

Vision 2020 Diversity Task Group

Minutes from the 05/14/18 Diversity Task Group meeting

Attendees: Michaiah Healy, Miriam Stein, Josh Ayares, Eve Manz, Lynette Martyn, Swapna Katamaroje, Brooks Harrelson, John Kozma, Sarita Duvadie, Katell Guellec, Edith Wun, Jane Lynch, Judith Schaechter, Louise Bipskin, Sean Garballey, Amanda Proctor, Ashley Lorenz, Ramona Granucci, Joanne Young, Sarah*, Naomi*, Allen* (*last names missing)

There was an opening icebreaker from 6:45pm – 7:15pm led by the chairperson, Michaiah Healy. Each attendee shared their name and a movie, book, or podcast that feels most relevant and thought-provoking right now. Miriam Stein shared that she is no longer the co-chair for the group and that Michaiah is the chairperson. An email list was passed around.

The minutes from the previous meeting were read and approved.

Michaiah summarized the history and goals of the Arlington Vision2020 project. The project will be changing its name to Empowering Arlington to reflect the aim to move past the year 2020.

Attendees offered updates on the following projects:

- Superintendent's Diversity Advisory Committee report by Miriam. Attendees also discussed various ideas to improve cultural competency in the classroom and suggested that the Superintendent could improve her communication around diversity issues.
- Colonial Day report by Lynette. Updates were given about plans for Colonial Day this year at the various elementary schools. The topic is closely related to curriculum development.
- Diversity & Inclusion Parent's Groups report by Lynette. There is interest at several elementary schools to start groups, either working with the principal and/or PTO, or independently.
- APS focus on cultural competency report by Michaiah. There was some discussion on trainings for teachers and how to go beyond checking the box to setting benchmarks in the classroom.
- Town Day report by Michaiah and Miriam. Town Day is 09/15/18 this year. There is a need for volunteers to staff a table with information on the Diversity Task Group.
- Bridging Communities: METCO and Arlington, report by Michaiah. Goal is to find ways to support parents with students in METCO.
- Freedom Mass Coalition, report by Brooks. Update on the ballot initiative this fall that seeks to repeal the state's 2016 antidiscrimination law that protects the transgender community. State Rep. Sean Garballey spoke about the importance of mobilizing to oppose the repeal and to ensure that voters understand the wording of the ballot initiative (voting "yes" will preserve the law).

Naomi provided background and an update on the hate graffiti at AHS and the work of the Arlington Human Rights Commission and APD to address this incident. Rep. Garballey spoke about the process of restorative justice that the offenders were offered in lieu of immediate legal charges being filed.

Michaiah led attendees in another roundtable exercise. Each person briefly shared their reasons for wanting to be involved in the Diversity Task Group.

Given time limitations, we did not split into break-out groups. Attendees interested in taking on specific projects exchanged contact information.

The meeting adjourned at 9pm. The next meeting is scheduled for June 11 at 7pm.

Notes Taken By: Katell Guellec