

**HARLEM BOARD OF EDUCATION
EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE (COTW)
MINUTES
OF
SEPTEMBER 4, 2024**

9. **EQUITY:** (Limited up to 60 minutes) Start time is 4:35 p.m.

Administrator: Jason Blume, Assistant Superintendent for Communications & Community Relations

9.A. Roll Call

Absent: Evelyn Meeks

Scott, Emily, Mike V., Marya, Elana, Kyra, Erin, Ryan, Becky L., Abbi, Terese, Maria, Terrell, Kris, Jason

9.B. Meeting Minutes Consensus: August 14, 2024 – Unanimous Consensus to approve, no objections

9.C. Public Comments (if any) none

9.D. Discussion

“Unpacking Our Implicit Bias”

Presentation & Activity by Marya Nelson

Olson Park will doing the activity on October SIP Day

Book – “Culturally Responsive Teaching & The Brain” is a good read

Your Lizard Brain is designed to keep us safe. Our Comfort Zone, safest place

Your experiences result in your responses, i.e. thundering and lightening.

It is instinctual, not intentional

Implicit bias is formed

Requires work to retain

It is the part that makes us vulnerable and open to some kind of emotional or physical attach

Your lizard brain will try a variety of scare tactics. Stress hormones start to flood the brain such as cortisol and adrenaline to short circuit

Being with intentional

Why is the response coming up for you

Where does it come from

Identify your cultural frames of reference

Map your cultural reference points

Widen your interpretation

Identify your triggers

Practice emotional self-management

Reflection sheet in the book would be a great activity to do with others

Reflect

How does this apply to classrooms, playgrounds, lunchrooms

How the brain responds and interacts with others

No way to dismantle the implicit bias, but we have to understand where it comes from before we dismantle

“The Hard Wiring Happiness” is another resource. You can use this with staff. How did your family identify, where did you live, what is the story for your family, who attended college, family folklore or stories about family, family traditions

Cultural Responsiveness Survey will be done with staff at OP. Vanderbilt Peabody College, Iris Center

QR Code Scan for survey questions

End of presentation

Jason reviewed a prior session relating to the use of the word “normal”.

The compass will tell you where you are at with your feelings.

Perspective is a particular attitude or the way of regarding something.

They come from societal influences, life experiences

Activity:

What is your dominant hand - most things are designed for right-handed people

Consciousness – state of being awake and aware of one’s surroundings

Clips were shown on bias advertising

Building E Team Support –

Abbie – HoLA Program, staff have worked hard with 10 new staff coming in and 125 students to feel welcome and a part of Machesney. Staff tee shirts are worn as well.

Elana noted that OP shares busses with Machesney and there is a bit of chaos and this year it is much larger due to MC being larger and the HoLA Program. It was eye-opening at OP having a double in busses this year and all the children that are coming to us and the language barrier that exists between staff and the HoLA students. The feeling of helplessness is there as staff want to help them but they cannot communicate. Staff can reverse this to see how it feels when you cannot communicate.

Kyra noted that all homecoming flyers have been translated into six languages and they are posted everywhere. Seeing the impact of that to foster that sense of belonging is wonderful. There is a shift in culture as a result of the equity work.

The conversation at the last meeting as to what the goal is or intended outcome. It is just to have these conversations and learn what we don't know.

Ana Luisa noted that she noticed at the high school she was talking to newcomers and them being a part of Harlem and the flyers provided the information for all students to feel a part of the school community. They feel valued and being seen as a part of Harlem.

Equity adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kris Arduino,
Recording Secretary