

## Equity Action Team Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2018 6-8pm

**In Attendance:** Casey Sommers, Andrea Fontana, Angie Jenkins, Venessa Goldberg, Katie May, Jessi Berkelhammer, Hilary Dameron, Jennifer Mayton, Zemra Mayton, Bridget Lamp, Mary Kimball, Devin Bruckner, Trinia Washington, JoyAnn Pardo (and additional others who might not have signed in)

6:15 Venessa Goldberg welcomed everyone to the meeting. She asked people to say their name and to talk about a good feeling they had at school growing up (something we would like to see our students have). Many people mentioned the connections they felt to teachers.

6:30 Angie Jenkins led a Connection Activity. Each person filled out a questionnaire with questions such as “What is the story of your family in America?” and “Who were the heroes celebrated in your family/community? Who were the antiheroes?” People shared in small groups and then out to the whole group. Take away encouraged us to take the time to sit and have conversations with each other, learning from our perspectives and those of others.

7:00 Katie May updated the group on the Race and Equity work that has been happening at Thurgood Marshall this school year. (see the report below):

### Equity Action Team Report – 2-8-17

**\*BLM at School Week:** Lessons developed by teachers and admin on the R&E Team. Lesson each day. 3-5 student have an additional home-school connection with an assignment to interview a parent. All grades end tomorrow with a review of the week and lesson on social action. Students have shown high levels of engagement throughout. Asked great questions. Evidence that when we use curriculum that is relevant to students lives and honors who they are, engagement really goes up.

**\*Staff R&E** – Goal is to reduce disproportionality in discipline. Focused around students with the greatest number of office referrals in the 1<sup>st</sup> 5 weeks of the school year. 3-pronged approach –

1. Work with staff to build skills to be more culturally responsive: CRT&TB, R&E PD once per month, R&E modules developed by the district.

2. Increase communication with parents to build a stronger partnership and connection to school.

3. Partner each child with a mentor who meets with them at least weekly and can be a regular source of support and connection to school. Many of the students were new to our school and did not feel connected.

**\* Playground** – area where most discipline is coming from. More students, not a lot of equipment. Trying to set this up as a space where students feel successful and know what to do. Hired a .5 PE teacher who start end of Jan. who previously work at Playworks and is highly invested in recess and PE. Teaching recess games during PE class, helping to plan for new

equipment to be purchased. Working with Ms. Kaloper to train the recess mentors. Also hired a Recess Supervisor who is on the playground for all lunch and afternoon recesses. Hoping to find funding for 4 day training with Playworks for whole school next year - \$9K

\* **Matumaini Counseling Services** – the focus of the executive director, James Norris is setting young black men up to succeed and he is developing a framework based on promoting community health in the Rainier Valley.

\* **BLT: Program Name Changes & New Vision**

\* **Social Studies:** Heavy focus on Civics Strand, along with Geography. We have spent some of our Staff Equity PD to explore the Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards (From Southern Poverty Law Center). R&E team asked each grade level team to create a lesson around the Identity standard as a team. BLM Lessons also align to SS standards. In addition, many of our teachers will be taking the Youth Uplift Challenge: Facing Differences. The goal is to help educators empower young people to reflect and take action toward building understanding, empathy and peace.

\***Math:** TM teachers have begun working with a district math coach and are exploring resources in addition to EnVision.

7:30 Casey Sommers introduced Equity Action Teams to share what they have been working on. The back of the agenda also had a list of “action” items people could get involved with and emails for team leads.

**1. Black Family Advocacy and Support Group (Angie Jenkins, Trinia Washington)**

Update Jan 2018: The group reconvened at the beginning of the school year and reviewed previous priorities with new members. In addition to offering input to the Race and Equity team regarding the discipline goal for frequently referred students of color, we discussed plans for Black Lives Matter week and National African American Parent Involvement Day. We decided that priorities for this year should be (1) Involvement in the recruitment, hiring and retention of more staff of color, (2) Efforts to engage and involve more black families in this work, and (3) Building relationships amongst the families that are currently involved in the hopes to attract more families to the group. We have a family social scheduled for February 27th.

**2. Facilitating Conversations Around Race and Equity (Valerie Ross, Diana Andsager)**

Update Feb 2018: Met in December 2017, discussed the idea of a Book club or Article club, Dionne Malatesta is working on a survey to see what families might be interested in reading/learning about.

**3. Supporting Our Scholars (Ann McNally)**

Update Feb 2018 1. Looked at data on who in TM attendance zone attends TM/goes elsewhere. The latest report showed that 113 of the 275 students in the TM attendance zone do not attend TM. We think it is concerning that only just over half of the kids assigned to TM as a neighborhood school actually choose it as their school. 2. Interest/conversation about why we have a math waiver and if this is in the best interest of Gen Ed students. 3. "Tutu's Pantry of Books" idea. 4. Resource list available to students translated at conferences, where translators are available (Meghan Kaloper took us up on this suggestion). Next year we would like to make sure resource list is translated (on paper or orally). 5. Conversation about getting info (ie, Pup Press) out to families in other languages, or monthly Pup Press

digest, or read on a robocall if a non-written language. 6. Drafted/sent letter to PTA regarding story in Pup Press about HS boundaries and associated call to action that prioritized interests of HCC students above interests of gen ed students.

### **Racial Equity in HCC (Devin Bruckner)**

Feb 2018 Update:

- Since Spring 2016, advocating for changes to increase eligibility of underrepresented groups in SPS' Highly Capable (HC) program
- Organized people to attend and speak at SPS Board Meetings in Spring 2017, Fall 2017 and Winter 2018
- Supporting Statewide bill to improve identification in HC practices
- Summer/Fall 2017 campaign to get-the-word out re: open referral window in communities of color
- Two large group meetings in Fall 2017 (1 in north, 1 in south)
- From Nov 2017-Feb 2018 supported proposals to increase # of HC pathways in high school
- District has made some small improvements, but more is needed
- Testing all 2nd graders in Title 1 schools in Spring saw improvements (31 students of color became eligible for HCC through the process, vs. 2 the prior year; 16 of those were Black or Latino, vs. 0 the prior year)

### **Social Studies (Andrea Fontana)**

Update Feb 2018: Staff have been exploring the Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards. Each team will develop and teach lesson related to "Identity" standard prior to Mid-winter break. Lessons will also be taught for Black Lives Matter at School week, Feb. 5-9.

### **Gender Issues (Andrea Radosevitch)**

No update. Zemra (K student in Tu/Hale) was present to ask a question: "Are there any holidays to celebrate women?" (she has noticed TM recognizes Thurgood Marshall, Martin Luther King Jr.) Group had a conversation around getting a group organized and calling it "Gender Equity" (instead of "Gender Issues"). Katie May mentioned a 5<sup>th</sup> grade group studying powerful women. Casey Sommers will email Dionne Malatesta, Jennifer Mayton, Andrea Radosevitch, and Venessa Goldberg to get the ball rolling!

8:15 Meeting concluded.