



DRAFT
NOT FINAL UNTIL APPROVED BY BOARD
BURLINGTON BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS
DIVERSITY & EQUITY COMMITTEE MINUTES

DATE: Aug 28, 2018

Attending Board Members: Monika Ivancic & Liz Curry

Administration: Henri Sparks & Miriam Ehtesham- Cating

Guests: Rachel Jolly, Jen L'Ecuyer, Graham Clark

1. Call to Order

A. The Meeting was Called to Order at 7:08

2. Approval of Agenda

A. Motion to Approve Agenda

Curry/Ivancic - both in favor

3. Public Comment

Jen L'Ecuyer presented her family's severely negative experience with bullying at Hunt.

Family lived for 14 years in District until moved to Colchester a month ago as a result of their experience.

Son entered 6th grade at Hunt 3 years ago

Victim of bullying since 2nd half of 6th grade year

Son ended middle school with high anxiety so family moved to Colchester to get away from the experience

New 7th grade team - teacher bullying - teacher made fun of son, he experienced teacher laughing at academic inability

Each year there were administration changes - new administrators w/out administrative experience each year after 6th grade

Son was suspended multiple times - victim blaming - did not receive notice or explanations of situations

Did not perceive bullying kids being held accountable

Administrators refused to put things in writing, they only had verbal explanations

Some teachers protected him, so he made it through

Reporting: No reported incidences were documented - only the incidences when his behavior was under investigation

VP not prepared for meeting after son's suspension

4. Recap of Restorative Practices plan for District for 2018

A. Rachel Jolly (Community Justice Center) RP Leadership, roll out of RP in District & Henri Sparks, District Director of Safe and Inclusive Schools presented the Districts Restorative Practices framework and training plans:

District has been trying to use RP for 5 years - mostly in reactive way

Beginning summer of 2017, began Tier 1 level training - 4 day summer institute

23 staff + faculty from 8 schools - all elementary + ON-TOP & Horizons

Oct. 2017 - 150 faculty & admin at elem schools 2nd training

40 faculty from Hunt had a 2-3h RP training workshop during the 2017-18 school year

Climate and culture for not only for students but also adults (Oakland, CA example) to address marginalized students

As RP becomes more systemic, want to change how adults interact with students

How students interact with each other

Know from model communities that RP implementation resulted in academic and school culture improvements

In BSD, main driver was to address marginalized students, suspensions, bullying/harassment

More people need to be fully trained in relationship building & bullying

Hunt has only been practicing among adults in building

'17-'18 18 paras at Champlain received in-service training

45 early educators also received in-service training

5 staff (after-school, Tech Center, etc)

Paras, early ed, afterschool staff were trained also - they are the ones who see the kids during "unsupervised" time and are more likely to interact with kids when kids' guard is down

Goal was to take holistic District wide approach; looking at training systemically, RP is a constant learning process

'17-'18 IAA and Champ PTO received RP presentations

June 2018 School Board and Superintendent received RP training

17 BSD employees from 10 departments/schools participated in 4-day Tier 1 Summer Institute

20 BSD staff had 2 day advanced summer institute, not quite Tier 2, called it Tier 1.5

Summer 2018 middle & high school trainings were cancelled due to stipend offer being unsatisfactory

Fidelity - How is use of RP monitored - documentation?

Tier 1.5 looks at how to assess how things are going and what is working/what is not
Looking at other national models and modify to BSD

MOU with UVM College of Ed

Looking at fidelity tools to measure success

Tools being used at first didn't measure properly

Goal to see bullying and suspensions decrease

Full data team creating measurement tools

Working on what activities and practices will be document

RP has been presented to 50 Baird Inclusion Program people and outside District support workers too

40 BSD Food service staff were trained 2018 summer (Intro to RP)

16 Howard support clinicians received Intro to RP training as well

Friday, Aug. 21 - 400+ teachers and administrators had ½ day in-service "intro to RP"

Created baseline understanding

One of BEA members is part of leadership team

Talked about master agreement (union contract) and how it might include RP language

We have trained teachers assigned to train other teachers; looking to transform entire community

RP Collaborative formed voluntarily- monthly gathering of 40-60 folks to have 4 hours together as a professional learning community (teachers & administrators) - meet with CJC, use reflection and dialog as problem-solving - pulls people from all schools

Horizons, BTC and On-Top have trouble getting subs so it's harder for their population so it's harder for them to participate

Outcome is school-based teams:

Teachers have taken initiative to make videos of circles and have kids talk about the circles

Peer-to-peer training is being developed

If don't have funds to train new administrators, have teachers who have been trained to recognize when RP is appropriate

Get more value out of working with staff who know schools, know kids, and have the ability to carry RP out into community, at youth organizations

How do we bond together to make community safe for everyone, esp kids

Need in coming year:

CP Smith, middle schools, BHS, BTC, AS, Horizons/On Top/ Bus Drivers/Maintenance Workers/ Flynn

CP Smith - has 3 person team that CJC is checking in with

AfterSchool - city could pay for that & CJC Is delivering proposal to Mayor this week that asks City to pay for trainings for community to use RP City-wide
Site directors and key staff should get trained - being visited monthly by trainers after initial foundation is built

Can't move to Tier 2 until Tier 1 training is accomplished throughout District

Need training in the future
Communications Team
Central Office staff

Student/family engagement team is a goal- team that includes students and families
Will work with students to look at ways to empower them to be involved in creating procedures when it comes to making change
Need families there when making decision
Francesca DuPuis & Jason from Horizons are leads - looking for more staff from other schools

DEALT team work is aligned with District's commitment to professional development
First part of 3 strands in Restorative Practices (RP)
Creating a culture of equity belonging
Socio emotional
Commissioners asked staff for the "3 strands" Plan - Miriam agreed to track it down

All RP teams with teachers/staff are voluntary
Ran into issue of stipends
Most of work being done during school day
Collaborative meets during school day - need to work out how to engage students during day with credit
Would be year-long course - being done in Montpelier and other places
Need to work on everyone's biases about student involvement

Commissioners requested report out on metrics to measure progress - Outcomes - can District elevate middle school training?
Staff responded that FY19 budget is already deployed but there is a recognition that middle school is in acute need
Looking at all procedures like suspension to align with RP
Staff will develop reporting format to keep D&E Commissioners up to speed on the FY19 school year activities and progress

5. Discussion: Bullying issues in our schools & data collection

A. District Director of Safe and Inclusive Schools to talk about BSD's statement and action plan on bullying

What resources are given to parents about bullying in beginning of year? (This info is in the BSD Calendar & Handbook that EVERY student receives at the beginning of the school year)

What are documentation protocols?

Bullying /Hazing/ Harassment

Sparks is responsible for procedures

Heather Lan is coming in October 2018 to train administrators

ALL new employees trained on bullying/hazing/harassment

Every employee in District required to take training

Administrators go through annual training

Atty in Burlington who developed statutory regulations does the BSD training

For all suspensions - parents receive a letter

Documentation - by law, required to keep documentation

Cannot say that there's been an investigation w/out documentation - word may be used too informally -

Graham Clark spoke to this point as well - administrator's language needs to be more precise.

If family told that there is an investigation, family must receive letter that there's going to be investigation or has been a suspension and legal protocols must be followed

Any docs that ID other students, cannot be shown to anyone else

Have to protect confidentiality of ALL students

In 2015, state changed the law that required parent to go to building administrator and follow chain of command

Now parents have right to go to Board or Superintendent and have right not to go to administrator, but challenge is making sure all parents know their rights

This year, will set up parent meetings around bullying

The plan is to include parents as partners, not just inform of rights

Have not taken this step yet

A lot of what parents hear and experience, administration does not hear about

Parents and community knows things that BSD employees don't

Sparks asked L'Ecuyer if the family would be willing to talk one on one about experience in order to learn from it

All parents have right to see behavior folder and academic folder

Policies are in handbook and on website

Will look at using PTO's and NPA's

Step 1 - district wide B/H/H training

Step 2 - work with middle schools to address behavioral strategies in addition to RP

Hunt and EMS have chronic issues

Formal investigation: admin is the only person who can initiate AND must be complete within 5 days

Knowing your rights is essential!

FY19 Theme is Relationships

Climate is about better relationships

District looking to change all inappropriate behaviors

Not just bullying/hazing/harassment but all inappropriate behaviors and building healthy relationships

Discussed whether RP could elevate middle schools this year

RP can't substitute for an investigation if one is triggered - only Building Administrator can decide that an investigation is warranted

6. Recap Goals for Next School Year

A. Affirmative/Diversity hiring and retention

Staff indicated that this is being called Inclusive Hiring & Retention (with longer formal name for it)

Commissioner Curry indicated that this was a Board goal for the Superintendent, not a DE&I

Committee issue to track

B. Closing the Achievement Gap Strategies

This year will focus on Climate, including RP & bullying

C. Plan for Building a Relationship with Local non-profits -

Commissioner Wick brought this up at first D&E meeting of Q4 FY18 - could align focus on RP with nonprofit relationship building since the District's goal is to have all organizations interacting with District students adopt RP, and nonprofits are on-board with this.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Liz Curry

Edited by

Monika Ivancic