



**New Hope-Solebury School District
Inclusion, Acceptance, and No Place for Hate
Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes**

January 24, 2017

6:00PM – Upper Elementary School LGI Room

Attendance

- **School Board** – Doug McDonough
- **Administration** – Dr. Steve Yanni, Alyssa Marton
- **Committee Members** – Tali Natan, Parker Miele, Sarah Bergenfield, Denise Sorin, Robin Kilroy, Denise Marshall, Joanne Reszka, Christine McGinn, Kiresten Cademartori, Matteo Cademartori, Francesca Cademartori, Dori Dugan
- **Presenters** - None
- **Public** – None

Dr. Yanni called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

New Business

Mission Statement—The members of the ad hoc committee began by reading, reviewing, and discussing the proposed mission statement for the work that is to be done within the group. As the members of the group worked through the mission statement, a conversation was had about how general or specific the mission statement needed to be. The group reached consensus that the mission statement needs to be general enough to capture the spirit of the work but specific enough to identify the topics we will address.

District's Focus on Inclusion and Acceptance—Dr. Yanni discussed the previous push for the Responsive Classroom philosophy at the elementary level as well as the push for Restorative Practices at the secondary level. Both of those initiatives will be reinvigorated to ensure they are being implemented meaningfully and purposefully. The committee also discussed the role of the Student Assistance Program (SAP) in our secondary schools and the renewed focus on School Wide Positive Behavior (SWPBS), which is starting at the elementary level and will matriculate to the MS and HS buildings. Core team trainings are currently happening. Further, the committee discussed joint efforts with all of the student groups who promote inclusion and acceptance such as National Honor Society, Changing Social Perspectives, Peer Leadership, and so on. The committee agreed that a lot of “good work” is being done, it just needs to be more formalized and overt to everyone.

Curriculum—The group discussed adding meaningful components to the curricula that focus on social awareness, inclusion, and acceptance. This will be part of the curriculum review cycle for all major areas of studies.

Parent and Community Engagement—The committee discussed how to spread the “word” of our work out beyond those that are attending our meetings. After our committee agrees on some initiatives and parameters for our work, we will spread the message through each of our buildings through natural communication processes, assemblies, grade level, meetings, etc. The group also discussed communicating via social media, namely Facebook or Twitter. We agreed

that one way communication was most appropriate for social media outlets.

Safe Spaces—The committee members discussed having designated “safe spaces” in each building where sensitive issues can be discussed, where conflict can be resolved, and where restorative practices can occur. Dr. Yanni will report back about these spaces at the next meeting.

Chain of command—The committee discussed developing a chain of command for students and staff to access if they encounter negativity, hate speech, or bias. Dr. Yanni noted that he will work with each building to develop—and then communicate—a chain of command. The group talked about the sensitive nature of discussing these issues and concerns; therefore, it is important to have a chain of command that is clear and known to all. Dr. Yanni will share this information at our next meeting.

Access to Community Resources—The committee discussed tapping in to various community groups in experts in various areas to serve as speakers, mentors, and agents of change in various forms in our district.

Next Meeting—The next meeting of this ad hoc committee will be on February 21, 2017 at 6PM in the UES LGI.

Dr. Yanni adjourned the meeting at 7:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Steve Yanni
Superintendent