

F.W. Parker Charter Essential School

Minutes

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion October Meeting

Date and Time

Monday October 2, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Location

<http://parker.school/deicommittee>

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

Committee Members Present

B. Harrigan (remote), E. Moura (remote), J. Green (remote), L. Hayner (remote), P. Gordon (remote), R. Whalen Crockett (remote), S. Razzetti (remote), T. Testa (remote)

Committee Members Absent

A. Vacca, G. Penna, M. Silva-Rosa

Guests Present

Biskut McGlaughlin (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 Oct 2, 2023 at 7:00 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

L. Hayner made a motion to approve the minutes from Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Meeting on 08-28-23.

S. Razzetti seconded the motion.

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

II. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

A. Welcome

What is your why? Many of these themes were repeated throughout this conversation. Passion for DEI, supporting student learning, paying it forward, it takes the whole community, this work is meaningful and important, we want to increase diversity and belonging at Parker, #10 Principle, my children felt belonging at Parker and it made all the difference, creating a space for all students.

B. Update on Transportation Goals

Brief update from Brian. This is an ongoing relationship with MART. It is ongoing. More will be related in upcoming meetings.

C. Enrollment Update

Brief update from Brian and Sonia: We are running an October lottery currently. We are experiencing a decrease in enrollment. This is reflected in all traditional public and public charter schools in the area with the exception of Littleton.

We currently have 370 students. We are budgeted for 390 and have a charter for 400. The 7th grade class is the most diverse class on record at 13%.

There is an enrollment committee that was just created. Pam Gordon is the chair.

D. What are Parker's graduates asking of us?

Graduation speeches from 2023 can be found here: <https://youtu.be/hgjli8Bf9WU?si=px1xKEJhWLXh6kLb>

First, we listened to Emilly Moura's graduation speech. Next in rounds we shared with we heard in the speech. Observations were: difference created strength, power of being different, fitting in and being okay with not fitting in, seeing parents are warriors, giving voice to the strength that is her mom and dad, expression of a desire to purchase certain clothes, welcoming community, not being represented, discrepancy in demographics, makes for challenging space to learn.

Emilly shared the story of when she pitched the speech. Peers and speech coach were encouraging but also wanted Emilly to avoid "drama". She was encouraged to take out parts of her speech that she felt shouldn't be but out. She wanted to give voice to those who couldn't speak and use her speech as a platform to say what was important.

Next, we transitioned to watch Biskut McGlaughlin's speech. The group again described what they heard and saw in rounds. They said they saw bravery, a call to action where our community can do better, she said 'Parker can be both supportive and hurtful,' Parker

has infinite room for growth, we must hold ourselves accountable, there were racial microaggressions and lack of action, 'Parker as a witness and collaborator,' Biskut used this a platform -- as a call to action, her intention was both to show her own growth as well as where Parker can grow, framing roles of diverse population, a measure of growth and development, specific and concrete, development of identify, self-love.

Biskut shared in her reflection that this was one of her bravest moments at Parker. She wants to give back to that it will get better for younger students of color. She relied on her family and her peers of color for support in this process of giving the speech. The feels of these people were most important to her. She did hear that some staff members were shocked which are further implications for the need for development.

We moved to the next questions: What are these students asking of us?

Ideas: How can we normalize discussions and create a community of calling out micro and macroaggressions of racism so that students do not feel that they must wait for their opportunity to give a graduation speech? How do we create this space to ask ab out how Parker has helped a student of color, and how has it hurt this student? How do we work to diversify our student and faculty without centering whiteness? How do we prepare students for a more diverse world? How do we transition from being bystanders/observers to agents of change? What have we normalized? Is there anything that we see wrong with what has been normalized? How do we further create an environment where student voice is normalized, action taking? Other issues that were raised in the conversation were that many students are used to hearing microaggressions at home and bring these ideas to school. How can faculty point out aggressions towards some communities of students and not others? How can we continuously do this anti-racism work, notice, empowerment, action, because when we don't act, we are also sending a message. We need to have intentional spaces, beyond the graduation platform, that push students and faculty to speak about race and racism early on. Students also need to have a safe adult that they can go to and talk about these things.

In November we will reflect on this conversation and discussion implications for our work and the larger work of the Parker board.

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 8:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
P. Gordon