendation	DEI October 24 Agenda with Minutes
Policy 110 Recommendations	Brainstorm	Review of current draft of Policy 110 (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy) with a goal of identifying specific areas to develop further and potential areas to edit. Action from October 24 Meeting 1) Members will review policy in its current state and make recommendations for changes. a) Committee members were to refresh memory on existing policy language, and identify up to 5 action items to incorporate into a plan that could live alongside the DEI policy prior to this meeting. General discussion followed regarding committee members observations of policy: a. Question regarding policy review cycle, and whether the DEI policy will be revised if it is approved now without a full community engagement process. i. Supt. Berzinski explained that there is a regular policy review cycle and a list of policies to review each month. After the first reading in committee, it goes to the Board, then back to the policy review committee for final changes. The DEI policy language currently reads that review will be on an annual cycle.. b. Mrs. Monson asked whether educators had any input on the learning and teaching section. c. Supt. Berzinski questioned 110-4, second section language reads “hidden spaces”, and questions whether this was meaningful to outside readers. i. Mrs. Hitz and Ms. Cunningham agreed that language was ambiguous. d. Ms. Cunningham also raised concerns that this policy does not capture “where we are” as a school district & expressed concern that putting the policy in place without a specific plan does not actually work in her experience, and further elaborated that without specific training, there was concern that the policy standards will put teachers in a position of feeling ill equipped to implement right away. Further discussion followed regarding need for an implementation plan:

		i. Supt. Berzinski offered additional comments questioning whether the policy should be viewed as aspirational, or capturing the current state. He further asked if we should put this in place to have something to advance towards. ii. Mr. Madsen offered further comment that this policy gives him a guide for how to plan professional development, and that this is who we are and aspire to be. Committee Chair Hanratty concurred that the policy codifies who we are and where we need to go. iii. Ms. Cunningham added that if we decide to move forward with this policy, we need action steps identified so that we can move forward in a concrete manner. Committee Chair Hanratty agreed that we need a road map. iv. Mrs. Hitz suggests adding a section 8: Implementation - not detailed, just high level. Additional discussion continued as to whether the place of the implementation plan belongs in the policy or parallel to it. Ms. Cunningham points out that there is language in the draft directing the District to move forward plans and goals within an equity framework. This framework language is in four sections in the policy, but we have not selected a framework yet. e. Additional general discussion followed regarding new DEI-related changes on the horizon and offering further support and context for the importance of moving forward: i. Example of recent legislative session changes raised. New requirement that an ethnic studies course needs to be required, however there are no standards for how to implement this. Ms. Cunningham shared her involvement in recent committee work for k-12 Ethnic Studies standards, these are forthcoming. ii. Mr. Madsen recounted a recent exercise where teachers shared what they thought was going well and not well. Some related concerns were raised that would have been supported by a DEI policy in place (i.e., is equitable grading emphasis coming from the principal level or is this a unified district push). iii. Brief discussion on data: what racially disaggregated data do we collect currently? Discipline data is state mandated, access to PSEO courses is tracked by race and SPED referrals by race were all mentioned. Ms. Cunningham asked if this was publicly available, and Ms. Harward reported that it was not. iv. Mr. Madsen shared that Steve Gilbertson is assisting with getting a connection at WSU. Keisha Morgan (Our Voices leader and student parent) and Denise McDowell (WSU VP of Enrollment Management & Student Life) both are involved in conversation to bring in college
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		students of color to mentor WAPS students. There is not a plethora of staff of color, and this offers a supportive opportunity. There was intention expressed to welcome Our Voices at WAPS and perhaps found some kind of student affinity group. v. Cultural liaison concept was discussed, this is a role previously considered but rebranded as student success coaches (question was “what culture”, so success coach was intended to be a pan-cultural bridge). Further discussion ensured articulating why getting specific in terms of these cultural supports is critical to actually impactful work. f. Students committee members, Mr. Roka, Ms. Rumpca-Veronese and Ms. Jacobsen shared that it is difficult to measure equity on the student level, surveys are challenging, but leveraging affinity groups, mentors and other linkages, would be more effective ways to gather feedback. i. Question was raised about how we can have challenging discussions without hostile feelings over some (marginalized) groups getting more attention/resources than others. ii. Discussion of ensuring that all identities are welcome. Ms. Cunningham discussed her experience with ROAR, and welcoming white members who are aligned around anti-racist action. iii. Ms. Jacobsen shared that she is working to relaunch the GSA. 2) Each member will identify their top five action items so that the group can map and determine items to include in an equity action plan. a) General discussion regarding the top five action items and how to implement the policy. i) Mrs. Fluharty suggested that it might be most supportive and effective to pair the policy with a plan, and an equity framework. ii) Mrs. Monson pointed out the section on community and family engagement (V11.3.), and Ms. Cunningham and Mrs. Fluharty concurred that this would be important to add to the plan. iii) Mrs. Monsoon pointed out in the V.2. Workforce Equity section, and Mrs. Fluharty and Ms. Cunningham concurred that this would be important to add to the plan. iv) Supt. Berzinski noted that professional development is a critical plan piece, particularly in the face of many other PD requirements coming down the line. Ms. Cunningham, Committee Chair Hanratty, Mrs. Monson, and Mrs. Fluharty all voiced agreement. Mrs. Cunningham cautioned that we also need to assess effectiveness. v) Data & assessing effectiveness was noted by Ms. Cunningham as another
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		critical component of the PD implementation, and Ms. Fluharty noted that this could be added to the plan. Ms. Cunningham, Committee Chair Hanratty and Mrs. Monson were in agreement. b) Discussion related to district accountability followed. Ms. Cunningham expressed the importance of having a place to go for equity related complaints that is above the level of the superintendent to ensure the highest level of accountability. i) Further discussion occurred related to district administrators that have equity related issues on the job, the question was asked about who they go to when violations of EEOC violations are occurring. Ms. Harward suggested that this employee would reach out to their professional groups for support in navigating this. Committee Chair Hanratty read from the EOE policy that articulated the specific protected groups, which then directs complaints to the HR director. Ms. Cunningham voiced that this specifically needs to be updated in future revisions to increase accountability. c) Committee Chair Hanratty summarized selected action steps: i) III.B - Data ii) IV.6. - Professional Development iii) All section V - Equitable Hiring iv) VI.1 - Inclusion of Student Voices v) VII.3 - Family/Community Engagement d) Suggestion was made to consider the MDE Equity in Action Framework , Ms. Cunningham directed the committee's attention to page 35 which summarizes recommended actions. e) The meeting concluded with roundtable announcements: i) Residents Organizing Against Racism (ROAR) is partnering with WCHS for community conversations on race and personal experiences, building relationships. There will be one date in January and March each, both partnering with WCHS, and Engage Winona will be partnering for a discussion in July. ii) ROAR is also partnering with the library for storytelling in the afternoons, Our Voices members will be reading stories across different cultural topics. ROAR is also facilitating a Banned Book Club coordinated with monthly cultural celebration themes, and include the following dates: January 8th, February 5th ("My Black Friend"), March 4th (Irish and Women themes), April 1st (will be an Arab related text). iii) Heidi mentioned the Impact Center as an important location for conversation and community building. The Center provides free aftercare, 70 kids are enrolled. iv) Special Education is partnering with WSU for conversations on equity. Ms. Harward is applying with Region 10 Directors for a grant, and will hear back in January,
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Assign future notetaker	Procedural	Assign notetaker for December 19 meeting: Heidi Monson
Future Agenda Items	Information	Next Meeting: 1. December 19, 2023
Adjournment	Procedural	Adjourned at 7:56PM