

11/20/2023

DEIJ Community Group Meeting

Attendance: Trisha Hall, Jim Morse, Val Wolfson, Kyra Dulmage, Rachael Blansett, Kristin Forselius, Kathy Collins, Nick Mattioni, Giana Gelsey, Eleanor Gelsey-Drees, Carolyn Sterndale, Lucy Gialousis, Kate Zimar, Rheanna Cote, Denise Day, and Suzanne Filippone

6:05 meeting is convened

Abbreviated meeting tonight so that we can attend the Mental Health Forum with HS students which starts at 6pm.

We will wait to have our discussion around class/classism for our next meeting.

UPDATES:

HS incidents around hate speech, what we have done, and steps moving forward. Schools are microcosms of schools so the parent forum next Monday and hope people attend.

Bagdad Rd. had some incidents of hate speech on a tree.

- Rainbow flag at Durham community church was stolen multiple times.

Laconia going through similar challenges; partnering with the town in efforts to address; we hope to do the same in the future; Todd S. is not able to attend next Monday for parent forum on hate speech.

Verbal hate speech is being seen as well at the high school and is part of the discussion with kids.

Rachael did some prework with faculty and did a debrief of hate speech advisory discussions with faculty today.

- Graffiti that was found was just a large manifestation of what is happening around the school, “f” slur and “n” word being used.
- More pervasive than we are thinking it is related to larger disrespectful behavior toward others and some entitlement.
 - Has the pandemic had an impact of student’s sense of empathy, social etiquette, etc.
 - This is happening earlier, (age-wise) than expected. Students are seeing it too. Conversations are happening to stop it but it isn’t stopping.
 - Gaslighting happening to teachers who try to call out behaviors I.e. “I heard what you just said,” “I didn’t say anything”
 - Some students may be doing this for attention or shock value (the idea of “going viral)
 - Power dynamics at play, classism may be underlining this too, it’s part of elitism.
 - Kids are accepting things being said to them others justify saying these things.
 - Marginalized students laughing off language; kids not thinking it’s a “big deal”

Discussions around how we respond to these things and what might help to make a change to this. Need to keep this discussion alive.

Article/story: NYTimes, Instagram account that rocked California town. Accountable the true story of a racist social media account and how it changed... San Francisco Chronical has an article too.

Teach In idea for kids from around the state to meet each other. DEIJ colleague is trying to do a student summit in Manchester. Can we replicate or partner with this work?

How do we create a community culture where this is not acceptable and it is not tolerated here?

- How can kids learn to stand up to other people? Underlining sense of fear and trust prevents people from being empowered to stand up and do something.
- Empathy piece. How does this work into the discussion? MS did a lot of work with this. It's about application and not just going through motions.... Compliant
- Can OR athletes and DEIJ work together to make change? College essays on DEIJ or learned something that changed the perspective. Real student scenarios would these make a difference. Real stories from people.
 - Invest in other places where kids can shine and get the whole school around them so the kids can shine and bring pride to OR. Weight that sports plays on toxic masculinity piece and boys bathrooms is where much of graffiti happening. Can we leverage this and shift cultural norms?
 - Rachael has been talking to Andy and Becka about connecting with coaches and then students about sports, bias and inclusion.
- Multi prong approach. Power, system, grassroots, community... Critical Kinship. Be critical and treat each other as a beloved family member. "I don't have to like you but I have to love you."

WRAP UP:

Spring event is the power of storytelling. End early for student mental health panel

December 18 next meeting.

Hate speech parent forum is Nov. 27th

7:09 meeting ends