

**New Hope-Solebury School District
Equity Committee Minutes
February 22, 2022**

Dr. Lentz called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM on Zoom. There were approximately 20 people in attendance.

The meeting began with introductions, including Dr. Emily Kalahan, Senior Director of Equity Training at the PA School Board Association.

Members discussed forming a subcommittee to plan a future public “town hall” meeting: what presenters should be included and what the format might be. Six members volunteered and Michele Ruggiero will send an email to the full membership to notify everyone of the meeting date. The subcommittee will report back to the full committee at the March meeting.

Chris Schwartz reported that she continues to collect feedback on the equity policy draft, most of which has been procedural as of late. The draft will go to the policy committee for review.

Dr. Kalahan discussed the results of the Equity Continuum Assessment survey sent to committee members about the work in which they have been engaged. The survey itself is a new self-evaluation tool developed by Dr. Heather Bennett, former Equity Director at PSBA, to evaluate the work of equity committees: what has been accomplished, what resources exist, and what needs are still outstanding. The eight categories of evaluation are

1. Include and affirm the voices of students, families, and communities
2. Identify and understand your district’s demographics
3. Analyze the data
4. Define equity for your district and community
5. Embed educational equity training into all levels of professional development
6. Pursue and practice cultural awareness and proficiency
7. Analyze policies and practices with an equity lens
8. Develop an action plan and/or policy to incorporate equity in your district structure

The results (25 total, with 11 committee members responding) revealed that overall, the committee considers equity as an important topic but is not yet systemic in the district. At this stage on the Equity Continuum, professional development is occurring, the committee has been established, policy is underway, but the committee may not yet feel empowered to make substantial change.

Many members felt the survey tool was not an effective way to measure committee progress, as many of the questions were geared toward administrative processes. Comments included: language in the survey was difficult to interpret; survey should be taken by subject matter experts, not the volunteer committee members; rework survey and conduct again; survey should include faculty; survey was too long with insider vocabulary; perhaps interviews would be more effective to gather subjective data on committee progress.

Dr. Kalahan reported that one committee member thought the committee was going overboard in attempting to “solve a problem that didn’t exist” and asked for member reaction. The consensus was unanimous among those that responded that this position was one of privilege and revealed a lack of

perspective or awareness on district issues; the committee was formed in response to a petition that clearly demonstrated the need for this work. Members felt that continued district-wide communication on this topic is necessary.

Dr. Kalahan will join the committee in April to discuss goal-setting.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.