

**Equity Committee Meeting Minutes
Eugene Public Schools District 4J
Virtually, Zoom Meeting**

May 13, 2021
4:30 pm

PRESENT: Ann Cole, Laura Dahill, Betsy Boyd, Gary Campbell, Maya Rabasa, Eric Richardson, Edward Olivos, T. Anil Oommen, Members; Anne Marie Levis, Judy Newman, Board Members; Cydney Vandercar, Misael Flores Gutierrez, Charis McGaughy, Brooke Wagner, David Jacobson, Karen Hardin, Leila Shuck, Oscar Loureiro, staff; Pooja Bhatt, Aimee Craig, Monica Cox, guests.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Flores Gutierrez called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. As a precursor to the meeting he stated he would take roll by asking each committee member to consider the question: What, in your opinion, is the most important thing a high school student should know before graduation?

Committee members Ann Cole, Laura Dahill, Gary Campbell, Betsy Boyd, Maya Rabasa, and Eric Richardson each responded.

II. Update on All Students Belong

Ms. Levis and Ms. Newman introduced SeeChange Consulting Firm and turned the meeting over to them: Aimee Craig, Pooja Bhatt, and Monica Cox.

Ms. Craig provided a slide presentation, School and Student Assessment Update. She indicated that it represented the first phase of assessment which would last through June. Items that would be addressed would be school and student safety, shared understanding, drawing from others, and focus groups. She added that, currently, the priority would be race and disabilities.

Group discussion followed regarding the assessment process, who would make up the focus groups, and whether those with disabilities would be able to verbalize their feelings.

Ms. Boyd questioned whether elementary students would be involved in the assessment process and Ms. Craig responded that elementary would not be included in the early stages of the assessment.

Ms. Rabasa asked if classified staff would be included in focus groups and Ms. Bhatt answered in the affirmative.

Ms. Cox pointed out that the data obtained was from School Year 2019-20 and was analyzed by grade level not per school. She reminded the group that they would be dealing with race data only as that had been determined to be the priority. The slide data displayed the likelihood of discipline, the likelihood of discipline by race and the likelihood of suspension.

The group broke up for eight minutes so members could review the information on the slides, and return with questions and/or comments. The committee brought forward many questions, including:

- What is discipline? What is expulsion?
- Is there a record of discipline or what would lead to expulsion?
- What would be the definition of bad behavior?
- Do the students know the rules and are they fair?
- How do stress factors effect behavior (i.e. hunger, homelessness).
- The importance of hearing from parents of disabled.
- The possibility of a uniformity form that would list discipline.
- Learning versus discipline (should the incident be a learning experience?)
- The fact that the data has not changed from years ago.
- The drop, indicated on the slides, from discipline levels in elementary versus high school.
- Does the data indicate adult behavior not that of students?
- Does discipline vary by the race of the teacher?
- Mediation skills for allowing differing points of view and for mediating disagreements?
- Data that might include stressors that the student may be experiencing (homelessness, poverty, domestic abuse, mental illness, etc.)?

Ms. Rabasa queried the reaction to the decision, in June, to not incorporate Student Resource Officers (SRO). Superintendent Vandercar responded that the SROs only wrote tickets and information was only reported to the police department so they would have no data from those incidents.

Mr. Richardson commented that normal is different to different cultures and conforming would not resolve the issue.

Mr. Campbell commented that the disparity in race, among staff, influences student behavior. Ms. Rabasa agreed.

Mr. Richardson questioned whether they should be looking at assumptions or children; what is the student's relationship to his/her peers and practicing restorative justice.

Ms. Boyd re-expressed her concern regarding discipline and behavior among those students with disabilities.

Ms. Bhatt responded that a slide presentation including those with disabilities would be ready in August.

Mr. Flores Gutierrez thanked the presenters and noted that he looked forward to their next presentation.

III. Public Comment

None.

IV. Closing & Updates

The next meeting of the School District 4J Equity Committee is scheduled for June 10, 2021.
The meeting was adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Marlene Hockema)