

**New Hope – Solebury School District
Equity Committee Meeting Minutes
January 25, 2022**

Dr. Lentz called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. The meeting took on Zoom and in person with approximately 20 total attendees.

Dr. Lentz led an ice breaker activity with attendees that included sharing personal backgrounds with a focus on highlighting diverse experiences and upbringings within our district community.

Mrs. Miller reported on K-5 lesson plans at the LES and UES. Each marking period has a theme pulled from the Profile of a Graduate in the district's Comprehensive Plan: Inclusive, Empathetic, Resilient, Collaborative. These words are defined for students and become the focus of that marking period's lessons, which includes read-alouds with community members each month and activities such as drawing projects geared toward understanding the feelings of others. Holiday celebrations in each marking period are woven into the themes. The "how" and "why" of these lessons are reviewed each marking period with students. Mrs. Miller also reported that the HS students are visiting the ES buildings next month and have felt real value from these connections with the younger grades.

Dr. Benolken noted that the March Curriculum Advisory Committee agenda will be focused on Equity in the district and that Mrs. Miller's work, in addition to other updates, will be shared with the public then.

Dr. Lentz shared that he will forward a chart to members for reviewing the Equity Policy, which was constructed by Ms. Schwartz using PSBA's template and several existing models in neighboring school districts, including Bethlehem SD. The Policy Committee has reviewed this draft and will do so again after the Equity Committee submits their comments.

PSBA is helping to conduct an Equity Continuum Assessment and sent surveys to members.

Dr. Lentz reported on the Action Plan Framework: Five Year Plan. Committee members broke into groups to discuss focus areas – early childhood education, school segregation, transportation, teachers and staff, school discipline, curriculum and instruction – what are we doing well, what can we improve upon?

- Group 1 reported on early childhood education and school segregation. Topics discussed included needing to better prepare incoming K students who may not have had preschool and provide professional development around learning levels and cultural difference for K teachers to help students in that situation. Difficult to find/reach out to those families before they register. Group felt that "school segregation" was less of an issue for NHSD and were not certain how to address or discuss.
- Group 2: Transportation and teachers/staff. Members reported activity bus was good for equity around participation in after school activities. Could we add an earlier, second run for non-sports participants? Teachers/staff - Discussion around zoom – teacher reported first time having 100% parents participate in conferences because of zoom. Staff continues to diversify. Penn Literacy can do a better job meeting teachers where they are in their understanding and experience of equity. Ask teachers how they feel about PD – we need a formal survey to determine what PD is needed.
- Group 3: discipline and curriculum/instruction. Low numbers of disciplinary events but need to continually look at MTSS data to make sure there is no bias in discipline or

overrepresentation of any one identity group. Where is bullying happening? How do we track, especially on buses or other situations that are hard to capture without reporting? There is an audit happening now to assess curriculum content. Questions around current events, ie January 6 – was that discussed and how? PS needed for teachers on how to present and discuss.

- Group 4 – Technology, Trauma. Report TBA
- Group 5 – Rigorous Courses & Post-Secondary Opportunities. Report TBA
- Group 6 – Family & community Engagement, Extracurricular Activities. Group discussed that Stephanie Yoder has been a great resource for communications with families and stakeholders, streamlining accessibility, considering alternative languages, etc. How do we bring in and support ELL families? District gives great support to special ed families, how do we replicate for ELL and engage families who don't attend district events? May be easier post-COVID when we can host community celebrations, etc. Zoom helps families but may be a barrier for others. Need to do more outreach to families prior to K, especially to ELL families. We already do good outreach to preschools, how do we reach others in the community? PreK program (fed-funded Head Start) was cancelled due to low enrollment, so we need to fill the gap to support PreK kids – what resources are available? Extracurriculars – what are the barriers to participation? How do after-school clubs etc compare to sports enrollment? Mrs. Miller discussed reading/homework club at LES/UES to give extra exposure to reading time and boost early learning skills.

Next meeting February 22, 2022.