

Minutes from Equity Committee Meetings on 11-17-2020 and 12-1-2020

11-17-20 Meeting

Present were: Michele Aeder, Kelly Thayer joined late into the meeting due to a scheduling conflict. Pat Ryan had covid issues at the college and was not available. Paul Erlebach and all administrators were present as well.

Due to not having a quorum the name of the committee was tabled. We will use "Equity Committee" until a name has been determined.

Michele reported the following based on information received from the Oregon School Boards Association annual convention:

- a. We need to determine an application process for representatives of marginalized groups for our committee.
- b. Research how we would create affinity groups that would inform that committee.
- c. Work on hiring that reflects the community we serve.

The meeting was open for public input.

It was suggested we define what "equity" means.

We should post minutes of past meetings. Michele explained they can now be accessed on the Neah-Kah-Nie District website under "School Board", Boardbook, meeting date, Agenda and Equity Committee Minutes.

For healing in the community: Ask what they would like to meet the core needs not just being heard.

Suggestions to collaborate with other groups (ie. Queer Straight Alliance, Tillamook Futures Council, Oregon Health Authority, Oregon Food Bank). Broaden scope to other states. Mediation group for moderators for affinity groups. Access "Teaching Tolerance" through Southern Poverty Law Center. Use of pronouns was discussed again. Heidi offered to write down her recollections of the history of NKN since she was a kid.

We talked about the following celebrations:

Two students each year to Costa Rica and two from Costa Rica to Neah-Kah-Nie High School.

Translation of many NKN documents to Spanish.

Hiring of a new Hispanic Family Resource Coordinator/English Language Development Instructional Assistant. We also have a bilingual PE teacher at the high school.

On December 1st: Present were Michele, Aeder and Kelly Thayer. Pat Ryan was absent. Superintendent and administrators were present as well as a number of community members and staff.

We talked about the process to get out the word we are looking for committee members to represent marginalized groups. We heard a number of suggestions from Liwaru of NWRESD toward this goal. From this expanded committee we initially expect the following:

- a. Definition of Equity
- b. Equity Statement

Following Northwest Regional Education Service District's application process, Michele will present our recommendation for the process for Neah-Kah-Nie School District at the December 14th School Board Meeting.

Affinity group leaders would be chosen by the superintendent from staff members and advertised on the NKN website and social media (to include groups that represent NKN alumni.) Lanecia offered to help with marketing.

The groups would be 1. Racial equity. 2. Gender equity. 3. Physical or intellectual disabilities equity. Both meetings adjourned at approximately 10 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Aeder

The following are examples of equity statements:

A Resolution of the Tigard-Tualatin School Board of Directors

- **Tigard-Tualatin School District, 23]**
Resolution 1920-19
A Resolution Of The Tigard-Tualatin School Board Of Directors Condemning Racism And Committing To Being An Anti-Racist School District
WHEREAS, George Floyd (a 46-year-old Black man),¹ Breonna Taylor (a 26-year-old Black woman),² and Ahmaud Arbery (a 25-year-old Black man)³ were killed over the last several months as the latest victims of racism and police violence; and
WHEREAS, Mass protesting is taking place all across the country,⁴ as people are refusing to remain silent or complacent about racial injustice, and decades of systemic oppression and abuses have reached a tipping point; and
WHEREAS, Systemic racism and racial oppression have long led to physical, political, legal, economic, and environmental harm on people of color in the United States and Oregon, specifically; and
WHEREAS, The Tigard-Tualatin School District has worked to be a leader on educational equity Over the last several

years with initiatives including operationalizing and implementing a collective equity framework, establishing pillars for equity to critically analyze our current system, policies and practices in collaboration with stakeholder groups, processes for equitable decision-making, supporting Student Affinity Groups, and developing Building Equity Teams, but we also recognize that the district has not done enough to combat racism or proactively teach anti-racism, and as a result, our students of color, and Black students in particular, still regularly experience racism in our schools; and

WHEREAS, In less than 24 hours, a petition demanding a hate speech policy be adopted in the Tigard-Tualatin School District has received over 750 signatures⁵; and

WHEREAS, Incidents of racism are happening not just in other parts of the United States, they are happening right here. Racial disparities in social, health, economic, legal, and academic outcomes exist in Oregon -- and they exist in Tigard, Tualatin, King City, Durham, and Metzger; and

WHEREAS, Students, parents, and community members in our district have consistently reported (including at TTSD listening sessions) experiencing and witnessing racism and hate speech in our schools.⁶

1 George Floyd was killed May 25, 2020; [News article](#).

2 Breonna Taylor was killed March 13, 2020; [News article](#).

3 Ahmaud Arbery was killed February 23, 2020; [State Investigation](#).

4 Protests began May 26th, 2020 and continue to the present day; [News article](#).

5 This petition is being led by the student-run Tigard-Tualatin Student Union; [Link to petition](#).

6 Minutes from TTSD listening session on hate speech from September 23, 2019; [Meeting minutes](#).

Now, therefore be it resolved on this 8th day of June 2020, by the Board of the Tigard-Tualatin School

District, that, the district condemns racism, racial violence, white supremacy, hate speech, and bigotry in all forms inside and outside of our schools; and,
The district will work to be actively anti-racist and dismantle systemic racism in our schools and empower people of color; and,
The board commits to adopting a hate speech policy prior to the start of the 2020-2021 school year that is responsive to the students, parents, and staff who have shared their experiences and perspectives over the last year; and,
The district affirms the value and importance of culturally responsive pedagogy and instructional practices, and of curriculum that represents the diversity of our community, state, and country and accurately honors the contributions of historically marginalized communities, and we acknowledge our current curriculum does not achieve that yet; we commit to using an equity lens for all future curriculum adoptions, as required in board policy; and,
The district believes that having a diverse faculty and staff reflective of the demographics of our students provides significant value to students of color and all students and will continue to work towards a more diverse workforce.

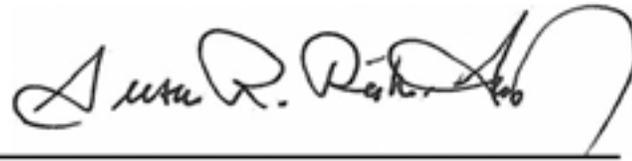
ADOPTED this 8th day of June, 2020.

Signed:

Attest:



A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Maureen Goff", is written above a solid horizontal line.



Maureen Wolf, Board Chair
Rieke-Smith, Superintendent

Dr. Sue

Statement from Superintendent Russell



Statement on racial equity
(Español)

The entire country, and in fact, the world, is experiencing collective grief over the killing of George Floyd, an unarmed African American man, by four officers of the Minneapolis Police Department. Mr. Floyd's death follows countless other wrongful deaths and acts of police brutality against people of color in our country.

A couple of years ago, the McMinnville School District began an intentional and intensive focus on race and equity. Why race and not poverty, when so often the two are linked? Why race and not educational attainment, when so often the two are connected? Why race and not home ownership, or sexuality, or language, some may wonder. Instead, we engaged in that uncomfortable and intentional discussion about race and equity.

In 2016, MSD students felt compelled to organize school walkouts because they feared for themselves, if they were students of color, or if Caucasian, they feared for their friends and classmates. This occurred during the time that the country was embroiled in the early days of "build a wall" rhetoric. Before I go further, let me assure you that I'm not writing this statement as a political declaration on the challenges of immigration. That is not my place. My role is to keep students safe, to create an environment that welcomes them and affords them the opportunity to thrive. My job is to ensure that all our students are better off tomorrow than they are today. After I spoke to a representative group of district staff of color, I learned how much better things were for them today than they may have been in the past, but I also learned that it was not good enough, and that we could do better. After hearing some stories about personal experiences shared by some of our adults of color who may have been marginalized by colleagues, I knew we had to do better.

Our employee group does not reflect, proportionately, the students we serve. Our largest minority population is Hispanic, about 33 percent. Yet, our employee group is 85 percent white. Having more employees of color allows for the offering of multiple perspectives in the decision making and culture building process in each school and enhances opportunities for understanding between families and school staff. It is true that in Oregon all school districts compete for native Spanish speakers, but I knew we could do better to recruit staff of color. And yes, it's true we have interview committees and believe we are hiring the best candidate for the job, but I wondered what we might be missing.

Why would we focus on race when we are not racists? I don't think any of us believe that we are. That horrible word implies intentional actions to harm someone because of their color. We don't do that, do we?

As a district, we needed to explore and dig deeper into the issue of race and equity because we needed to do better for our students and staff of color.

Some of the things I learned, alongside my colleagues, as we studied race, is that a contributing factor that may go along with the adverse life conditions faced by many people of color, is the generational trauma that

results from years of systemic discrimination. When we were learning about trauma, often in the context of adverse childhood conditions fueled by racism, we learned how such trauma can take years to overcome. The stories we hear from people of color, who live in fear of death by law enforcement, is an example of trauma, an example that I could not even begin to imagine how to deal with on a daily, weekly, monthly, yearly, or lifetime basis.

Unlike educational attainment, career advancement, or even an individual's exercise regime, a person of color can't change the fact that they were born black or brown in order to achieve privileged status, while those who make the decisions in our country and in our communities remain predominantly white. While the decisions and actions our leaders and public officials make are often done with the best of intentions, for the most part they are made by people who have not gained a deep understanding of the experiences of people of color in this country, as compared to the experiences of white people.

Through our exploration of race and equity, I learned about the importance of white allies. White people should speak up on behalf of people of color, who many times aren't treated equitably when making a loan application to buy a house or start a small business, or in a job interview, or while shopping, dining out, or going about their daily lives in a variety of public spaces. We are supposed to speak up. That's not politics or blame and shame, it's just the truth, and it is something we can do better.

A lot of people, including our students, staff, and broader community, are speaking up right now. This is an historic period in our country and world. No matter our age, nationality, or ethnicity, we are all living through this collective grief together, and doing so in the time of a pandemic. Many of our students and staff have spoken up against racial injustice through peaceful protests. In fact, just yesterday our students organized a peaceful demonstration in our community. I could not be more proud of their efforts or of the many members of our school community who work each day to support one another. They are unified to do better, to achieve a more empathetic and equitable world.

The McMinnville School District will continue to commit to the following actions to address racial equity:

- Train and improve upon, as needed, the district's Anti-Discrimination Policy
- Increase the recruitment and retention of staff of color
- Improve Spanish/English translation services
- Commit to an additional/third year of racial equity training

- Systematically monitor discipline referral rates to ensure students of color are not disproportionately targeted
- Continue to support McMinnville's Hispanic PTA, the first in the state
- Continue to support the Hispanic Parent Advisory Council leadership
- Plan for an Equity Program Coordinator position
- Provide culturally relevant curriculum and materials for students
- Work with student groups and community agencies to achieve equity for all

We can and must do better. Our times demand it.

03 June, 2020

RESOLUTION NO. 20 - 001

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NORTHWEST REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT IN CLATSOP, COLUMBIA, TILLAMOOK, AND WASHINGTON COUNTIES, OREGON AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF A BOARD EQUITY POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, Northwest Regional Education Service District (NWRESA) is committed to equity, anti-racism, and the success of each and every student; and

WHEREAS, we focus on attaining student outcomes that are not predicted by race, ethnicity, family economic status, mobility, language, country of origin, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, or zip code; and

WHEREAS, the murder of unarmed Black men and women around the country has prompted a nation-wide call for change; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors (the "Board") stands in solidarity with its students and community to declare that the lives of Black students and Black people matter; and

WHEREAS, the Board's declaration that the lives of Black students and the Black community matter does not negate the commitment to serve all students but rather reaffirms the

Board's commitment to addressing the disparities and inequity of different student groups including students of color; and WHEREAS, the formulation and adoption of policies, recorded in writing, will constitute the basic method by which the Board will exercise its leadership in the operation of the NWRESD; and

WHEREAS, the Board has the authority and responsibility to establish policy and create from time to time committees as it may deem necessary or expedient to accomplish a specific but limited purpose.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Directors of the Northwest Regional Education Service District will create and develop an Equity Policy Advisory Committee to address matters related to discrimination, racism, or prejudice, to promote ideas of organizational anti-racism, and to make policy revision and creation recommendations to the Board to accomplish these goals.

SECTION 1. AUTHORITY

The Equity Policy Advisory Committee will make recommendations to the Board focused on racial equity in policies and practices.

SECTION 2. GOALS

The Equity Policy Advisory Committee will

- a. gather promising practices and tools from across the country.
- b. establish clear, consensus-based recommendations on best policy and practices to advance the equity and inclusion efforts across the organization.
- c. audit district policies with an equity lens and anti-racism focus
- d. assess and recommend consistent policies regarding anti-racism, diversity, equity, inclusion and sovereignty
- e. support strategies for staff recruitment, hiring, on-boarding, retention and promotion through an equity lens

SECTION 3. MEMBERSHIP

The Equity Policy Advisory Committee shall be made up of a minimum of two board members, but no more than three. Further, the Equity Policy Advisory Committee shall have a total membership of no less than seven members and no more than ten members to be composed of board members, staff, community, and leaders within the region. Appointment of staff members, when appropriate, will be made by the Superintendent. Additionally, the Board may provide for the method of appointing other members to the committee.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Resolution is effective immediately upon adoption. ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of the District this 15th day of September, 2020.

NORTHWEST REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE
DISTRICT, CLATSOP, COLUMBIA, TILLAMOOK,
AND WASHINGTON COUNTIES, OREGON

By: _____
Chair

ATTEST:

By: _____
Superintendent