



MASON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Diversity Committee
Wednesday, January 13, 2021
5:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

Present: Ron Drzewicki, Rick Brooks, Mike Prelesnik, Angie Vandecar, Dr. Karlin Tichenor, Matt Stuard, Melissa Netzel, Molly Williams, Liz Evans, Janet Alleman, Ted Berryhill, AmySue Hopkins, Mary Hilker, Kimberly Clark, Laura Lange, Rachel Foster, Summer Issawi Courtney Vincent, Katelyne Thomas

Not available: Erinna Toodzio, Lynn Goedert, Lance Delbridge, Abby Strachan. Kim Dickinson, Kathy Hicks, Marlon Brown, Christopher Mumby, Alexander Charlot, Anne Gill, Desiree Waters, Jennifer Schlosser
Guest: Noel Dolan

Minutes

Mike welcomed the group to the meeting.

Public Comment

No public comment

Dr. Karlin J Tichenor - Implicit Bias and Schemas

Karlin greeted the group and shared that he plans to lead a committee discussion on internal schemas and implicit bias this evening. Karlin shared the working agreements and learning targets of the session. Committee members discussed a photograph of a person and how the picture causes you to make internal assumptions about that person. The committee met in breakout rooms to discuss implicit bias with presented scenarios.

The committee participated in an exercise of This or That? where each person made choices between two suggested items. Our personal experience is how we shape our thoughts and perceptions. Karlin shared that beliefs, attitude, behavior and emotions influence our perception. We define first and then see. Despite our predispositions and automatic reactions based on experience, our brain can be rewired if we are intentional on challenging predispositions. Karlin shared practical steps. The most important is to show down - mindfulness, disconnect from immediate thoughts, and take a break. From schemas we develop stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, that leads to racism (or other "isms").

Staff survey

Mike shared a staff survey was developed by Karlin. It is scheduled for distribution on Friday, January 15 and due on January 22. The data will guide the February 26 PD and continued work and conversations through the year. Angie shared that all staff need to mark their answers authentically. We are expecting low areas. Karlin share the data will be shared without identifying demographic information disclosed.

Student voice - Defining Diversity

Karlin shared his experience co-writing with three high school students. Formatted and framed in student voice on defining diversity. Supplemental resource. Still in the editing stage.

Communication Plans

Ron shared the communications team is working with Karlin to prepare the messaging that accompanies the staff survey.

Professional Development Ideas/Plans

Matt reported that Diversity PD is in development for February 26. All district staff is invited to participate and will follow a webinar format. The event is scheduled from 8:00-3:00 with a break for lunch from 11:00 to noon. A morning address from Karlin and Ron will begin the day. Dr. Curtis Lewis will provide the kick-off - The Brain and Cultural Responsiveness. Dr. Carter will follow in the afternoon - Critical Consciousness. Survey results will drive PD and book study, Cultural Responsiveness Teaching and the Brain, in the spring. The district will purchase the book/e-book.

- 3/10 - Building Awareness and Knowledge: Awareness of Self
- 3/31 - Building Awareness and Knowledge: Implicit Bias
- 4/14 - Building Learning Partnerships: Dependent Learner vs. Independent Learner
- 5/5 - Building Intellectual Capacity: Cultural Responsiveness

Next year additional PD will continue with details to follow.

Liz inquired about the session being available to Board members. Matt shared that participation by the Board on February 26 is welcome.

Next Steps

Future meeting dates:

- Wednesday, February 10th at 5:30 PM
- Wednesday, March 10th at 5:30 PM

Angie shared that the committee has received interest from others in joining the committee. Laura shared the previous discussion to include individuals with opposite points of view. Liz supported Laura's point. Mary recommended opening up the group to expand participation. Angie shared the City of Mason is continuing its diversity work with city departments and community groups.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.