

In attendance:

Commissioners: Liz Curry, Monika Ivancic, Jean Waltz,

BSD Staff: Henri Sparks, Miriam Ehtesham-Cating,

Public: Shy Lalumiere

Meeting called to order at 6:05pm

2. Approval of agenda:

Move to Amend agenda by M Ivancic

Change no.4 to “Report on Hunt Incident at the school dance on 9-28-2018”

Add: No. 9 Equity Report Card

L. Curry: explains some history of D&E committee, strategies to track disparities, achievement gap, DEALT team

4. Report on Hunt Incident at the school dance on 9-28-2018

L. Curry heard from a large group of people since 10-1-2018

J. Waltz: had a meeting with 3 Hunt parents and Liz Curry on 1-14-2018 and met with an additional parent today (10-16-18)

Hunt dance was interrupted and dismissed

Concern about safety surrounding kids involved in incident

Building administrators asked a group of girls to compose apology letter regarding confusion created by rumors spread by students

L. Curry: based on what heard from multiple sources, believes there are hundreds of versions of events that occurred

Observed that 2-3 current Hunt parents were at Barnes in 2008, when there was a racial incident and continues to feel that we have a lot of work to do!;

Sees pattern of kids acting in age-appropriate ways and are met with administrative responses that leave them feeling humiliated

Building administrators don't yet have skills to handle many of the situations that come up

Resulting in a dynamic of racism or unconscious bias

Spoke with P & J Center about training in disrupting racism

H. Sparks:

has been intimately involved since the Saturday after the dance (9-29-18)

Established that the N word was not used and there was no hitting or punching involved

Followed by series of confrontations between kids that led to building administrators shutting down the dance and getting students into auditorium to discuss what was going on
2 police officers were called when kids left building without adult supervision
Sparks followed up by meeting with group of students after the weekend; principal sent out several communications to parents
School has been a “powder keg” for a few years so there is a lot going on under the surface that likely contributed to much of the behavior
On Oct. 23rd there is a scheduled meeting about “Bullying, Hazing and harassment” at Hunt

L. Curry:

We have deeper climate issues at Hunt that need to be improved
Looking at how to instill skills within administrative staff to de-escalate situations instead of backstop of calling the police to solve the problem

H. Sparks:

Building administrators’ first responsibility is to keep everyone safe! Situation wasn’t safe, kids were non-compliant

Challenges are going on all of the time in kids’ families and the community, school is tipping point

Even about national messages (!) kids are getting contribute to tensions

Schools have been in the forefront to address these issues

BSD putting in RP; also e-bullying is a big issue

In meetings with the Hunt students, he asked them “What do you guys want to do to solve the situation?”

The students decided on an apology letter

No one was suspended, but they were held accountable/responsible for act

Using RP to make amends

L. Curry:

Would like to envision things happening differently with less reactivity and stronger prevention/ de-escalation skills - spoke with Peace & Justice Center and they sent proposal for Disrupting Racism

Climate work in schools will change this

H. Sparks:

we can always improve what we do; talked about DEALT team’s role in building staff skills
We need to understand identity and how we are as people BEFORE we can talk about racism

Miriam E-C:

focusing on BSD - “re-focusing” on middle schools this year - discussed middle schools as “flash point”

CJC involvement in BSD is a strong partnership

H. Sparks:

Our goal is to be a “restorative city”

J. Waltz:

Asked about court diversion program v. CJC restorative practices

H. Sparks:

CJC working with us through juvenile justice center; CJC responds differently by using restorative practices

Court diversion is more punitive approach compared to restorative practices; being punitive doesn't work; working on building healthier relationships; this is a community endeavor

Oct. 23rd meeting at Hunt about bullying/hazing/harassment and talking about RP

1st of series of meetings with parents

Parents learning about their rights

Open conversations with various students!

L. Curry:

inquired about follow up with kids

5. SRO Data Tracking Process

L. Curry: how and when are we tracking arrests?

Sparks: Mike Hemond (new SRO) made changes to how data is tracked

Will send us the document about this.

Exploring national protocol to address safety issues

6. Report on “Parents & Youth for Change (PYC)” by Liz Curry

PYC has been working on transportation issues in Winooski; want to return to collaboration with BSD

PYC suggested idea of a MOU with BSD

Infinite (of PYC) went to Community Engagement meeting; requested how BSD get info from low income folks per Title I funding requirements

Miriam E-C: contacted by PYC; they want to learn more about how BSD does this

Sparks: when started RP in BSD 2.5 years ago, Infinite was part of LT (Leadership team)

J. Waltz: need to have a listening campaign to hear what students need

Monika: discuss Board representation on RP Strategy Team with Superintendent and will be attending meetings

7. Vermont Coalition for Ethnic and Social Equity

Group was focuses specifically on legislative initiative

Kiah Morris led this effort (VT State Rep from Bennington) with goal to include ethnic studies in VT public schools

Liz will focus on asking Board to formally supporting the bill after discussing at DE&I

Liz will share bill, no. 257 with us -> Senate Education Committee

<http://ethnicstudiesvt.org/about/>

8. Three strands document

Shifted to one strand – full implementation of RP in BSD

Train teachers on how to implement restorative procedures

9. Equity Inclusion Report

Sparks: Yaw needs to make changes and will provide report at a later date

Format will stay the same

Committee has spent years to figure out current format so that it captured data accurately; new Data Management position will enable report to become more robust

DEALT History by Miriam Ehtesham-Cating

Miriam was asked to be coordinator over a year ago

On team: EL director (Miriam E-C)
 Special Ed director (Laura Nugent)
 Director of Equity (Sparks)

Combined info and resource hub

This school year, kicked off first 2 days of professional development on 8/23 and 8/24

Meeting adjourned at 8:22pm