



APPROVED BY THE BOARD NOVEMBER 10, 2016

**BURLINGTON BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS
DIVERSITY & EQUITY COMMITTEE MINUTES
November 1, 2016**

Committee Members: Chair Seguino; Commissioners Stoll, Cina, Berrizeitia, Kleman
Attending Board Members: Commissioners Olwell & Curry
Administration: Superintendent Obeng; Henri Sparks; Laura Nugent; Nikki Fuller
Guests: Michael Hill, Multicultural Youth Program Manager & Sarah Woodard, Director of Development, Spectrum Youth Services

1. The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.
2. Approval of Agenda
 - A. *Motion to approve agenda (Berrizbietia /Stoll) - approved unanimously*
3. Public Comment:
 - A. Comments and Questions from the Public - None
4. Presentation from Spectrum on Social Work Case Management Capacity at BSD Funded through CEDO.

Michael Hill & Sarah Woodard presented Spectrum's Multicultural Youth Program and how recent funding from the City of Burlington will support case management services in collaboration with BHS social worker to remove barriers to successful completion of high school
5. Research and Data Team
September & October 2016 Suspension Data Report
Miriam Ehtesham-Cating presented for newly formed Research & Data Team
The team introduced themselves at October meeting and introduced UVM Data Team that will assist with data collection & analysis; they still in process of clarifying roles & responsibilities and data collection/tracking across the District

They are:
 - Looking at how Team will interact with UVM Research Team that is collective and analyzing data for District

- Trying to focus on use of data for strategic plan - what strategies will be developed to change the data. Defining data and its usefulness in ways that will benefit all stakeholders in the District.

Commissioner Stoll commented on the report format and noted that the term “SPED” is a derogatory term and requested that there be a different way of identifying students with IEPs. Miriam agreed there are a number of identifying labels that need to be corrected.

Sparks explained how Team hopes to use data to drive decisions and allocate resources. They are seeking a systematized approach to policy decisions and protocols like suspensions.

Commissioners asked questions and commented on reporting format and how to read. They also congratulated the Superintendent and the new data team on advancing the use of data to monitor and innovate around behavioral management.

6. Student Voice Proposal

Lauren spoke with Diversity Rocks and Parents & Youth for Change - idea of focus groups being pulled together of kids who have felt disaffected at BHS and understand their experience.

Also, she suggested considering how to structure groups to make as comfortable and conducive to participation as possible. After seeing SPECTRUM presentation tonight, it introduces another opportunity to speak with kids through another forum

She is still concerned about designated employee situation at BHS - the people who have been designated are people who students feel they would never go to. She asked if we can we look at designated employees at partner organization.

Suggestion box idea is a practice that offers anonymity. Commissioners discussed proposal - offered additional ideas like on-line reporting of comments and concerns.

Student voice is focus of proposal; designated employee is a related issue. Sparks offered that Designated Employees are defined by law to perform statutory functions. If students need someone they trust who they can talk to, that’s a different question. There are formal protocols that Designated Employees have to follow.

Agree that we need to have safe adults for kids who are trustworthy so kids don’t feel like they are taking a risk to talk to and invite investigations.

Commissioners discussed pros and cons of idea to have focus groups sorted by culture - ask kids what would be most comfortable to provide information.

Superintendent Obeng asked what the primary focus is of student voice - there are lots of different strategies to invite student voices - need a variety of methods - invite students to reflect on what the priorities are.

Committee discussion resulted in consensus that Board's role is to seek out opportunities to connect with marginalized communities. The proposal was tabled, and in the interim, we will reflect on the best mechanisms to include student voice of those who typically have less access. This might occur by meeting with students at King Street, Boys and Girls Club, Diversity Rocks, and with Parents and Youth for Change.

7. Adjournment

A. *Motion (Kleman /Stoll) to adjourn at 9:21 p.m.*