

Student and Community Workforce Agreement Task Force Meeting Minutes

Oct. 30, 2019, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Room 2700,
John Stanford Center, 2445 3rd Ave. S, Seattle, WA 98134



Opening: The meeting began at 10:05 a.m. with Nancy Locke welcoming the task force and providing an overview of the meeting agenda.

Task force members introduced themselves by letting people know a little about themselves and their interest in the task force.

Attending: Harvey Wright, Stephanie Colbert, Keith Weir, Pastor Lawrence Willis, David Hackney, Hanna Blackbourn, Tamara Harris, Jane Mounsey, Monty Anderson, Bob Korth, Richard Best, Sandy Hanks. Also, in attendance: Nancy Locke, Fred Podesta and Deborah Northern.

Podesta shared the principles of this effort. This task force was born from a board workshop, and students and African-American males are the focus. Podesta and Locke worked together at the city on a similar workforce agreement. It was a similar effort, but this focus is students. Today is mostly about setting the table about what we are trying to accomplish.

Locke said two documents, strategic goals and the task force charge, are worth a good read to understand the core pieces of this group. These set the purpose and expectations. Some of the scope of work has been pulled by Locke and put in Microsoft Teams. The outcome of this task force will be recommendations from this group that Locke will write up and share with the School Board.

Locke walked through the meeting schedule. The most current information is on Microsoft Teams. Weir, Anderson, Blackbourn and Best haven't got access or tried to access. Mary Cauffman or Locke can help with access. Weir definitely doesn't have access.

Task force meetings are public. People may join to observe. Documents are available to them too.

There are core meetings and some optional meetings. The first optional meeting is the ANEW graduation on Nov. 1. It provides an opportunity to see how these programs impact our community. No RSVP needed. Parking can be tough at the location.

The second optional meeting is Nov. 6 and regards CWA-PLA. We will have the meeting even if there is only one interested person. Locke asked for interest. Several members raised their hands.

The third optional meeting is Dec. 4. It's an extra hour before our regular meeting and regards costs.

Locke said each meeting will provide a panel with an expert to teach the topic. There will be a Q&A. Locke wants everyone to have a chance to share their opinions. She asked members to try to be respectful and not interrupt people who are talking.

The end goal of this task force is to provide recommendations to the School Board and Superintendent. Locke doesn't expect all to agree and welcomes dissenting feedback, which will also have an opportunity to be included in the report.

Once those final recommendations are made, the board will take action. We are not a decision-making body, but the board wants to hear from experts. This is an education process for the board to provide them material and information. Podesta noted we will have new board members.

Willis asked if these recommendations will be applied to 2020 projects. Podesta said that is a question he has: What is the appropriate term for this agreement? Podesta said the feedback will be provided in 2020, and he expects the board to act on them.

Korth said Marysville School District is ahead of this process, and we may be able to learn from them. Podesta said the district will ask what are the characteristics of the projects we start with.

Locke is as passionate about this process as the task force. Locke said racial equity has been part of her work as a kid. Business case and contact reality was her world at the city of Seattle. Locke will use her expertise but is trying to be a neutral party. She apologized for not being good with details and may mix up her dates. Please realize our agenda is dynamic. Things may change.

Task force took a five-minute break.

Racial Equity & Advancement Coordinator Deborah Northern introduced herself. She asked the group to think about what this work will lead to. Focus on the what and why, not how. Build knowledge around difference of equity and equality. Discussed norms and group agreements. Northern mentioned that she noticed some in the task force charter.

Norms and group agreements:

- Stay engaged
- Accept and expect non-closure
- Experience discomfort
- Speak your truth
- Intent vs. impact (cannot say whatever you feel like because you need to think how it will impact other)

Northern set context (our focus, our work, our why). Shared mission and vision of Seattle Public Schools (SPS). One mantra SPS has is "Every Student. Every classroom. Every day."

Northern shared an image of three children with a view of a sports field to illustrate equality and equity. Members discussed the images among themselves and shared their thoughts with the whole group.

An excerpt from SPS's Racial Equity Policy 0300 was shared. Northern challenged members to explore and examine resistance.

Colbert brought up class in construction trades and said people don't see the trade as intellectual. It is less valued. Colbert said the racial makeup of classes are changing. Northern asks what is the communication on the trade classes? How are families notified?

SPS definition of racial equity shared: "To provide access, opportunities and resources for every child by recognizing and eliminating historical barriers and the predictability of success based on race, background and circumstance."

Blackbourn asked if SPS has had successes in racial equity. Northern said look at the history of education. Racial inequity is deeply embedded and shows up throughout our system. We cannot solve racism, but we can do the best for every student, every day. Willis said he appreciates the shift he has noticed just looking around the room and seeing diversity. Northern said, "If we do nothing, it will be more of the same."

Northern asked members to discuss ways the task force will provide racial equity from a list of suggestions presented:

- Equitable access
- Racial equity analysis
- Workforce equity
- Professional development
- Welcoming school environments
- Partnerships
- Multiple pathways to success
- Recognizing diversity

Northern asked where do we see the task force making an impact. One group said all but welcoming school environments. Another group said by letting each school know of technical training program and having them at each school, you are providing a welcoming environment. Another group used a school project as an example and said contractors not allowed to use pre-apprentice program.

Northern shared the strategic plan's theory of action.

Northern asked members to write down two to three reactions and thoughts about the focus of racial equity for Seattle Public Schools. Then members shared their thoughts with elbow partners before sharing with the whole group.

How long has Policy 0300 be in existence, one task force member asked? Northern said about five years. Northern said is part of Capital. Another task force member said they want to see this language in the agreement. Wright said 0300 was created in 2012.

Colbert said grateful to work with task force, but said she works in the present too. Rainier Beach is about 90 percent school of color and is unsafe. This is not equitable.

Meeting adjourned at 12 p.m.

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