

Equity & Social Justice Committee
Minutes
Thursday, March 21, 2024 4:30 PM

Harlem Administration Center - Board Room
8605 North Second St
Machesney Park, Illinois 61115

Minutes

1. Call to Order by Jason Blume

2. Roll call

Jason HAC, Scott R. RA., Emily B. MP, Tammy MP, April MP, Andrea OP, Mary PC, Michelle WI, Adriana WI, Mike V. LP, Christy LP, Alana HHS, Kyra HHS, Ana Luisa HAC, Terrell HAC, Lisa MQ, Abi MQ, Elana OP, Deb OP, Lisa MQ

3. Approval of Agenda

1st Scott 2nd Jason

All aye, Motion carries

4. Approval of Committee minutes: February 22, 2024

1st Mike 2nd Abi

All aye, Motion carries

5. Goal Statements

6. Comments from the Community - none

7. Discussion Items

7.A. Meeting Norms

Four Agreements

(1) Stay Engaged, (2) Speak Your Truth, (3) Experience Discomfort, (4) Expect and Accept Non-Closure

7.B. Training: Engagement

i. Presenter: Maple Elementary

Jason noted that the SEL Accommodation and Monetary Sponsorship through the Regional Office of Education was awarded to Maple School as all staff at the school are all trauma informed. Congratulations noted.

Tammy presenting noting that student engagement is very important and they are a Kagan School so there is high student engagement and students are learning to work with each other. Not just one but everyone gets a chance to answer as per Kagan. There are 54 different structures to get into student engagement.

Emily presenting

Activity - Take Off Touchdown – example of how you can have lots of people participate in a short amount of time was completed.

A statement is read, people stand if applies to them, and this is how kids can participate with 100 % of class participation.

In equity work we start off mild and get into deeper issues with an equity lens which was created for staff to use in the classrooms.

Take Off if you like onion on your pizza – stand

Touchdown – Take off if you have gotten into trouble for talking to much at school – stand

With process following several questions and responses by standing

Last Question – What are you?

Leading into the next activity

Battle of the Books which all schools use is a resource for Maple. Emily began by reading the book for the Activity

Tammy noted Talking Chips is one of her favorite activities to use which gives everyone a chance to talk. You each take two chips, the teacher provides the topic and teammates use the talking chips and cannot talk without a chip, once the chips are gone for a person you cannot speak again.

Activity performed, once all chips are in you can start over.

Into small groups, a couple of questions after book reading, groups shared out with using chips

Mike V. asked if a question is asked about the response, do you need to put a chip in, Emily stating no, the point is to have good discussion per Emily.

You can also do a Student Reflection Activity at the end per Emily.

7.C. E-Team Survey Results

Jason reviewed some of the information that was shared to see what comes up for people.

A copy of the survey results was distributed with 28 responses included from E Team Survey.

Some time to review was given. Three survey questions - What do you feel your E Team Needs? What do you need for your personal journey? What things do you remember from the impactful experiences you had in attending Beyond Diversity?

Sharing out: Kyra noting that in Beyond Diversity it is difficult to force having difficult conversations. Having an outside facilitator is beneficial as some of the relationship is not there to put pressure on. Shayna noted she does not think we are pushing like we should be. The high school has a lot of visuals more than other school districts, and it is a good thing to have. We need more visuals in all schools.

Elana noted that elementary level students love to see the shirt that was created and bringing those little things it makes you realize a little makes an impact.

Evaluating where everybody is at in their equity work and what you believe and are putting into practice is important. Everybody learns the tools but not everyone is having critical conversations and how do we move people through this. We need more picture books at elementary and more resources. Books in different languages would be good as well.

Jason noted that the structure piece is what we say we are about, as a way to say our SIP's define us and there are solid goals and we want to be sure it is clearly identified throughout and define it. E Teams are still feeling it is haphazard. We need to make sure we have a direction in the schools by creating the structure within the SIP for the building.

7.D. Harlem Professional Development (Beyond Diversity)

We will reach out to the principals to work with E Team members as Jason and Terrell are working on this BD and how we can develop a training that would be replicated.

One of the things is to find out if you attended BD and have an extension course that could be designed as a first time experience for new people and extension for people that have attended previously. Please submit anything you would like to add.

7.E. Building E-Team Support (skipped)

8. New Business

8.A. Other Items

Peter Nogacz shared his experience with the GSA, Gender & Sexuality Alliance in the District. TEACH stands for Teaching Education to Adolescents with Homophobia, but may change the title to include every person in the LGBT spectrum. He has been at Harlem for 23 years. Leah Krippner and Peter started the club together as students need a safe place. TEACH students do experience a lot of bullying as they are putting themselves out there. We do different events to support these students such as dances, traveling to NIU to seek about colleges and the supports they will find there. There is a bulletin board that posts different resources for these students. We have had the issue of suicide with two students and one student left because of the bullying and is now home-schooled.

Elana asked if all kinds of students reach out as supporters of this group as well. Peter noted the group is open to any allies that support these students. Kids are identifying at younger ages now and there is a need for support at earlier grades.

Terrell thanked Peter for sharing. There is a GSA at the middle school as well as Ralston which is the only elementary school. Kasie was thinking about starting a club for her students with activities based on the monthly themes. Peter noted that the Illinois States' Schools Alliance out of Chicago will help train for this. Elana noted if they are comfortable maybe utilizing high schools students in this club would be a great way to talk to elementary students as well.

Elana noted that with moving kids to the middle school from 6th grade, we also have some staff moving and we will need to do some team building to replace these individuals.

9. Announcements and Updates

9.A. Next Meeting Date: April 25th at Harlem Administration Center

i. Presenter: Loves Park Elementary

ii. Theme: Reflection for Growth

9.B. Equity Monthly Themes

Elana noted the May meeting may not be a good date and should be reviewed to possibly change.

10. Adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Minutes taken by recorder and

Transcribed by Kris Arduino