



Mayor's Task Force for Racial & Ethnic Equality

EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Thursday, May 20, 2021 5:30pm Zoom Meeting

Call to Order

Alexandria Ayala, subcommittee co-chair, called the meeting to order at 5:41 pm. Tiffany David, of the City of West Palm Beach Mayor's Office, took attendance of participants for the meeting record. Kayla Elson, of Justice & Sustainability Associates, reviewed the meeting agenda.

April Meeting Minutes

No comments were made about the April meeting minutes. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved as distributed.

Education Surveys

Subcommittee Members discussed who and how to distribute the Education surveys in order to garner responses. Subcommittee members compiled a list of organizations and associations to provide a direct link to the survey. They also discussed sharing the survey during the June Action Summit.

Panel: Educator Perspectives on Addressing Racial Disparities

Alexandria Ayala introduced Ms. Rebecca Currie, a Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) at North Grade Elementary School, who has been providing groceries and meals for the food insecure students in her school. She opened a food pantry where students can shop for food for free and she also brings food to the children's homes and performs wellness checks on students as well. Ms. Currie expressed concern over the mental health impacts that COVID-19 and isolation have had on students.

Discussion

Tiffany David asked about the type of initiatives that would make the biggest impact on children's lives. One suggestion that was highlighted was to invest in more mental health services such as providing trauma-informed training for teachers or more counselors, developing referral services for children who need a mental health professional, and offering mental health and self-care services for teachers and frontline workers. Ms. Currie recommended creating a task force or committee of counselors who work together to address the prominent mental health issues in the community.



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Another concern that was shared focused on English as a second language (ESL) learners and the impact of at-home learning on their English language skills. Alexandria Ayala asked how the School Board could better support teachers. Ms. Currie suggested a needs assessment that analyzes test scores and other data to understand what the schools need and how to better engage students. She also stated that the School Board should offer flexible support that works in tangent with students' needs.

Public Comment

Kayla Elson opened the floor for public comment. Dr. Karline Prophete thanked Rebecca Currie for all the work she is providing to the community. She highlighted the importance of being flexible as a teacher but also the need for easily accessible resources, such as one-pagers that highlight all the resources a teacher may need to support their students. Dr. Prophete also shared that mental health services and support for teachers should also be a priority.

Next Steps: Equality Action Summit

Kayla Elson provided updates on the June Equality Action Summit. All Task Force members were provided with promotional materials to advertise the meeting. Subcommittee members discussed distributing the facilitator sign-up link and information. The subcommittee also planned to schedule a 1-hour meeting before the June Action Summit to make sure all members were aligned on the subcommittee priorities.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:54 pm by Alexandria Ayala. The next meeting will be on Thursday, June 17, 2021, at 5:30 pm on Zoom.



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ATTENDANCE

Guest Speakers

Rebecca Currie, Teacher on Special Assignment at North Grade Elementary School

Present:

Alexandria Ayala, Subcommittee Co-Chair

Julie Fisher Cummings, Subcommittee Co-Chair

Dina Rubio, Subcommittee Member

Joyel Glaze, Subcommittee Member

Tiffany David, City of West Palm Beach Mayor's Office

Kayla Elson, Justice & Sustainability Associates

Milena Almetica, Justice & Sustainability Associates

Public Attendees:

Lancho

Julia Dattolo

Yezenia Reyes

Pranati Kumar

Dr. Karline Prophete

Absent:

Sally Chester, Subcommittee Member

Sergio Piedra, Subcommittee Member

Andre Darnell Wynn, Subcommittee Member