

**New Paltz High School District**

**Racial Equity Initiative Advisory Committee**

**Thursday, November 8, 2018**

**District Office – Lenape**

**Start: 6:05 End: 7:57**

**Present: Carlos Rodriguez-Murcia, Paris White, Tricia Bowen, Cathy Sanchez, Pilar Duvivier, Kristen Diedhiou, Alana Florencio-Wain**

1. Establish Minute Taker and Chair

Pilar and Paris have offered to take minutes. They will co-chair the next meeting.

At this point, we go into executive session.

As a product of executive session, the committee has decided to open the application process again. The lack of board members on the committee was addressed and we decided to ask the BOE for 2 representatives. We also discussed the lack of school administrators.

2. Approve/Discuss Minutes from October Meeting

October minutes were approved.

3. Set next meeting date

The next meeting will be December 4, 2018 in the district office.

4. Undoing Racism Workshop Debrief

The students who attend the Undoing Racism Workshop at Oakwood Friends School talk about their experience. At the beginning, they formed a covenant which shaped the entire weekend. The information they received was done in a way in which it was easy to understand, but somewhat hard to comprehend. The students also expressed that the entire group was very interested and supportive of our committee and they have made several connections that could be helpful in the future.

5. Discuss AP Interview and new High School AP

A student on the committee had tried to be a part of the committee for the AP Interview process and found a lot of difficulty and hoops to jump through. The overall feeling in the room was that the

student wasn't able to sit on the committee because they were part of REIAC. It was also brought to the table that 2 students of color had tried to be a part of the AP Interview and both of them were turned away. However, through further discussion, we have found some inconsistencies with the process of choosing students.

At this point, we go into executive session.

From our discussion during executive session, we learned that a student who was on the High School AP Interview process felt as though a candidate was already picked and their voice wasn't heard in the room.

- Parent Letter

The committee received a letter from a parent who said that no parent of color was selected for the committee.

## 6. Incidents

It was expressed by students that after the March in town regarding the flag, there has been a toxic climate in school and an influx of incidents. We discussed 4 different situations.

- Incident A: A Spanish student was speaking Spanish in class and two people said that this is America, we don't speak Spanish here. Talk English or get out of the country. This happened in classroom.
- Incident B: An argument started in the cafeteria regarding explicit pictures that were sent. Student A called Student B "white trash" and a fight happened in the cafeteria. Only one punch was thrown and another student separated the two immediately. Student B received a two day suspension.
- Incident C: Related to incident A, two students were having a conversation over text (it was not reported to the school, but it was shared with a student member of our committee ) and the word "Spic" was used in describing the Spanish student from incident A.
- Incident D: On the morning announcements (which are broadcasted to everyone in the High School), a student was wearing garment that appeared to be related to a hate group. The BOE was notified and our committee discussed and decided that it was not malicious.

We talked about climate in the High School and how to address it. We feel its important to give teachers and administration the tools necessary to have conversations with the students. We believe that guidance counselors need to build a relationship with the students ( the students on the committee talked about when there's situations in school, they go to teachers, not counselors). Training is necessary because the job of a guidance counselor has changed. We also spent some time comparing the middle school and high school counselors. We looked at the Saugerties website and discussed the possibility of anonymous reporting.

## 7. NYCLU Code of Conduct Review Resource

During the Undoing Racism Workshop, a woman approached Alana and gave her a business card. She does work with examining Code of Conducts to see if they're equitable and worded in an appropriate manner. She has offered to help us.

## 8. Sub-Committee Updates

From the discussion we had while talking about incidents that have recently occurred (see 7. Incidents), the committee had decided to dedicate our next meeting to incident reporting.

## 9. Spackenkill's Form + Incident Reporting

We did not have time to discuss this point. It will be added to the agenda for next meeting.

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| <b>Add to Action Plan</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On reviewing the District's Action Plan for Racial Equity, it appears that hiring a diverse school staff is not an action item for creating a more culturally proficient district. Add "hiring for racial equity" to the Action Plan.</li></ul>                     |
| <b>Document Action Plan Milestones</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In an attempt to align the work of the committee with the work of the district, it would be helpful to see milestones for the Action Plan. Racial Equity Community Forums (Possibility for extracting milestones from the questions provided by parents).</li></ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Action Plan notes all students to be included in surveys; the currently proposed Climate Survey covers only MS and HS.</li></ul>  |
| <b>Hiring Protocols</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Considering that the hiring, retaining, and supporting of people of color is one of our immediate priorities, how can the REAIC committee be a part of the hiring process now?</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the structure of the interview process to include an integrated gathering of parents and professional staff to reinforce shared values to candidate and to each other.</li></ul>   |

