

Seattle Public School District
HIGHLY CAPABLE/RACIAL EQUITY SERVICES ADVISORY
Monday, June 1, 2020
4:00 PM – 6:00 PM (PST)

SPS HC/RESA Agenda - June 1st

Meeting Objectives

- To build community in an online platform in service of our work
- To re-ground in the mission, vision, role and purpose of HC/RESA
- To explore how the SPS Racial Equity Policy undergirds our work

Present (via Zoom): Dr. Concie Pedroza, Deenie Berry, Melia LaCour, Sean Fisher, Emijah Smith, Kate Poux, Aida Fraser-Hammer, Paula Montgomery, Margaret Montsaroff, Marc Salazar, Damon May, Crystal Daniels, Gabe Herbison, Christina Ellis, Bobbi Windus, Maki Ichikawa, Kelsey Benslimane, Shraddha Shirude, Radhika Nair, Douglas Sohn, Nichole Coates, Megan Haddock.

Absent: Shane Baguyo, James Blanton, Carmen Brady, Jacklyn Cable, Dominique Pavageau, Berhanu Alemayehu, Rina Geoghagan, Gretchen Waschke, Kaila David-Nsimbi, Lisa Batten, Manuela Slye, Tina Meade, Jenny Miller, Gail Morris, Sariya Dunbar, Matthew Perez, Romanita Hairston, Deborah Schaaf, Christopher Thomas, Cindy Watters, Nathan Wheeler, Yen Banes, Laurie Kazanjian.

Welcome, Agenda Review, Community Agreements, Zoom protocols

Melia LaCour Founder and Executive Director of Becoming Justice, and Deenie Berry, Highly Capable Services and Advanced Learning Programs, opened the meeting by greeting the group, and then acknowledged their happiness to virtually join with the group, as the last two meetings were cancelled as a result of the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order issued by the Governor of the State of Washington. Deenie suggested this meeting, taking place via Zoom, would allow the group to reset and resume the work already in progress.

Deenie committed to starting each meeting with a Land Acknowledgement: *We would like to acknowledge that we are on the ancestral lands and traditional territories of the Puget Sound Coast Salish People.*

Deenie also called for a Moment of Silence *To honor the 100,00 people who have died during the COVID-19 and For those who continue to die under the threats of racism in our country.*

Next, Deenie went over Meeting Details, Meeting Agenda, and Melia reviewed Zoom Protocols and the Meeting Objectives.

Introductions

The members of the group were asked to share their name and connection to Seattle Public Schools (SPS), and to share one word that describes how they are showing up in the space this day. Following the introductions, Melia re-introduced the Community Agreements.

Connections Activity

Melia introduced the Connections Activity: *1. We are all processing the protests in different ways. What is on your heart and mind that feels important to share with one another? 2. What are you noticing/observing about how SPS students and families of color are being impacted by COVID-19? What impacts should be centered in our HC/RESA work moving forward?*

Share-out

The group spent the next few minutes speaking to the whole group about the questions discussed in small groups.

Re-Grounding in our Mission, Vision, Role and Purpose

Deenie led the group to the next section.....

Despite the distractions, Deenie asked that the group center on the mission, vision, role, and purpose of the Advisory. Looking at trajectory moving forward, our work together is building a common understanding around racial equity, and the realism of what's that's happening in Seattle, as we prepare to make decisions that will drastically alter the future; some of those decisions will be

made later in August/ early September. the plans for the work over for the summer are developed, the desired focus is on building understanding, as well as a realism of what's happening and what is and is not working. It is also desired that the group is prepared to see what the AL department does, based on ALTF recommendations and the advisement of the HC/RESA.

- Overview
 - The Mission, Vision, Commitments (M/V/C) were created by ALTF. We must hold these as ours moving forward.
 - Seating ourselves within racial equity learning, as these are morally imperative
 - We must embrace the M/V/C, and move this forward into action
 - In order to serve in the role of Advisory to the AL Department, the HC/RESA will ground their work in the understanding of Racial Equity
 - This work will take time, and so the HC/RESA is needed.
 - The HC/RESA Committee will (role):
 - Understand the ALTF recommendations
 - Advise the AL Department as they design and implement a model or models for AL identification and Service delivery
 - Monitor the progress and outcomes
 - Serve as a two-way conduit of information to SPS families and community

A member posed a question, asking assumptions behind why accelerated learning is necessary for some kids and not for others. The answer was that answering that very question was central to ALTF's work and research. It is a belief in certain groups, that accelerated learning is the only way to meet kids' needs. Our team does not believe that, there are different ways to provide with what they need. Not with labels. Examples in SPS. We are developing a model that will be presented in August, and that will meet the needs in every child. Developing potential in every child.

Another question that was posed is how do we address people's natural tendencies to separate themselves? The answer is that a segregated model

will not be happening in SPS. Strategic Plan directs us to meet the student's needs.

Educators of colors have created materials and framework (through Ethnic Studies). Has it been considered? If not, is it because it makes people uncomfortable? Incorporating Ethnic Studies into Curriculum fits the needs of all students because it is individualized. It has not been considered in education, before because it thinks of where kids come from. When it is *considered*, it is a huge part of AL. Not enough educators of color in this space [HC/RESA].

An equitable model, addressing services or content, is currently in development.

Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity, School Board Policy 0030: How will this guide our work?

Dr. Pedroza spoke about how 0030 will guide the work of the HC/RESA, and that SPS is currently in the process of developing anti-racism policy. Now, SPS School Board Policy 0030 is more "inspirational" because it is what we strive to be. There was a need for a stronger policy coming through the school board, which is also complimentary to 0030.

Focus on Access and opportunity provided for students. Goal of Student Support Services is Equity Access for all students. They are charged to analyze goals using data to measure progress.

Using Racial Equity Analysis when we talk about programs and designs and work that must happen. This group must be steeped in racial equity to understand how to use racial equity analysis because we have to ask ourselves all of the time, are we designing programs and structures that mitigate and undo legacy of racism, and are we causing more harm than good to the groups that we are trying to "help?"

Question: policy established in 2012 said annual reports are created, are they available? Any good lessons learned?

Yes, and a new report is going out this year. We have evolved over the past ten years, as evidenced by developing an anti-racist policy. Will share reports into a resource bank.

Developing our Racial Equity Analysis

Melia reminded the group about the Connections Activity questions because they can be reminiscent as to why having a Racial Equity Analysis is important: to eliminate any racial inequity in our work developing and advising services. Spending time unpacking is important so we can have a good understanding, as well as a structural and systemic racism lens. This is the beginning of a conversation that we will have that will help prepare us to do the work, moving forward.

SPS has a Racial Equity Analysis Tool, so we can:

1. Consciously address racial inequities and prevent racial discrimination in our system as to not unconsciously replicate it.
2. Amplify voices of stakeholders from communities of color
3. Systematically analyze propose policies, institutional practices, programs, plans, budgets, decisions that result in increasing racial equity.
4. Minimize unanticipated adverse consequences.
5. Better develop strategies and actions that reduce racial inequalities and improve success for all groups.

Melia wants the group to have a clear and unified understanding of terminology, so the group watched a YouTube video by RaceForward.org, *Moving the Race Conversation Forward*, narrated by Jay Smooth

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjGQaz1u3V4>.

After the video, Melia requested that the group go into small groups and consider and discuss the following:

1. *How is the lack of a systemic racism lens showing up in the media as it relates to COVID-19? The lynching of George Floyd?*
2. *How do we talk about COVID-19 and George Floyd through a systemic racism lens?*
3. *How will we hold ourselves accountable as a group to center race in our work moving forward?*

Members took a moment, after coming back from smaller group, to share some of their conversations. Deenie then asked the group two questions: What was something that resonated with you in tonight's meeting? And what are 2 topics you would like to go deeper on at our June 16th meeting and/or future meetings?

Next Steps and Closing

Deenie and Melia provided the dates for upcoming meetings, and then thanked the group for their time and their contributions.

The meeting did **adjourn** at 6:02 PM.

Upcoming meetings:

Tuesday, June 16 – 1 p.m.-3 p.m.

Thursday, July 16 – 4 p.m.-6 p.m.

Tuesday, August 4 – 4 p.m.-6 p.m.

Tuesday, August 18 – 4 p.m.-6 p.m.

Tuesday, September 22 – 4 p.m.-6 p.m.

Tuesday, October 6 – 4 p.m.-6 p.m.