

New Paltz Central School District - Racial Equity Initiative Advisory Committee

Committee Members:

William Ball-Administration
Tricia Bowen-Community Member
Miranda Cangietter-Community Member
Arielle Chiger-Instructional Staff
Pilar Duvivier-Student
Deborah Fialkow-Community Member
Alana Florencio-Wain-Student
Richard Heyl de Ortiz-Community Member
Kristen Masson-Diedhiou-Community Member
Carlos Rodriguez Murcia-Student
Cathy Sanchez-Community Member
Sophia Skiles-Board of Education
Paris White-Student

Minutes from May 29, 2018 — District Office, 6 pm

Start: 6:10 pm

End: 7:45 pm

Attending: Full Committee

Distribution of hard copies of foundational documents:

- Racial Equity Initiative Advisory Committee BOE Resolution (4-18-18)
- Action Plan for Addressing Racial Equity and Creating a Culturally Proficient District
- Board Policy 2210 (Committees of the Board)
- Racial Equity and Cultural Proficiency Overview

Welcome by pro tempore Chair Sophia Skiles, as well as from BOE members in attendance, Alison Easton, Kathy Preston, former BOE, Aimee Hemminger. Additional welcome and appreciation was passed on from current BOE President, Michael O'Donnell.

Introductions around the room by each committee member. The possibility of sharing letters of application with the full committee as a way of learning about each other's backgrounds (insights, personal expertise, and professional experience) was addressed. To be followed up. Individual committee terms were shared, as determined by a random number generator.

Interest in setting shared agreements/rules of engagement/discussion for the committee going forward.

Questions around the timeline of the Racial Equity Initiative. In reviewing the District web page, actual dates are missing that chart an explicit timeline. This was a strong, informal suggestion.

The book referencing the District's driving definition of Cultural Proficiency is being requested by this committee for review.

In-depth committee review of charge and operating procedures - the committee read aloud the full charge as outlined in the BOE resolution dated 4-18-18, with pause for discussion of various points. It was reiterated that the Chair is temporarily held by the BOE appointee and a change in Chair serves the values of the committee in de-centering traditional hierarchy.

Immediate operational concern - discussion of specific incidents and the individuals involved. In anticipation of this concern addressed in the BOE resolution, it was reinforced that committee meetings are public. As such, the committee's focus is in policy and protocol; it is not empowered or equipped to address or unpack specific incidents. However, as recognized members of this

committee, individuals from the District may seek any of us out. The chain of command to formally address and document concerns/conflicts was raised, with the caveat that if that chain truly functioned equitably, this committee would likely be unnecessary. Students testified that traditional roles of support (social workers, teachers) were not viable resources - many students better trusted their peers, or one or two known teachers.

Remaining concern about how to address/action emergent incidents.

Specific discussion points that were raised within the full review of the charge:

Membership. Strong concern was raised in observing that only one administrator and one instructional staff was among the committee. This raises serious questions about efficacy/legitimacy of the committee's work without the "buy-in" in the form of participation from these stakeholders.

- How to encourage more staff/admin to participate without losing the self-selecting (i.e., an individual desire to be a part of the committee and not be forced/cajoled into reluctant participation) approach to this difficult/uncomfortable work?
- How to keep the student committee members safe from the energy of participants who may not wish to be present?
- Can unfilled member slots be added in on a rolling basis?

Meeting length. Optimally: 90 minutes, out of respect for everyone's time/energy, as well as the efficacy of the meeting. The meeting time may go longer, by group consent.

Student suggestion. Could a brief summary of the committee's work be provided to student government on a regular basis. Yes - finalized minutes could be used to provide this summary and build connections with the larger student community.

Permanent Chair. No current interest/readiness to transfer the Chair. The election of the Chair can be a standing agenda item going forward. The BOE/pro tempore Chair remains at the informal support of committee (no formal vote).

Logistics.

Contact Information - current emails were confirmed as best way to stay connected.

Interest in a book club, resource sharing.

Schedule — urgent concerns around the possibility of a District-employed SRO and if the committee needs to meet to prep for any imminent decision/discussion. It was voiced that an SRO would complicate if not counter the work of this committee.

Next meeting: Tuesday, June 5, 2018 from 6-7:30 in the District Office — determined by verbal group consent (after determining that there were several District conflicts on Thursdays). Discussion of future dates and the summer schedule should take place next meeting. Online doodle poll (with assurances that everyone can navigate that well) will be used.

"homework" for next meeting:

- share any suggested "shared agreements" for committee conduct
- review the "Immediate Priorities" outlined in the BOE resolution as well as the extracted recommendations from the individual letters of interest and generate a list of priorities for discussion.
- summer schedule
- suggest any other agenda items

Submitted by Sophia Skiles