Forward Together: Cultural Competence Update: 2019-2020 School Year Updates

**Overall District Work**

- Organized a new staff/parent/community member Cultural Competence Engagement Committee in 2019-20 (which followed the former Community Forum group facilitated by Dr. Marks from 2016)
  - Written language to support the district’s work with equity, inclusion and anti-racism in mind for four core areas of the district’s work with staff and students:
    - Curriculum and Support Resources
    - Hiring Practices and Retention of Teachers
    - Responding to student behavior and overall support
    - Professional Development of all stakeholders
  - Add new action items in addition to the work the district has already implemented (see below)

- Board of Education Discussion Meeting Spring 2020 (postponed due to school closure; rescheduled for Fall 2020) - Expo on staff and student initiatives highlighted by representatives from across the district, sharing their work on equity, inclusion and diversity
- December 2019: ROHS staff member Alyssa Reimold and students present on the ROHS Diversity Club’s work and activities, and accepted a donation from the ROHS PTA.
- All schools/K-12 teachers have participated via building wide, year-long training with Dr. Jay Marks, Diversity and Equity Consultant, Oakland Schools with a focus on bias training
- Professional training and diverse literature added in K-5
- Continued priority on hiring practices to recruit, sign, and retain professionals with diverse backgrounds/experiences
- Formation of ROHS Diversity Club and Equity work at the high school
- Development of Equity Team as part of the School Improvement process. Equity Team guides our cultural responsiveness work as part of the ROHS School Improvement Plan. They work directly with Dr. Jay Marks to develop plans as well as skills to lead staff development.
- Attendance at job fairs with a goal to recruit minority candidates to apply in Royal Oak
• **Recommended material and lesson plans adoptions**
  o 2020-21 - elementary lessons for focus celebration benchmark events (Black History, Women in History, etc.); social studies curriculum additions researched and expanded class offerings at ROHS for 2021-22.
  o 2019-20 hired two additional, general education social workers who are able to support all students (ROHS and ROMS). They will remain in place for 2020-21 at both schools. “They possess the background in community mental health resources to assist all families and students with social emotional supports. They also facilitate PD for our staff to empower their toolbox as educators,” Jane Flarity-Gram, Special Education Director
  o 2020-21 retaining Coach to continue the work with staff and students, and social workers

**Professional Development**

- All schools/K-12 teachers have participated via building wide, year-long training with Dr. Jay Marks, Diversity and Equity Consultant, Oakland Schools
  a. Focus on bias training
- Royal Oak has participated in two Oakland County annual cohorts of the *Social Justice Project*, a commitment to training and county-wide work. The participation includes fostering project teams at each level of the district. Outcomes for Royal Oak:

Some examples of our commitments include:

- Hiring of a full-time Restorative Practices Coach for Royal Oak Schools - 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21. This coach trains teachers on restorative practices and facilitates small groups with students as a model for empowering all staff.
- Hiring of two general education social workers for ROMS and ROHS to support students in and out of the classroom as an additional resource with counselors, teachers, administrators and specialized staff.
- K-5 Social Justice Team who leads initiatives for staff and has organized the implementation of diverse lessons and materials for K-5 literature.
- Additional lessons and materials have been researched and implemented across the district in the areas of art, music, Spanish and secondary ELA.
- Supporting our students as they strive to improve their learning environment and relationships with one another through a high school Diversity Club. Students represent a diverse population and provide opportunities for discussions, and facilitate multiple activities for their fellow students.