

Reports

Chariho Regional School District

Anti-Racism Task Force

Minutes of April 7, 2021

Virtual Zoom Meeting

ENCLOSURE

XA-3

Present: (Quorum = 6) Maija Hill, endawnis Spears, Dan Fitzgerald, Thawn Harris, Katie Kirakosian, Joseph Lopes, Joseph Reddish, Heidi Fee, Jess Avizinis, Carla LaRoche-Harris, Lisa Macaruso, Gina Picard, **Guests:** Keith Hoffman, Elwood Johnson, School Committee Members Donna Chambers and Linda McAllister, Community Members

I. Call to Order – Maija Hill (Chair) called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

II. Approval of Minutes – Motion to approve 3/3 minutes by Joe Reddish and seconded by Heidi Fee. Vote- Aye- Unanimous

*Joe Reddish motioned to cover the school committee liaison report next on account of scheduling and guest attendance—motion seconded by Heidi and unanimous approval. (**NOTE:** *The minutes will reflect the order of the agenda as originally posted noting when the Anti-Racism Task force moved to discuss items out of order.*)

*After School Committee Liaison report, Joe Reddish motioned to move original agenda item VII up while waiting on meeting guest, Carla LaRoche-Harris seconded, all in favor.

III. Review/Discussion of open meetings act: Jon Anderson school attorney discussed the Open Meetings Act (OMA) rules, importance of the agenda having a defined scope, and requiring quorum rules are followed i.e., rolling quorums are not permissible.

IV. Reporting Concerns of Safety, Cyberstalking, Harassment with Input from Attorney General's Office and Chief of Police: Keith Hoffman Civil Rights Advocate for AG's office-- partnership with police departments to have a hate crimes liaison officer to coordinate with AG office. Complaint form from AGs office can be filled out for review (prosecutorial office/investigative office working with police) Richmond Police Chief Elwood Johnson. All laws governing social media are tied to First Amendment--Keith presented about specific applicable laws and doctrines. Questions were raised regarding legal definitions of specific terms such as "defamation" and "incitement." Chief Elwood talked about his career and role in community engagement and encouraged people to go to resource officer for help.

*Joe R moved to return to item 3, Seconded by Carla—unanimous approval

V. School Committee Liaison report Student demographics: Lisa Macaruso reported that of 3164 students, 402 identified as Black an Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) and out of 480 professional staff/Teaching Assistants, 1 student identified as BIPOC.

*Joe motioned to move to Agenda item VI and Thawn Harris seconded with unanimous approval.

VI. Debriefing, next steps for policies and practices work groups based on school committee feedback: A) Dan Fitzgerald reported on the Policies subcommittee presentation to the school committee 3/9 and Practices subcommittee presentation on 3/29. Both subcommittees described the Tiered approach recommendations presented to the school committee as well as their feedback about intentional language for crafting final recommendations. Dan reminded the School Committee that the recommendations are data-driven, through the lens of learners, using accessible definitions etc. Subcommittee will craft drafts and will bring back to main Anti-Racism Task Force to review and then finalize for the school committee, encouraging participation by all members including the community. The sustainability of these recommendations will require continued participation of school committee and public and that there will be difficult work and tiers that will be easy to implement while others will require long -term investment
B) Practices subcommittee presented to the school committee on 3/23. Their recommendations followed the same format in tiers, and included things like recommendation of a Tribal liaison

role, curricula input from students/community etc. The feedback was favorable for tiered structure and some items were seen as especially easy to implement or obvious e.g., School Committee chair looking at policy for cultural celebration attire for graduation immediately.

C) Curriculum Subcommittee: Jess Avizinis explained that they will be presenting their recommendations to the school committee the following week but Gina let them know that the presentation would need to be pushed to 5/11 to accommodate other business. The Curriculum subcommittee intends to use the same format and tiered recommendations to the School Committee when they present.

*Joe Reddish motioned to move back to agenda item III seconded by Jess Avizinis to unanimous approval

VII. District School Committee Approval and posting On website: – Several terms were suggested by Anti-Racism Task Force members as well as members of the public to be posted on the school district website if approved by the School Committee. The work to produce a comprehensive list to recommend to the school committee will be performed according to the Open Meetings Act as is all business by the Anti-Racism Task Force.

VIII. Public Comment on Agenda Items: School Committee has an agenda item for "public comments not on the agenda" if it's not on the agenda, the task force members can't discuss. For this item we can discuss public comment on these agenda items in the posted agenda. Wendy Fenner-Aubin from Exeter but grew up in Charlestown social worker in Providence/Pawtucket,/Central Falls asked about a Health Equity Zone in the area. It was clarified that per OMA, anyone from any town allowed to join. Public means public. Clifford Heil: A lot of discourse about this work in the public but lots of community members that are happy this work is going on. Nicole Weeks: asked about the definition of "slander" as well as "harassment/target" --Gina Picard reported that we do have those definitions in our Chariho policies/handbook so if we update it should be updated there as well.

IX. Future Agenda Items: Suggestion to invite Organizational Content Expert to see what they can provide to the task force around data-driven and student-centered perspective approach. Non-profit sector in this space (non-violence institute, health equity zone, center for reconciliation) could help. Suggestion to add agenda item about public comment not on agenda. Suggest Curriculum team provide update prior to going live to school committee>

X. Next Meeting Date

May 5th at 7pm

XI. Adjournment

Carla LaRoche Harris motioned to adjourn, Jess Avizinis Seconded unanimous approval 8:37pm

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Avizinis
Clerk