

Meeting Summary

Council for Diversity and Inclusion

October 14, 2020

Participants Present:

Dr. Daniel Goffredo, Dr. Joanna Wexler, Jennifer Blake, Abby Linderman, Ashlyn Llerandi, Charles Lowery, Christina Ensling, Cristina Juisti, Dr. Heidi Capetola, Jason Rasmussen, Karen Taratuski, Lisa Phoenix, Marshall Hoffritz, Osagie Anetor, Sara Slaybaugh, Sharon Webster, Samantha Jouin, Tia Jiles, Shannon Maroney-Garrett

Facilitator: Dr. Crystal Lucky

Dr. Wexler opened the meeting by welcoming CDI members back for the 2020-2021 school year. She also introduced three new members who are students at Great Valley High School: Osagie Anetor (present), Abby ... (not present), and ... (not present).

Following new member introductions, Dr. Wexler welcomed Dr. Crystal Lucky, who will serve as a consultant to the CDI for the 2020-21 school year.

Dr. Lucky stressed that the Council (and eventually the organization) need to move together toward shared language and a shared vision for moving forward. She stressed that the council needs to model how we're expecting students and others in the district to behave and how we want them to think about this work.

Dr. Lucky facilitated a conversation with members about what they would like to see moving forward. Council members shared their perspectives, including:

- Many think the pandemic has highlighted the differences in access to parts of the educational system. The pandemic hasn't highlighted the difference. It's exploded the difference. Going forward, if we're talking about doing work that will help kids immediately, it's about having the difficult conversations about providing access to our students who are at or below the poverty level.
- Concern was expressed about Great Valley's inability to attract and retain minority candidates. "what do we need to do or what are we missing that causes us not to attract those individuals?" If we find candidates that have all of the qualifications that GV seeks, why is it that they are not being hired? We need to explore how we can entice minority candidates and then give them an opportunity to showcase their skills.
- A council member commented that he'd like to see more involvement with the students themselves so that they are educated about topics they might not know (or care) about. He suggested that a lot may be resolved, if we start at school where students spend so much time.
- We need to think more systemically for both marginalized and nonmarginalized students. How can we create a system of support for our students and staff? How can we build a community of teachers who are comfortable facilitating conversations with students? How are we creating a

safe place for not only students, but also for teachers and staff so that we can all move together?

Dr. Lucky highlighted the subcommittees that will be formed:

- Climate – day to day experience of folks in the system/community. How are students feeling? How are faculty feeling?
- Community Engagement & Outreach – the way we connect with the community; engagement through a Speaker Series or film series. The committee becomes the conduit within the district for these opportunities.
- Curriculum
- Hiring: Recruitment and Retention

Subcommittees may welcome other members not already on the CDI. It would expand the conversation to other members of the community. One member suggested that the Council work specifically to get more parents involved. Dr. Lucky responded that the goal is to develop well-rounded committees that include teachers, parents, staff, students, etc.

Dr. Lucky shared that the issue of equity needs to permeate each of the subcommittees. This is one of the central questions. She references a reading she will share with the Council that will provide a shared vocabulary.

In response to a comment that curriculum needs to be a focus so that we are teaching subjects in ways that are empowering and not embarrassing for students, Dr. Lucky stressed the need to tie together climate and curriculum.

A conversation about the difference between equity and equality ensued. If we are removing resources for some and adding resources for others, that is not equity. We want to move to a place that removes barriers for everyone.

Dr. Capetola shared that a group of students and teachers from the HS participated in a voluntary book club this past summer that read “Stamped.” She stressed that we can be models for others’ learning by seeking perspectives and having conversations. She asked how we can keep efforts like that going when things get busy and other parts of the school experience resume.

Dr. Lucky reported that she will work with Dr. Goffredo and Dr. Wexler to better flesh out the contour of the subcommittees. Descriptions will be emailed to the council to establish understanding of each committee’s work.

Next Steps:

- Dr. Lucky will work with Dr. Wexler to initiate a draft of subcommittee descriptions. That will be emailed to the group.
- Dr. Lucky will prepare two short readings for the November meeting. Council members are asked to read them in advance of the meeting so that we can break out and have small group discussions with the goal of addressing specific language.
- Dr. Wexler shared that the data that was shared with Dr. Jarvis was also shared with Dr. Lucky. That data will help articulate goals as we move ahead. She also shared that the suspension

policy was reviewed in October. The policy committee will be looking at the discipline policy in the months ahead. The District will work with the CDI and with its attorney, with models from other district who have worked in that area.

- Council members were also asked to think concretely about the initial question: Where would you like to see the committee a year from now? They were asked to be able to provide concrete examples. This will help develop measurable goals.

The meeting adjourned.