



Minutes
NASHOBA Regional School Committee
Diversity, Equity, Awareness, and Racial Justice Advisory
June 8, 2022
8:00 PM

Meeting Remote via Zoom Technology

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87140833497>

Meeting ID: 871 4083 3497

Present: Courtney, Laurie, Greg, Rhyllis, Lindsay, Kelly, Kristin, Charlene

- I. **Call to Order @ 8:03 PM** by Laurie Burnett
- II. **Introductions, Review of Norms, and Land Acknowledgement-** Reviewed as a committee
- III. **Citizens Comments:** No comments
- IV. **Reviewed Agenda**
- V. **Approved Minutes:**
 - A. **5/11/22 Minutes:** Kristin moved to approve the minutes and Kelly seconded. Courtney, Laurie, Greg, Lindsay, Kelly, Kristin voted yes and Rhyllis Abstained.
 - B. **5/17/22 :** Kristin moved to approve the minutes and Laurie seconded. Courtney, Laurie, Greg, Lindsay, Kristin voted yes. Rhyllis and Kelly abstained.
- VI. **Updates Current Projects & School Committee Activity:**
 - A. Greg reported on the School Committee's discussion of the calendar at their meeting of June 1st. Superintendent Downing made the recommendation to include all federal holidays on the calendar which includes acknowledgement of both Columbus Day and Indigenous People's Day and Christmas. Kirk would like to meet next year with DEARJ and faith leaders to further discuss how to acknowledge religious holidays. Vote will be next Wednesday..
 - B. Courtney provided an update on the Strategic Planning Committee. The Plan is organized within the following four strategic objectives: 1) Connections & Communication, 2) Learning, Teaching, and Leading, 3) Culture and Belonging, and 4) Human Capital and Resources. The last meeting of the working group is tomorrow, 6/9/22. At this meeting the initiatives under each objective (the work) will be agreed upon and finalized. The Mission Statement was finalized in meeting #4, as well as the Theme for the 5-year NRSD strategic plan "Learning Along the Great Road." DEARJ

spent time discussing the necessity of equity being woven into all of the work and ways this could be seen in the values and initiatives. The Strategic Planning Committee has also discussed this in an ongoing way.

VII. Planning for Summer/ Fall:

- A. We briefly reviewed the status of our completed and ongoing projects:
1. **SC August Retreat & Ongoing Professional Development Recommendations:** we need to provide the School Committee our recommendations, ideally by their last meeting this month.
 2. **District Strategic Planning Work-** Our next steps will be to review the work and determine where our support is needed and prioritize where/how we want to proceed.
 3. **DEARJ vision, mission, values, participation, definitions, and means of community and district input:** We have our “Guiding Document” which collects into one document our drafts and the resources shared for moving forward on this work. While this may be a “living document”, we need to complete our initial draft as a resource to provide clarity and direction to our work.
 4. **Calendar-** School Committee will vote on acknowledging the public holidays at their next meeting. Kirk will reach out for further conversations about acknowledgement of religious holidays next school year.
 5. **Sub-committee guidance and support-** ongoing and perhaps can be wrapped into the professional learning work of the full School Committee.
 6. Follow through on **Land Acknowledgement Commitments** - Ideally this will be part of Strategic Plan and DEARJ can determine how to support through implementation of Strategic Plan.
 7. **Our meeting structure and participation:** working groups can meet over the summer. Meeting times can be submitted to Laurie for public posting at 48 hours ahead of the meeting. Sub-committee work will be brought to the full committee when our meetings resume in the fall.
- B. We discussed in further detail how to move forward on our Professional Development Recommendations for SC’s August retreat. Discussion included:
1. Sharing on the ground experiences and strategies that are helpful for supporting teachers were discussed.
 2. Ways to build investment , empathy, and awareness, including the sharing of personal stories with School committee members and “This is Who I Am Poems”
 3. Additional themes identified and considerations discussed included:
 - a) Building an understanding of difference.
 - b) Identity mapping
 - c) Common definition of equity
 - d) Is there a way the SC can carve out a certain amount of time at each meeting to build this awareness and understanding?
 - e) Data disaggregation and analysis
 - f) Everyone is coming from different places- providing a series of experiences to build awareness, understanding, and mindset will be helpful. As is a recognition that the work is ongoing.
 - g) Important to provide tools along with the awareness and learning.

4. **Motion:** Laurie moved that Courtney will write, in partnership with interested DEARJ and Community members, a list of Professional Learning recommendations for the Nashoba Regional School Committee to consider for their August retreat. Kristin seconds. Unanimous approval.
- C. Discussed arenas in Strategic Plan to consider support/ action for next year:
1. Our overarching goal is to support the district in making equity central to all components of its work. We can review the Strategic Plan when complete to see how we can support this happening.
 2. Equity work is a process that is ongoing: it is not done in a series of months and years, but that is a systemic approach.
 3. Supporting the district in embedding the ongoing learning and support needed to do this hard work- eg working from a growth mindset for all- students, staff, families, community members.
 4. Specific areas/ initiatives in Strategic Plan brought up included:
 - a) Does the district have a neutral person/ ombudsman type person available to talk with parents/ students have a concern?
 - b) Translation- importance and range of strategies- provide teachers with the tools. Consider how funding and outreach is provided.
 - c) Look for how will be able to measure/ see the improvements that come from the work.
 - d) What tools and methods are being used to support the change identified in the Strategic Plan? Eg how are families, teachers, students, and staff supported in carrying out these changes is critical for the change to happen. A culture and climate of respect is an essential foundation.
 - e) How do we recognize this is difficult work and ensure the support is needed to continue it?
 - f) Social emotional learning as a means for carrying out this work.
 - g) Hiring processes- supporting how outreach, screening, and interview process are all informed by DEIB awareness. Can DEARJ be a part of this process? The hiring of the new assistant superintendent is a critical opportunity. Discussed our possible role in this process. Agreed too late at this time for the Asst. Superintendent role, but something to consider for the future.
 - h) How is the work centered at each school? Are there working groups at the school level?
 5. In hiring Superintendent Downing the School Committee prioritized hiring someone with a background in DEIB work and he is centering this work in his actions.
- D. Identifying what if/ anyone wants to do any work over the summer on our existing projects and if so the format/ frame for the work:

1. Anyone interested in working on one of our ongoing projects over the summer can schedule a working group meeting to discuss. Interested members will share meeting data and time with Laurie for posting.
- E. Plan for starting the new year:
1. Utilize a format that allows for different levels of commitment/ contribution to the committee.
 2. Review sub-committee work from the summer and plan how to move forward given the work.

VIII. Acknowledgements & Appreciation

- IX. Adjourned at 9:43** Greg moved to adjourn Kristin seconded and unanimously approved.

"The items listed are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair, which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law."