

F.W. Parker Charter Essential School

Minutes

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Meeting

Date and Time

Monday August 28, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Location

This meeting will be hosted online: <http://parker.school/deicommittee>

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Committee Members Present

B. Harrigan (remote), J. Green (remote), M. Silva-Rosa (remote), R. Whalen Crockett (remote), S. Razzetti (remote)

Committee Members Absent

G. Penna, L. Hayner, P. Gordon, T. Testa

Guests Present

emillymoura@icloud.com (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

R. Whalen Crockett called a meeting of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee of F.W. Parker Charter Essential School to order on Monday Aug 28, 2023 at 7:00 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

B. Harrigan made a motion to approve the minutes from May DEI Meeting on 05-08-23.

S. Razzetti seconded the motion.

The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

A. Welcome

Everyone introduced themselves and shared what they are looking forward to. This includes children starting new schools, one member starting a new job, and one new member starting college!

B. Update on Transportation Goals

Brian updates us on the new program for transportation provided by MART, regional transport between Leominster Boys and Girls Club and Parker.

Questions raised are the safety concerns. In morning, parents will need to wait until students are picked up at the Boys and Girls club in Leominster. Other question about the demographics of families involved. Is there contingency plan if there is push back for students waiting for transportation. Boys and Girls club did say that at our cost, we could hire staff to open the center for children to wait inside. Other questions raised were: How many of these riders may be convenience riders and how many are doing this out of cost and necessity? Are there families that could not participate because of the cost?

Another future expansion is a late bus. Would just a later bus make sense? Students who don't need this could work at school until the late dismissal. We will learn more about this opportunity at our next meeting.

C. Enrollment Next Steps

This committee previously was the enrollment committee. It shifted to DEI and still has an enrollment element. The board would like to have the enrollment committee return, and the DEI committee will still have an enrollment component, but there would be two separate groups with a dedicated focus towards enrollment. The ambassadors program began last year and would be led by a board member on the enrollment committee. Pam Gordon has offered to serve as the chair of the enrollment committee. This will provide board level leadership for enrollment.

About five years ago we shifted from enrollment to DEI. We then focused on lottery issues, faculty access to lottery, and other issues. DEI in other sectors works to apply DEI principles to every single committee, the DEI committee is responsible for making all committee work engaged in DEI principles. Marketing, recruitment, supporting faculty efforts. That should be efforts of this committee. Diversity of Board, what other issues we should be discussing, etc. That is how you better embed DEI work in all aspects of the organization. This committee will be an important voice for the strategic planning. It is also critical to faculty recruitment. DEI is the table and umbrella for all of our other work.

Current enrollment challenge. We had more children unenroll than expected this summer. Last year we ended at 390, we were down in 370s, we brought in 16 kids mid-year. Daily census was 390 at the end of the school year. We are in the high 370s again. We are going to want to do a fall campaign and fall lottery. The sooner we can get to 390, the better. This will be brought up at September board meeting. It will be important to have an

ambassadors' meeting before that. It will take a month for open application, two-week window, and we would like to accept kids at the beginning of November. We know how to do this, we had positive energy, there is no reason to wait. We would play an important role in diversify as we do outreach.

Questions were raised about retention of mid-year additions. There were also questions about strategizing for recruitment. We need to get into our mindset that we are always recruiting. This is not how we have operated in the past. This requires a different level of attention and capacity. Mario reminds us of community outreach done in the past. And how are we educating our community to be formal and informal ambassadors of Parker (at any community event).

Emily asks question about how students are onboarded and would we bring in a number of students after different times of the year.

D. When, where/how & who?

What do you think about the first Monday of each month? What do you think about in person vs. online? We should be cautious about Monday holidays. Face to face and in person in doable. Online is also super convenient. WE will meet next on Monday, October 2nd at 7:00. At our next meeting we will be updated on recruitment, transportation and focus the majority of our time on examining graduations speeches made by seniors in June, 2023.

III. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
R. Whalen Crockett