



Mayor's Task Force

for Racial & Ethnic Equality

EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, July 15, 2021

5:30 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

Call to Order

Alexandria Ayala, subcommittee co-chair, called the meeting to order at 5:48 p.m. Kayla Elson, of Justice & Sustainability Associates, took attendance of participants for the meeting record and reviewed the meeting agenda.

June Meeting Minutes

No comments were made about the June meeting minutes. The meeting minutes from both meetings were unanimously approved as distributed.

Process and Education Surveys Update

Kayla Elson reviewed the process for drafting and presenting the recommendations to the Task Force, Mayor, and City Commission. It is expected that the Task Force will finalize their recommendations by September 2021.

Kayla Elson stated that there were no updates about the Education Surveys at this time. Alexandria Ayala challenged the subcommittee members to get at least five people to fill out the survey and to increase their collective efforts to gather responses from the public. She stated that she will post on her social media accounts and reach out to stakeholders that could take the survey and share it with their networks. Kayla Elson and Milena Almetica, of Justice and Sustainability Associates will send the surveys out to previous guest speakers as well.

Discussion: Priority One Recommended Ideas

To begin the discussion, Kayla Elson highlighted the three ideas that received the most attention: creating an accessible resource that includes information about all existing educational and workforce development opportunities, leveraging business partnerships to support workforce development and educational programs, and eliminating barriers to accessing workforce development programs.

With respect to the first idea, subcommittee members agreed on its importance. Alexandria Ayala emphasized that the website or database needs to be robust and include descriptions of the resources to give users context. Dina Rubio, subcommittee member, shared that many principals do not have access to the same information about available resources, making



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information sharing important across schools. Angelina Gallesi-Schmitt, public attendee, stated that the database needs to be in multiple languages and should be shared at parent-teacher conferences, community centers, and schools. Sergio Piedra, subcommittee member, suggested that the subcommittee recommend that the city invest in updating and maintaining the website to ensure it is a sustainable resource.

For the second idea of leveraging business partnerships to support workforce development and education programs, Alexandria Ayala suggested offering businesses tax credits to hire West Palm Beach residents and students. Angelina Gallesi-Schmitt highlighted the need for local businesses to offer more internship opportunities for high school and college students. Kayla Elson asked if any language that needs to be added to this idea relate this idea specifically to racial and ethnic equality. Joyel Glaze, subcommittee members suggested including verbiage such as “first generation students”, “of all income levels” and “of all document status.” Joyel Glaze also recommended offering “Sun passes” for easier travel and childcare for those aiming to access these services.

To address barriers to people trying to access workforce training courses, several subcommittee members suggested partnering with educational institutions to speak with students or staff about volunteering their time to share information about financial and digital literacy, applying for jobs and other services. Angelina Gallesi-Schmidt highlighted the importance of teaching the community about the importance of building credit and maintaining it. Alexandria Ayala also suggested working with local banks such as Flagler Bank and Seacoast Bank to offer financial literacy courses at community centers.

Discussion: Priority Two Recommended Ideas

Under priority two, subcommittee members discussed three ideas: providing more robust mental health resources to students and the community, offering anti-bias, cultural sensitivity and de-escalation training to educators, and creating an education liaison position within the mayor office. Alexandria Ayala discussed creating a mental health task force with mental health and behavioral health experts to address the community’s needs with the city. Sergio Piedra, emphasized that the mental health recommendation should focus on raising awareness of available resources and educating the community about different mental health resources. Joyel Glaze suggested recommending more than one education liaison staff position.

Public Comment

Kayla Elson opened the floor for public comment. Angelina Gallesi-Schmidt thanked the subcommittee members for dedicating their time to promoting equity in education.



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Next Steps

Kayla will update the recommended ideas list and redistribute to the subcommittee members. The subcommittee members will review the policy ideas further and reshare the education surveys.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m. by Alexandria Ayala. The next meeting will be on Thursday, August 12th, 2021, at 5:30 p.m. on Zoom.

ATTENDANCE

Present:

Alexandria Ayala, Subcommittee Co-Chair

Joyel Glaze, Subcommittee Member

Sergio Piedra, Subcommittee Member

Dina Rubio, Subcommittee Member

Kayla Elson, Justice & Sustainability Associates

Emma Lipsky, Justice & Sustainability Associates

Public Attendees:

Yezenia Reyes

Angelina Gallesi-Schmitt

Absent:

Julie Fisher Cummings, Subcommittee Co-Chair

Andre Darnell Wynn, Subcommittee Member

Sally Chester, Subcommittee Member

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