

Wooster City Schools
Diversity Task Force
Steering Committee Meeting
6-11-2021
1:00pm
NOTES
In-Person
144 Market St., Wooster

Present: Steve Shapiro (on the phone), Yvonne Williams, Michael Tefs, Gabe Tudor, Sue Herman, and Cameron Maneese

1. Welcome - The Steering Committee welcomed new Wooster City School District Superintendent Gabe Tudor and School Board President, Sue Herman.
2. Notes - February 18, 2021 Steering Committee notes are posted on the WCSD website under the District -> Diversity Task Force tabs.
3. Transition Plan for DTF 2021-22
As part of welcoming Superintendent Tudor discussion took place regarding the original creation of the DTF. Tefs noted that the first deliverable of the Diversity Task Force was to increase the recruitment and hiring diversity in the WCSD. This has not changed and needs to remain the number one priority. The Task Force decided to then add a curriculum deliverable and a social / culture deliverable. Committees were established and met for two years developing a final report with recommendations to the WCSD Board of Education in June 2019. For the last two years the Steering Committee has met three times a year and the DTF has attended an annual report that is then given to the BOE regarding how the WCSD is doing in addressing its recommendations.

The committee discussed how the Steering Committee would look going forward as its current facilitator, Maneese, will be leaving the position after the July 27th DTF annual meeting. Discussion took place to increase the capacity of the Steering Committee by 3-4 people, including BOE member Dr. Kris Boone. Shapiro recommended that a teacher and student also participate. Regarding finding a new DTF Facilitator, Shapiro, Williams, and Tudor will work on this.

Tefs discussed how current deliverables could be reframed to be more tangible and objective, with concrete outcome data. This would help the district and community know that progress is being made.

The primary goal remains increasing diversity of WCSD staff. To that end he noted the increased relationship with the College of Wooster Education Department and recommended that Tudor meet Matthew Broda, Chair of the department. Tefs also noted new recruitment strategies and materials that are in place.

The curriculum deliverable was discussed. Tefs recommended that to meet the curriculum goal all curriculum materials that come before the BOE to be approved should first go through an equity and inclusion lens by the faculty who are submitting their recommendation to the board. While all curriculum changes must meet academic content standards, they should also acknowledge bias in the curriculum and plan ways to ameliorate this bias or address it.

An important deliverable that has been in process for much of this academic year is the establishment of Implicit Bias Training for all faculty and staff. WCSD is signing a MOU with the OSU Kirwan Institute to offer 20 slots for "Train the Trainer" workshops. Those trained will then offer on going Implicit Bias Training. These trainings will be remote and in person. The school system will request 20 volunteers to be trained. Scott Miller will help coordinate this effort. It is a four-month process to be trained. If all goes well trainings should begin the second semester of 2021 - 2022 academic year. BOE members may participate

<https://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/>

These three deliverables (Recruitment, Curriculum, and Implicit Bias Training) should be clearly stated on the WCSD website.

4. Academic year Update – Tefs reported that the Civil Rights course taught by Brian Questel is still being offered. It is a semester elective. It is hoped that with the return to in-person classes student enrollment should grow. It was noted that the adoption of curriculum changes take place each spring.

Tefs reported that while the HS principal and the superintendent meet with Student Council. The council's main area of interest this year was School Spirit and trying to keep students engaged and uplifted during this trying year. He did note that the superintendent should continue to add diversity, equity, and inclusion updates to his meetings with the Student Council.

Restorative justice practices in the WCSD - Tefs noted that the public needs to be better informed on the restorative justice principles that WCSD uses to address student behavior. He noted that the school system is educated in the impact of trauma on students and many in the school district have been trained in how to respond to student behavior asking what is behind it, not how to react to it. Suspension and expulsion are a last resort.

5. Recruitment 2021 – Tefs asked that Nancy Johnson of Human Resources be contacted regarding diverse candidate data for 20-21. Recruitment was impeded by it taking place virtually this year. It is hoped that this will improve next year with in-person recruitment fairs.

6. One Book / Reading Under the Lights – *I am Enough* by Grace Byers and illustrated by Keturah A. Bobo, was selected as the community read for WCSD students and families.
7. The July 27th DTF Annual Report – This will take place at 5:30pm in the Large Group Instruction Room (LGIR) where the BOE meet. The annual report will be directly before the WCSD BOE meeting. Technology will be available for this meeting to be both a Zoom meeting and will be in-person. Directions about how to access the Zoom option will be forthcoming.

It is recommended that Tudor and Herman create the agenda for the July 27, 2021 DTF meeting and that Tudor, Herman, Williams, and Boone all participate in giving the report.

Respectfully submitted,

Cameron Maneese