

Committee on Student Equity
End of the Year Report
July 12, 2021

“Even though volunteerism is at an all-time high according to the U.S. Census Bureau, three of every four citizens do not give any time into the community in which they live because they think it will take too much time or they think they are not qualified.” ⁽¹⁾

Thank you for being that one citizen in four that is willing to volunteer.

After reflecting and processing the conversations of the June 8, 2021, meeting, it is important to report back to the Committee and the School Site Council on what has been accomplished over the past 9 months. Historical information is included with this chronological report for background.

- In November of 2019, Mr. Reed brought to the School Site Council (SSC) meeting the issue of our black students being accosted by Union Mine HS students during a football game. The Union Mine athletes taunted the athletes, using racist language - with no adult within the CIF organization to counter. The response of the coach was, “Well if you had won the game you wouldn’t be complaining about this.” In February of 2020, a proposal was made to the SSC about how we might tackle this issue, although the SSC was assured by leadership that this issue had been addressed. That proposal was also provided to the Committee on the Google Docs site:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15PXaA9HHsYVMwu91AJollFgBu51nu4FU>

The Student Athlete Working Group led by Counselor Onisha Cook is working to bring awareness to the accomplishments of students who are often overlooked, through an “Athlete of the Year” award. They are also tackling the most important issue, the Code of Conduct.

- In September of 2020, Mr. Reed brought to the School Site Council an incident that occurred during his on-line Zoom class whereby a student, with the video turned off, called Mr. Reed the n-word. There was dissatisfaction about how this was addressed by the leadership and so at that time, I proposed to the SSC that we needed to look at the Handbook and the included policies. After several emails and meetings between Mr. Reed, Mr. Richardson, and myself there was little headway made on this topic due to the limitations with District policy and its references to the Education Code. I am pleased that Mr. Christopher Hicks recently agreed to facilitate this discussion with the Handbook Working Group.
- In October of 2020, the SSC agreed to allow for the creation of a *Committee on Student Equity*, reporting to the SSC on issues of racism that had been documented and that

were not allowed to be discussed within the short monthly SSC meetings. The only requirement was that the Committee had to operate within the guidelines of the bylaws of the SSC. There were six volunteers in attendance at the first meeting.

- In January of 2021, concerned with the mental and physical health of our students, the Committee came together and created a document of community resources that would help to direct our students and their families to District resources including meals, food banks, information on energy bill relief, and other services available to them. We provided this information to the school counselors, community youth groups, and other organizations such as the Rosemont Community Association.
- In February of 2021, the Committee pushed for anti-bias training, which had been on the top of the teacher 'wish list' since the unofficial SSC summer discussions of 2020. Tired of waiting for the District's promise for this training, Ms. Vigil agreed that this could be funded from her budget. However, she asked that the selection of the training individual(s) or organization to be vetted through the Committee on Student Equity. At that time, I wrote a scope of work, solicited potential vendors with the help of many on the Committee, and created a matrix for evaluating the providers of these services.
- In March of 2021, with over thirty in attendance to discuss the training, it was instead decided to start to address the training issues by hiring a facilitator for the **Book Club**. The idea was that it was important for the leadership and teachers would learn the language and skills necessary to embark on this challenging work and the uncomfortable discussions that were required to address the racist issues at Rosemont High School.

This is where I believe the 'weird change in direction' alluded to in our last meeting may have happened. While this was not a weird change in direction it was the point at which the activities of the Book Club were bring reported and discussed in Committee because many of the Committee members are parents and are from the community and do not have access to the Book Club discussions. The focus of the Committee continued to be on Students. As I told Dr. Stevens when she attended one of our first Committee meetings, this Committee is focused on *the students* and not human resource issues that are on-going between the leadership and teachers. While I realize these two are related, I continue to defer to Ascribe and Mr. Moore on these topics. Their focus is improving relationships on campus and working on anti-bias training.

- In April of 2021, the Committee provided input into the SPSA development for the 2021-22 school year.

In addition to all activities above we have collected data!!

- A student survey taken in September of 2020.
- A 'homework assignment' for all the teachers in March of 2021. This homework will be reviewed and used as a basis for work of Committee over the summer.

We have expanded the **Rosemont Reads** program which kicked off on Tuesday, June 8th and extended an invitation to the in-coming first-year student from Einstein Middle School to participate. This is a great collaboration between Mr. Hopley and the English Department at RHS and the Rosemont Community.

But most importantly, we have created an **Equity Statement** that has been released but requires more fanfare, follow-up and enforcement than has currently been provided.

It has been brought to my attention that Ms. Vigil put out a statement regarding the Equity Statement to the students and their parents in the Wolverine Update of 6/13/21. In that email it is noted that there is not yet a plan, no responsibility has been taken for the situation that has prompted the creation of an Equity Statement or Committee, but it does recognize the working groups that have "gained traction and will continue to move forward with their work."

The simple rolling out of the Equity Statement does not address the issues that continue to plague Rosemont High School. In preparation for the 2021-22 school year, the summer meetings of the Committee on Student Equity will discuss the following:

- (1) Acknowledging and making things 'right' with those [students] who have been hurt by injustices and the lack of equity, whether intentional or not.
- (2) Working with leadership to state what changes are going to be made to address this.

Summer meetings for the Committee are Monday, July 19 at 5:30pm and Monday, August 16th at 5:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Meline, Chair
Student Equity Committee

⁽¹⁾David Lazarus, "You Can Deduct Charitable Contributions. Why No Tax Benefit for Volunteering?," Los Angeles Times, latimes.com January 2020.