

Meeting Minutes
Committee on Student Equity
April 27, 2021

In Attendance

Chesshuwa Beckett (teacher)
Lisa Meline (community)
Matthew Naumann (teacher)
Sonia Lewis (community)
Scott Singer (teacher)
Keeynon Oliver (parent)
James Hopley (teacher)
Cline Moore (community)
Sue Richards (Crawford's Books)
Rebecca Siegert McGill (teacher)
Daeja Scott (student)
Kelly Martinez (teacher)
Michael Reed (teacher)
Rob
Christopher Hicks (community)
Kim D.
Steve Boettner (teacher)
Amber Cosby (parent)
Paul Kato (community)
Imani Waweru (student)
Prima Garcia-Hopley
Onisha Cook (counselor)
Amofah Brobbey (community)

MN moved to approve the meeting minutes. LM seconded. No discussion. Ayes; no nays. Motion carries.

Mr. Cline introduced Sonia Lewis who is a community member and guest speaker for this evening's meeting. She is a BLM activist, advocate for many. She has been interviewed by NPR and has degrees in history and psychology as well as education. She is graduate of Spelman college and received a Master's degree from SFSU. She is owner of the Black-owned Business ASCRIBE where she marries education equity and social justice.

SL began the presentation with several key statement. She always starts with grounding. The following are the main elements of her presentation with some additional notes to help summarize.

- The Normalization of White Supremacy Erases Many Who Matter. Who do we have the possibility of Becoming in an overly racialized and socially violent world?

- This is a journey on a regular occurring bus route. Not everyone gets on arrives at the same time along the journey. But all will take the journey.
- We want to be inclusive of those people of the core who have been erased from the equation. We think of Native Americans and enslaved Africans. She asked everyone to breath together. Holding it in; exhaling to realize all the things that cause us to normalize. Release anxiety and fear.

*It is important to Ground & Acknowledge....
That we have the power to shape outcomes & expectations*

- **Breath is life, so is land and water....take a deep breath in (and exhale). Recognize that we are about to cover some heavy material that may evoke/trigger past experiences - release all of your anxiety/fear; and replace it with changed energy. In our collective efforts, there are great possibilities for equity and humanity.**
- **Breath in (and exhale) - American COLONIZERS brought enslaved Africans (not slaves) to this land, they were met by indigenous groups throughout all of the Americas.**
- **We acknowledge the Nisenan, Maidu, Patwin, Wintu, Me-Wuk and Miwok people, who are still amongst us. This was their land before colonization. Like the Africans, Indigenous people were also stolen, indoctrinated/conditioned, and killed off in large numbers - GENOCIDE by definition.**
- **Breath in (and exhale) - Along with acknowledging the land, we have to recognize this country wouldn't be what it is, had it not been for those stolen Black bodies who built and fed this country. Not by choice, Africans lost that which connects them to Africa - language, religion, cultural, ritual, etc. This disconnect is coupled with never being given the full privileges of America due to ENSLAVEMENT.**



Possibilities Require Bravery

Goals:

- **Engage in courageous conversations around Race, Equity & Belonging**
- **Can we agree - systemic racism in education causes unwarranted harm and oppression to the most marginalized and disenfranchised....if you can, then**
- **It's fundamental to embrace shared language and values**
- **YOU are the co-creators. YOU are a part of the equation. You matter.**
- **Creation of an anti-racist work & learning environment requires more than an acknowledgment, but a strategic plan that centers ALL Rosemont scholars and stakeholders**

Equity Strategist & Anti-Racism Impact Activist
Sonia Lewis, Founder/CEO



Who
Am
I....

- Born and raised in the Bay Area, but literally a **California kid**....the product of Richmond, Compton, Oakland and Sacramento.
- **Deep, rich roots** in the Midwest and South - traced family ancestry back to **slave plantations** in both North Carolina & Texas
- **Proud graduate of Spelman College**, THE top HBCU for more than 30 years, earning degrees in History & Psychology; as well, earned Master's in Education & Secondary Teaching Credential from San Francisco State University
- **Wife, mother, educator, community activist and entrepreneur**
- In my Whitney Houston voice, I often hum "I believe the children are our future." I pay homage to my 7-year-old self who has taught me the most about challenging systems. At age 7, I refused to say the Pledge of Allegiance because I didn't see **"liberty and justice" for people who looked like me, my family and my community.**
- From a young age, I was determined to beat these systems at their game; and I began **imagining a world where equity and humanity** can be experienced by all humans.
- I am **determined** to live and work with people and in places where **humanity matters.**
- I am **unapologetic & authentic** about being and centering the Black-lived experience in very intentional ways and be **"Blackity" Black**, for whatever that means, it is my super-power.

My Work's Mission, Vision & Commitment:

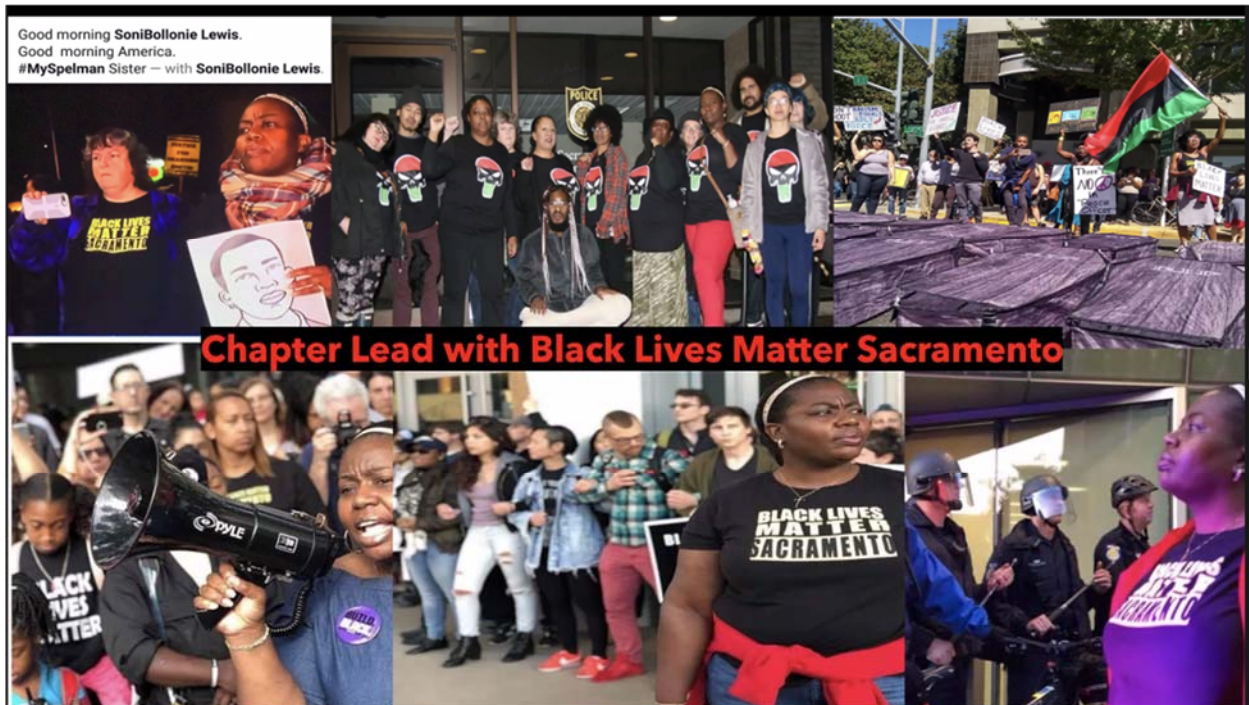
We are anti-racist impact activists, who influence/strategize/specialize in equity-based outcomes....we stand on the shoulders of our ancestors and their contributions to this country and the world.

For as long as I can remember, I have been re-imagining a world where humanity supersedes policy and established norms that have literally and figuratively been the root cause of death to the most marginalized people in community....the Black community.

Core to this work, is a commitment to curate safe/brave space for challenging conversations about race. So, we create pathways that make room for the things our ancestors earned/deserved but were ultimately denied.

Total Transparency

I HAVE ALSO USED MY
PRIVILEGE TO FIGHT FOR
SOCIAL JUSTICE - AND YES,
THE IMAGES ON THE NEXT
SLIDE ARE ME



Chapter Lead with Black Lives Matter Sacramento

There is a false assumption that those who are protesting are uneducated; unemployed. Many of the people in these photos hold master's Degrees. Including our speaker this evening Sonia Lewis.

We Proudly Accomplished...

We helped author and sponsor AB1492 (aka Stephon Clark Law) and SB392 - Police accountability & transparency state laws

We for the city of Sacramento to outfit all officers with body cams

We demanded the city of Sacramento show video footage within 30 when there is a violent officer involved incident

We shut down freeways, streets and traffic - as a message to pause for life taken

WE STOP THE BIGGEST MONEY MAKER, NOT ONCE BUT TWICE - SHUTTING DOWN GOLDEN 1 ARENA, King's games & NBA

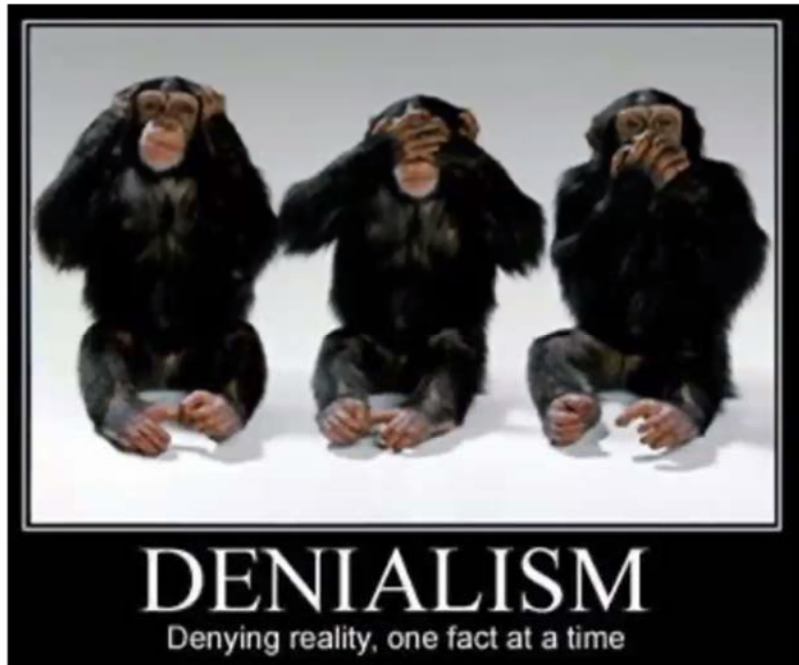
We sat with the leaders of the Kings organization & NBA to built a structure for community development and engagement - Build Black

We successfully SUED Sheriff Scott Jones for violating our 1st amendment rights and calling out his base to put our lives in danger

Led successful campaigns to shine a light on the inequities of the Sheriff, DA, and County Judicial offices

- We demanded the city of Sacramento provide culturally competent training for all cops
- We cop watch and urge officers to not use lethal force and deadly weapons
- We court watch - to send a message to judges that people are innocent until proven guilty
- We have fought to eliminate money bail
- We support families and communities traumatized by State Sanctioned Violence
- We partnered with the ACLU and led "know your rights trainings"
- Don't believe the hype - employed, college educated with DEGREES (yes Ph.Ds), college students, high school students, all types of Black people and white folks too

You can no longer pretend not to know....



There's a song that comes to mind by Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes -
"If you don't know me by now, you will never ever ever know me...."

This is dedicated to knowing this struggle of survival:

#EmmettTill

#GeorgeFloyd

#BrionnaTaylor

#AhmaudArberry



....and so many countless others

In my 50 short years of life, I can say Black lives don't/haven't mattered in this country because I know the sound, taste and smell of tear gas while peacefully protesting....and the threat is systemic oppression is real.

**Black lives
don't matter
in this country.**

Have you noticed?

vs.



**Big Elephants like:
Stolen Bodies &
Colonized Land**

WHAT WOULD AMERICA BE
WITHOUT BLACK AND
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE...?



This is not about blame or shame. This is about what is happening in this moment. We cannot continue to perpetuate white supremacy.

This is the road to racial restoration.



Covid exposed everything. Anti-blackness is the worst form of racism and impacts all communities, not just communities of color. Policy changes are needed.



People who have existed in a perpetual state of resistance. All oppression is connected.



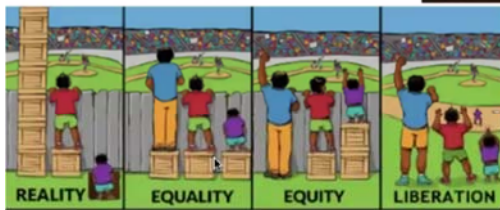
Washington Post Article:
"I'm Your Black Friend, but I won't educate you about RACISM. That's on you."
-by B. L. Wilson, June 8, 2020



IF BLACK CHILDREN
 ARE "OLD ENOUGH"
 TO EXPERIENCE
 RACISM THEN
 WHITE CHILDREN
 ARE "OLD ENOUGH"
 TO LEARN ABOUT IT

BLAIR IMANI

DO YOUR HOMEWORK!



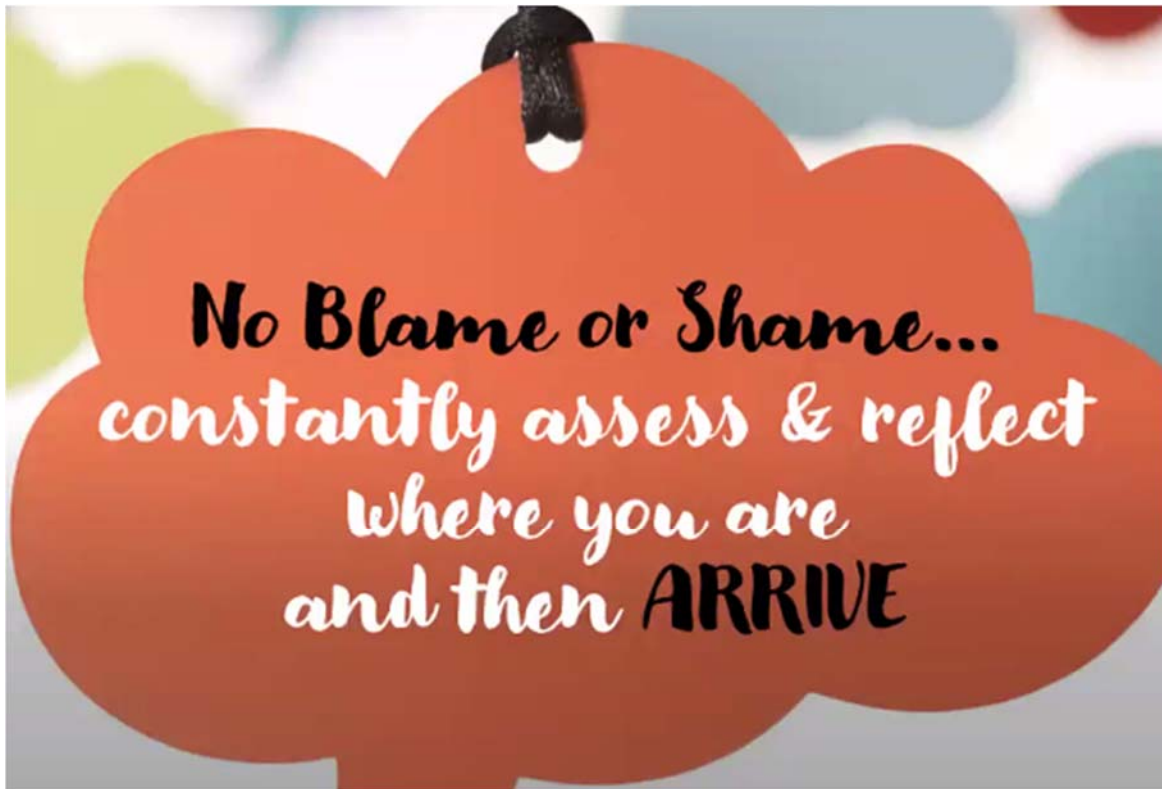
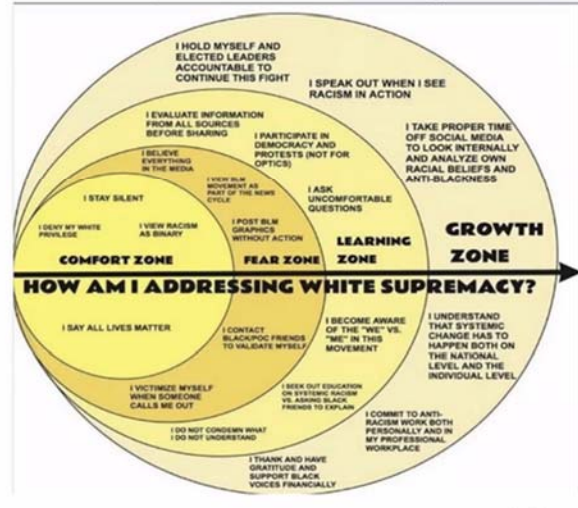
Equity in education — ANet

“WHAT’S THE PROBLEM WITH BEING ‘NOT RACIST’?”

It is a claim that signifies neutrality: ‘I am not a racist, but neither am I aggressively against racism.’ But there is no neutrality in the racism struggle. ... One either allows racial inequities to persevere, as a racist, or confronts racial inequities, as an antiracist. There is no in-between safe space of ‘not racist.’ The claim of ‘not racist’ neutrality is a mask for racism. ”

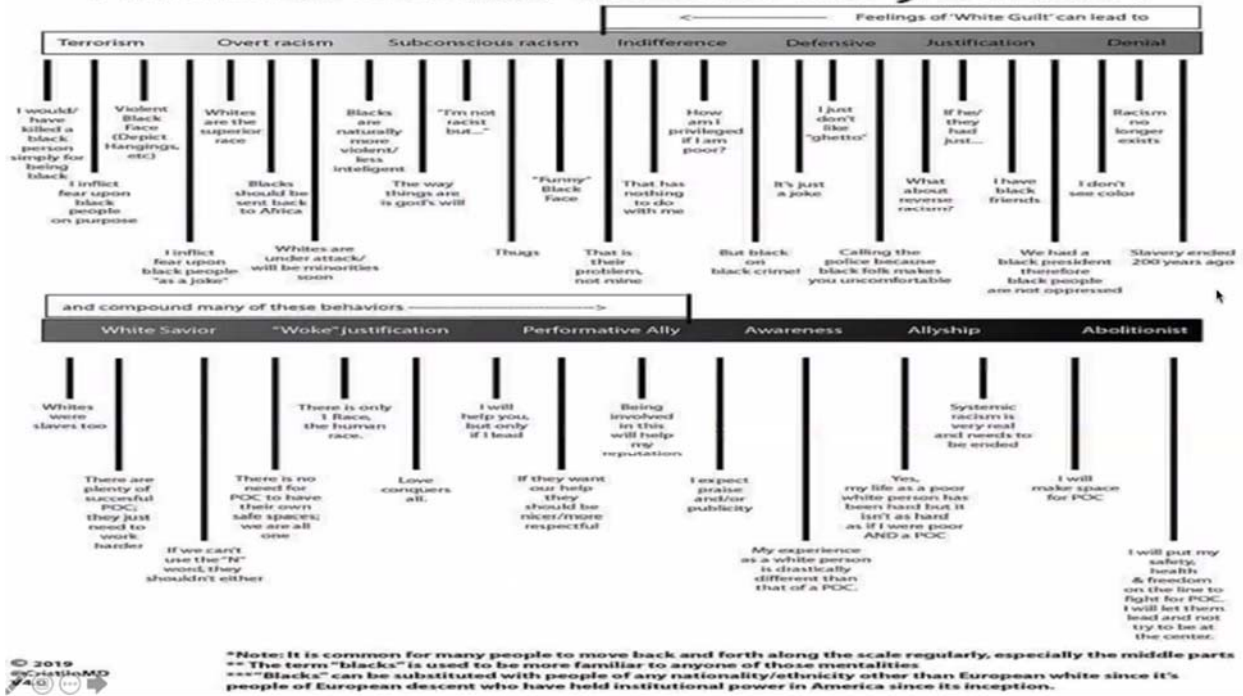
— IBRAM X. KENDI
 AUTHOR OF *HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST*

Ask Yourself: Are You Fearful, Learning or Growing



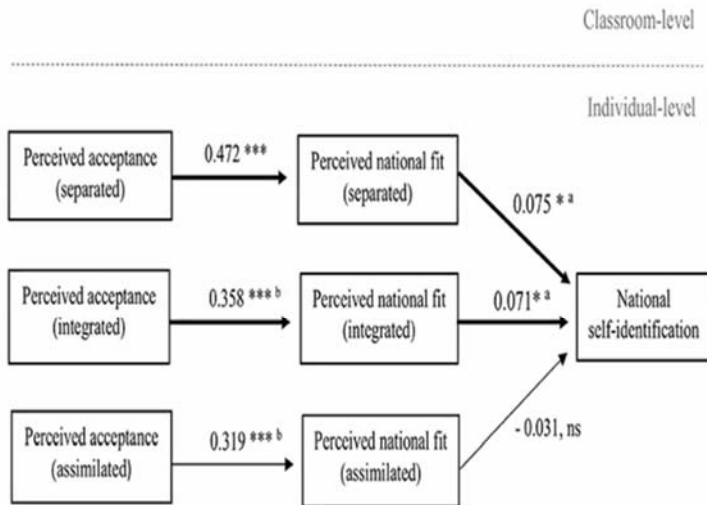
Acknowledge that we are not all going to arrive at the same place or at the same time.

Racism Scale: Where do you fall?



Black, Indigenous, Brown and others of color...

We are not off the hook...often times, we fall into the tools of white supremacy that divide and pit one group against another.



Services Offered

Organizational →



Conferences →

Programing →

Individuals →

- Lev 1 - Organizational Climate & Culture Assess/Evaluate
- Lev 1 = DEI&B (DI, DEI) - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging
- Lev 2 - Anti-Racism Training
- Lev 2 - Critical Race Theory (CRT)
- Lev 2 - Affinity Listening Sessions
- Lev 3 - Cultural Humility & Sensitivity Training
- Organizational Leadership Coaching - Accountability/Transparency
- Strategic Planning & Implementation - Representation, Recruitment/Retention
- Speaker Engagement: Keynote, Panel, Workshop, Speaker, Facilitator
- Conference/Event Tabling
- Write curriculum & Program Development
- Teach-In & Webinars
- One-on-One Equity Coaching

In summary:

- The mirror is important.
- Well-intentioned does not allow you to not hear that students are being marginalized.
- SL has received a lot of input from two students at RHS. Harassment by those who look like them and those that don't.
- Hurt people, hurt people.
- Shared stories of harassment by black and brown students but all over this country. RHS is not alone.
- The end of this is that we are fighting a system. Not individuals.
- If the disagreement we are having about the way in which we are doing things, you are perpetuating their oppression. Oppression doesn't feel good.
- SL shared example of Pledges that are being made around the country.

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SL shared some of the Next Steps from her discussion with Mrs. Vigil.

Next Steps

- Meeting with decision making team for Rosemont – principal and key staff
- Flush out specific needs and fears
- Identify prior PD work
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Identify commitment level
- Establish MOU (Memorandum of Understanding)
- Create contract terms and fees
- Develop stages
 - Stage 1 – Curating Safe & Brave Space for Anti-Racist conversations; prep to make an anti-racist pledge and equity statement
 - Stage 2 – Countering and Redressing the legacy of Racism, Exploring Best Practices for modeling and applying anti-racist BELIEFS & BEHAVIORS, and dismantling violent/racist CURRICULA
 - Stage 3 – Advancing the action plan – addressing inequities of representation, full examination/audit for policies impacting SPP, behavior, curricula, achievement, hiring, and transitions
- Suggested commitment with staggered stages – 3 years

There is no prescription to this work. SL will attempt to curate those things listed above.

MR: thought we might be getting off task but Sonia answered his questions. Thanks.

IW: appreciated everything that was said and Sonia's contributions. Happy to create a safer space at RHS for her little sister.

CM: acknowledge those people who have laid the ground work for us to be where we are now. There is still a lot of work to be done. We can adapt, we can overcome. Super-excited we are all here, we are all talking, and we are already moving.

EV: very excited about this total picture; understanding all the moving parts. Understanding the work aside from training alone; many moving parts and excited about ASCRIBE.

SL: read item from Rob in Chat. "I've asked this before but with this program is there going to be a public apology for or acknowledgement of any of this administration's past wrong-doings before trying to convince the black community that administration is an ally here? There have been numerous racist incidents between students and staff on and off campus that have gone unpunished and ridiculous policies directly from administration that have unfairly and obviously targeted students of color. I don't see how anyone (especially the students like the ones we have here who have experienced it directly) will believe that their intentions are legitimate without the administration taking direct and specific ownership or their past and current failings." SL: Let's be specific about what is included in that acknowledgement. That is being discussed and we need to have some workshops, learn the language, before we can address that.

IW: Very well said, we must publicly take accountability?

MR: How can we move forward if there's not? Trust me, I've lived it as well!!!!!!

KM: Evan at this point there hasn't been any acknowledgement.

SB: Noted comment about calling a thing a thing.

SL: There are individuals who do not want those walls to come down no matter what we say. We won't let them stop us from our work.

Questions to focus our acknowledgment of racism:

- 1. Can we agree that systemic, institutional, and structural racism are embedded in every system we all rely on for survival; and by design said racism negatively impacts the Black community and individuals? Yes/No**
- 2. Can we agree the education system has intentionally excluded, othered, and erased certain groups based on race and socio-economic status? Yes/No**
- 3. Can we all agree, due to the normalization and conditioning of who we are as Americans, we/you intentionally and unintentionally perpetuate racism at Rosemont? Yes/No**

CH: echo all the appreciate for Sonia's time today and with Robla HS. He is leading the Work Group looking at Handbook review. Was there anything that was done at Robla HS that we might use for our work here.

SL: When she went to Robla, Dr. Andrea Moore (Robla) had done a lot of work around resistance social/emotional framework; staff started to have an epiphany that this work needed to be done for the teachers not just the students. They had already started looking at the zero tolerance. They were already revamping their district policy. They will be bringing out their statement in June.

PK: Very pleased by the presentation. Very instructive in many respects. How are the teachers going to be able to address the ambient stress of what is going on in the world? The things that happen in other location and that are transmitted into our living rooms and into our classrooms.

SL: That questions is so loaded, heavy, so deep. Unfortunately, because we live this the state that we do. Try not to listen to the news until the end of the day. Don't want to have to address every incident. Let's have a conversation about this, what can we do about this? How do we feel about this? Students will begin see teachers a humanitarian. Student are watching. If they see that we care about them. They will come to us and they will listen.

SB: I want to thank Imani for not giving up on Rosemont and prodding us to be better.

CM: Respect is an action word... not a sentiment per se.

IW: Thank you Mr. Boettner, that means a lot. I know exactly what it feels like and I wouldn't wish it on my worst enemy so there is no way I could be complicit with it. It is crucial that we affirm everyone's right to exist and to be treated like a human being.

KO: Believe that the people on this phone would stand in the gap for you. But I can only speak for myself and you can tell me. I will come stand in the gap for you. All you have to do is ask. I am there.

REPORTS FROM THE WORKING GROUPS

Equity Statement Roll-out Planning – no update.

Book Club

CM: Content; Gotten through chapters 1-5. Final assignment by May 3 meeting. Responses has been minimal in the percentage: 8-10 people responding (of 63). Massive in impact. He sees folks grappling with their understanding of the material and figuring out how to apply it. Going to work to be little more assertive to get more participation. Reading this book will be done this year, the work will be coming.

SB: teachers are totally overwhelmed with getting back to the classroom and getting the tech set up, transition to class teaching . etc.

CM: Discussed how this might work over the summer. Challenges: can't gauge where people are unless they respond with how they feel. There was some issue at the last meeting; they are prepared to unpack it at the group level and if needed bring in the administration. There will be healing.

Handbooks

CH: leading the effort to revise student and staff handbook. Had a kick-off meeting last Thursday to establish a methodology moving forward. Looking to have a significant deliverable before the school year starts next August.

PK: does this pertain only to the student's conduct?

CH: Yes, student and staff as a whole. Looking at it comprehensive – one big family. If it is good enough for a student its good enough of a teacher. Gave example of dress code.

OC: Seems to be some separation of classified and certificated staff and staff (consistency) separation of the groups. Maybe all can be addressed in the handbook?

Sportsmanship

OC: Met last week briefly about the focus of the committee. So many things to address the athletes their academic. Code of Conduct is what was decided. Every single team has a different code of conduct. Coaches have the freedom to do what they choose. Looked to have one consistent conduct. Get student, parents, staff input. Who is governing the CIF? Look at policy and procedures. Etc. Also talked about diversity among the coaching staff, athletic directors, and CIF board. Need representation at annual planning meetings.

CM: What about the referees? What are they responsible for relative to code of conduct, inclusiveness?

SL: There is a process where you can go through your AD to take to the CIF Board. In EG had to push for each school in their district to have a code of conduct. Want all schools to have all the same code of conduct. There also has to be a level of representation of all students – this is in an opportunity to impact equity. Need to make sure the student achievements are important and recognized. "A closed mouth don't get fed."

KO: every school has a conference. File a complaint in the conference.

PK: how are we going to demarcate regular sport bravado with language that is normally 'don't give umbrage' it's their normal 'talk' on the field. How do we policy that? The term comes from a region and context matters.

SL: When two athletes use word who use the 'n' word with each other in a friendly manner is that to be policed? Bring to their attention that it is not acceptable. Using the n word to 'that's my homey' v. calling you that if you're not black. Don't want to get in that policing

game. What is decorum and what is respect? How to you define that in your community. Need to set that expectations (in my classroom, in my home, on my team).

Summer Reading Program

JH: Oliver, Kato, Oliver – frame work for moving forward; met to discuss. Literacy is a very important component of equity. There is a lot of anecdotal data about to how reading can be transformative in a person’s life. A document was sent out to the group . Wanted to share a quick presentation. Rosemont doesn’t have a library nor do we have a bookstore in our community. Two proposals:

- 1) Erect a mini library on the Rosemont campus. Staff and community others to donate. Kids have free access.
- 2) Would like students who win ‘student of the month award to get a book starting next year. These are books that they may choose.

Reading program, multi-tiered, build goals and pathways.

From Chat (missed name): The access is always the starter issues when it comes to statistical disparities.

CM: I’d like to donate your first 100 books.

MN: Let’s have the students pick the books.

IW & EV thanked CM for his generosity.

Sue Richards, owner of Crawford’s books near City College in Land Park spoke to the group. She has children at Kennedy. Books have always been a part her families. She deals in used books in stock for summer reading. The kids get excited when they come into the store, introduce them to new authors, books are in good condition and half the price. Would like to work with our group somehow.

LM: due to the time constraint, JH and his working group will be first on the agenda next meeting for reporting.

Next meeting is Tuesday, May 18th from 5:30 to 7:00pm.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:38 pm