

Board Special Meeting
Work Session: Anti-Racism Policy
November 9, 2020, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
Meeting held remotely



Minutes

Call to Order

Director Hersey called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Directors DeWolf, Harris, Hersey, Mack and Rankin participated with Microsoft Teams or by phone. Directors Hampson and Rivera-Smith joined the meeting shortly thereafter.

Work Session: Anti-Racism Policy

This work session was staffed by Superintendent Denise Juneau and Manal Al-ansi, Director of Integrated Curriculum and the Department of Racial Equity Advancement. Additional presenters were Manuela Slye, President of the Seattle Council Parent Teacher Student Association (SCPTSA); Sebrena Burr, Vice-President of the SCPTSA; Marquita Prinzing from the Seattle Education Association (SEA) Center for Racial Equity; and Aneesa Roidad from the NAACP Youth Council.

Director Hersey noted that the meeting would begin with a presentation from the Department of Racial Equity Advancement (DREA), followed by the Seattle Education Association's (SEA) Center for Racial Equity and then Seattle Council Parent Teacher Student Association (SCPTSA). He then introduced Manal Al-ansi, Director of Integrated Curriculum and the Department of Racial Equity Advancement.

Ms. Al-ansi stated that she had been asked to report out on where her department and the division of Equity, Partnerships & Engagement (EPE) were with recent engagement and partnership with SCPTSA. She noted that a trend analysis had been completed, encompassing the last year of engagement by the EPE division that was centered on Black, Indigenous and Brown students and families. This analysis was developed to ensure that the most recent draft of Policy 0040 would be in alignment with the feedback gathered from these communities. She shared that there is now an updated version of Policy 0040 that is not only in response to the trend analysis but also in response to feedback from SCPTSA and the communities with whom they conducted engagement. She noted that both EPE and SCPTSA expressed readiness to partner during this final phase of engagement around Policy 0040 and finish strong.

Director Hersey opened the meeting to questions from the Directors and Ms. Al-ansi provided responses, with additional information provided by Manuela Slye, President of the SCPTSA. Director Harris requested a pictograph with dates to represent the development of the policy over time. Ms. Al-ansi agreed to provide the graphic.

Director Hersey then offered time to the SEA Center for Racial Equity, Director Marquita Prinzing. Ms. Slye shared that Mrs. Prinzing was hosting an engagement session with educators and would join as soon as possible.

Director Hersey then offered time to Ms. Slye and Sebrena Burr from the SCPTSA. They shared a presentation on the history of their involvement and engagement on Policy 0030, 0040 and anti-racism work beyond the district. Time was given to Aneesa Roidad from the NAACP Youth Council who provided a student perspective on the development of Policy 0040. Ms. Burr spoke to the amended timeline for presenting a final policy to the Board and shared that the extension was important to ensure that the policy was done right to ensure all voices are heard and that it is truly a collaborative product. Ms. Al-ansi spoke in support of Ms. Burr's statement and asked that women of color, particularly Ms. Burr and Ms. Slye in this case, be protected from harmful narratives that had developed regarding a previously requested extension for this specific policy work. Ms. Al-ansi noted that when she and Dr. Scarlett previously requested an extension under the same justification, they were met with harmful narratives about their investment and values in the work which resulted in the Board supporting the insertion of SCPTSA to take over the final phase of engagement around Policy 0040. Director Hersey thanked her for elevating that critique and asserted the desire to hold our communities—specifically our Black and Brown communities—in a unified way and reflect to create better, safer spaces for our staff members to engage in this work. He then thanked all the women, particularly in the Black and Brown community, who are leading for this work and moving it forward.

Director Hersey then opened the meeting for questions from the Directors for the SCPTSA. Ms. Slye noted that Mrs. Prinzing had joined the meeting and she was offered time to speak. She highlighted her experience with the group of educators that evening, asking where in our system do people go when they see something that is affecting our children in a harmful way.

Director Hersey returned to offering time for questions from the Directors. Director DeWolf asked Ms. Roidad, Ms. Slye and Ms. Burr what they would like to see next from the Board. The opportunity was shared with Mrs. Prinzing who asserted the need for a safe space in our system where educators of color can share the stories of their experiences. Ms. Al-ansi requested to respond to Director DeWolf's question alongside the other presenters. Ms. Al-ansi then inquired about whether another work session would be held on the Policy, and if so, requested that the Board invite EPE to participate in the development of the agenda, and asked all involved in the work session to come prepared to center Black and Indigenous voices in the analysis of the policy and strategy, in alignment with the District's Targeted Universalism strategy. She also requested that the work session not be structured as only an update but rather an opportunity to have critical feedback from the Board around the next policy draft. Ms. Burr requested support from the Board to ensure the policy and procedure is not just on paper but is uplifted and supported with funding and action throughout the system.

Director Hersey expressed gratitude for those on the call, noting that as has been recently demonstrated on a national level, Black and Brown women are lifting this work. He asked that they continue to be open and frank in discussing their experiences and that all those involved in the work uphold and protect the process.

Mrs. Prinzing added a further request in response to Director DeWolf's question, asking that Board members sit in on a classroom and then have a discussion with the educator afterwards. Director Hersey noted that if time allows, the Board would like to do so.

Adjourn

Director Hersey adjourned the meeting at 7:41 p.m.

This meeting was held remotely per the Governor's proclamations prohibiting public agencies from conducting meetings subject to the Open Public Meetings Act in-person to curtail the spread of COVID-19. Public access was provided remotely online and by teleconference.

Minutes submitted by:

The Office of Chief of Equity, Partnerships & Engagement Dr. Keisha Scarlett