



## Equity and Diversity Council (EDC)

### Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 27, 2018

3:45 pm – 5:00 pm

Town Hall- Room 400

[www.whps.org/edc](http://www.whps.org/edc)



Recorder: Melissa Zych

<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b></p>	<p>Introductions to new representatives and returning members. Many are also West Hartford parents. Thank you for being here for this important work.</p>
<p><b>Icebreaker</b></p>	<p>Using printed table jokes and inspiration, the group warmed up with a turn and talk reflection on something that made participants laugh or smile since the start of the school year. All were smiling by the end of this activity.</p>
<p><b>2018-2019 EDC Focus Areas</b></p>	<p><b>Welcoming Families-</b> Combined Open Choice and Family Engagement subcommittees have expanded the Welcoming Schools Assessment initiative (See Subcommittee Report). <i>Cause I Ain't Got a Pencil poem</i> Joshua T. Dickerson was shared as reminder about getting to know our children and families and their uniqueness, backgrounds, circumstances, sacrifices, etc</p> <p><b>Systemic Equity-</b> Looking closely at things through an equity lens that may be hard to see and uncomfortable to discuss. Social Studies Dept Supervisor, Jessica Blitzer gave an Aug. Extended Leadership presentation on Johan Galtung's framework as a "tool" to begin identifying and discussing WHPS programs, policies and practices in an effort to create systemic equity. Examples of inequities that district leaders have identified and commit to take action were shared.</p>
<p><b>Subcommittee Updates/Reports</b></p>	<p><b>Family- Community Engagement Welcoming Schools (WS) Assessment</b> Amy Yarborough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2017-18 combined efforts of the Family &amp; Community Engagement and Open Choice Committees led WS Assessment pilot. Wolcott, Norfeldt, Bristow and KP hosted.</li> <li>● Info collected from the schools and families included: how we are doing being welcoming schools. Perceptions? Practices and plans that we can put in place to better connect with and serve families?</li> <li>● Data collection: computer surveys, walkthroughs, interviews, focus groups, partner school 'look for' criteria for visits, etc.</li> <li>● Pilot schools will continue to use this data this year to make decisions to better serve their communities.</li> </ul> <p><b>District Plan for Welcoming Schools Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Two staff members and 1 parent from each school were invited to participate in Overview, 2 half-day trainings, a book study (<i>Powerful Partnerships</i>) and components of the Welcoming Schools Assessment.</li> <li>● <b>Thr. 10/4 3pm-4 or 4pm -5pm</b> -1-hour District Team Designee Overview Meeting Thr. Town Hall, Rm 407.</li> <li>● <b>Thr. 10/11 11:30 am - 2:30 pm</b> Town Hall Session 1 half day WS Training</li> <li>● <b>Tue. 10/16 8:30am -12:30pm</b> Conard HS, Room 169 Session 2 half day WS Training</li> <li>● Participation in a Book Study, <i>Powerful Partnerships: A Teacher's Guide to Engaging Families for Student Success</i> by Mapp, Carver, &amp; Lander-Accessible w/ a video companion.</li> <li>● Components of the Welcoming Schools Assessment: surveys, focus groups/individual interviews, physical walk throughs, review of website and print materials, shopper calls, analysis of findings and next steps keep-stop-change planning</li> </ul>

- The EDC will be supporting the efforts of Welcoming schools in our subcommittees. Roszena will send out the invitation for these sessions to the entire EDC. You may indicate your availability and areas of interest.
- **The Family Resource Guide**- Background shared: A tool for understanding WHPS schools, district and town resources. All schools should have this on their website too. There are lots of helpful links embedded.
- EDC building reps are a liaison between the EDC and the schools- please communicate with the appropriate resources at your schools to ensure that the resource is on the website and in the office.
- Other resources shared and available in all school offices: West Hartford Cares card, ESOL classes available for adults, and WH Food Programs. Links: [West Hartford Cares Card](#) [West Hartford Food Assistance Programs](#), [FREE WH Adult ESOL Classes](#)

**Open Choice Enhancement**- Amy Yarbrough

- Save the Date! **Nov. 30th 5:30 pm - 8pm @ Bristow- Open Choice Family Game Night** It was very successful last year. The night provides a wonderful way for families to connect. Please share the date and info (flyer) at Open Choice participating schools. Thank you Principal Cook & Bristow for hosting.

**LGBT**- Cathy Davis

- This summer the group took the presentation that was given to the PE department and added narration via Voice Thread.
- We still need to work on our language. Cathy noticed this at a recent open house (sons and daughters). "Your children or our students" may be a better way to address this. We have patterns that we don't even notice. We have made huge gains as a district but still have work to do.
- The new training can be viewed at the school by itself because of the new narration. It was really well received by the PE and Health departments in the spring.
- To follow up the committee would like to know: How is it going now that you've seen the new training? What changes can you see?

**Ethnic Affairs** - Roszena and Lara

- This subcommittee is comprised of two action work groups: The WHPS/WHEA/WHAA Ethnic Affairs Committee: educators across the district collaborate, plan, and support programs and opportunities for expanding and sustaining diversity.
- **Future Educators of Diversity** program in partnership with local colleges, encourages, provides training, mentorship, and support for high school students of color to enroll in a CT teacher preparation program. Program goal: to ensure that students, as aspiring educators of color, are identified, mentored, and are encouraged to build relationships with those who can support them in their journey to becoming WHPS professional educators. Students who successfully complete the program and complete postsecondary educational requirements and earn state certification will be guaranteed an interview for employment opportunities in the WHPS.
- **October 23- 6-8pm- Conard**- FEOD College Mixer Meet-Up with area colleges will promote teacher ed programs at participating colleges. Event is open to families and students.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Aim is to have the students take part in a student teaching assistant program and get credit for it. They have to fill out an application to be in this program, complete modules, and fulfil requirements. At least 1/3 of these students want to go into education.</li> <li>● If others see a way to connect with this group, please email Lara_White@whps.org at Hall High School.</li> </ul> <p><b>Capacity-Building</b> (Introduces new subcommittee name)- Dave and Melissa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Surveys and chats with colleagues indicated that there were a large number of teachers who have no idea what the EDC does.</li> <li>● This year, an opt-in monthly email newsletter is offered.. It will be available to all WHPS staff. Look for an invitation to join this newsletter group. We are hoping to make it available to the community as well (it will go onto the EDC webpage too). Dave shared a mock up the upcoming letter.</li> <li>● Please send Melisa (Melissa_Zych@whps.org) or Dave (Dave_Barrieau@whps.org) your flyers for upcoming events so that we can promote them in the newsletter.</li> <li>● The Capacity-Building Committee will divide into two subs : one for secondary and one for elementary. Hopefully, this will increase participation in the middle and high schools.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Announcements and Shares</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make sure that reps have given the EDC overview at your building (group surveyed indicated that 99% of schools have done so).</li> <li>● Next month’s subcommittee minutes should include ways that people can promote the work of subcommittees within the district buildings. Bulleted lists, etc. everything matters.</li> <li>● Thank you to all the subcommittee chairs!</li> <li>● Cultural Competence relevant CITs are available. A list of a few proposed by EDC members were shared. Thanks, Dave B, Jenny D, Lara W. , Scott R.</li> <li>● Witness Stones Project: slavery in West Hartford, encouraging conversations in classrooms. Project Link <a href="#">WH Witness Stones Project</a></li> <li>● <b>Nov. 8 @ 6pm- WOLCOTT’S INTERNATIONAL NIGHT! ALL ARE WELCOME.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Adjourn 5:00pm</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Committee members were invited to review and cast a vote on a new visual for the cultural competence continuum.</li> <li>● The meeting closed with partner shares of what members and guests were hopeful for in this year through their participation on the EDC.</li> <li>● Next meeting: EDC Subcommittees-Thurs, October 18 at 3:45pm in assigned Town Hall rooms</li> </ul>

**"Dawnland"** Film Screening Showing Mon. 10/8, 4pm Noah Webster House - 227 South Main Street, West Hartford

**Dave Stevens, Motivational Speaker**, Tue Oct. 9, 7pm, Norfeldt.

**Leading for Equitable Classrooms**- CT for School Change-Mon. & Tue Oct. 15 & 16- 8:30am – 4:30pm-Wadsworth Atheneum

**Facilitating a Civil Discourse in the Classroom Training Session**- (TBD) offered by CREC. Graustein grant funding covers the cost of materials, lunch and up to 3 substitute teachers.

**Deeper Change Forum w/ Dr. Joy DeGruy**- Thr. and/or Fri. Oct. 18 & 19 8:30 am – 4:00 pm, New Haven

“When a flower doesn’t bloom, you change the environment in which it grows, not the flower.”  
 –Alexander Den Heijer