Forward Together: Cultural Competence Planning Outline

Board Update: June 8, 2017

Two high profile incidents that occurred at Royal Oak Middle School in November, 2016, create an opportunity for us to work together towards a more complete realization of our district vision to be a Community of Excellence. Although these events highlighted a need, they did not create it. While we have a great school district in a great community, of which we are rightly proud, we acknowledge that we have work to do with regard to our promise that ALL experience a welcoming and inclusive community. We also recognize that we are not alone among districts and communities needing to do such work. In the coming days, weeks, months, and years, we will work together to make the promise of our vision a reality for ALL.

The focus of our work moving forward is on developing programs and capacity that allow all persons in our school community to understand the experiences of each other. Ultimately, bullying, harassment and intimidation are reduced when there are not groups of people or individuals that we view as "other." These action steps focus on building our organizational capacity, leadership training, and developing a long-term strategic plan to increase cultural competence among staff and students.

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| Leadership Meeting and Consultation | District leadership consultation with Anthony Lewis (Field Director for the Michigan Office of Civil Rights), Dr. Jay Marks (Diversity and Equity Consultant, School Culture and Climate, District and School Services at Oakland Schools), and Julie McDaniels (Student Engagement Consultant, School Quality Department, Oakland Schools). | • November 22, 2016 (initial consultation with ten leadership team members)  
• November 28, 2016 (review with all adm. team members)  
• Monthly review of action steps following.  
• Documented each month as agenda item for administrative meetings; next meeting is June 12, 2017. |
| Inventory of current practices.   | Across the district, buildings and departments have been engaging in work with staff and students to increase cultural competency. Documentation and mapping of existing initiatives is needed to a) identify current best practices and b) identify gaps. | December 2016 – February 2017  
Initial Report on January 12, 2017 Board Meeting |
| Student experience data collection. | Collection of baseline data across the district. Working with Oakland Schools, Student Engagement Team, LAC-O student survey will be administered to all students 5-12. | November 2016 – February 2017  
Survey refinement with Oakland Schools completed; survey administration completed. Data |
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<td>Social Justice Project</td>
<td>This workshop is a collaboration between Oakland Schools, the Districts of Oakland County, and the University of Michigan’s Youth Dialogues on Race and Ethnicity in Metropolitan Detroit, in partnership with the Program On Intergroup Relations. This workshop series is designed for the purpose of enabling teaching professionals to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to promote social justice and diversity relative to race, gender, sexual orientation, social class, etc. within their schools, districts, and communities. A ten person representative district team will participate. Commitment in place to send additional Royal Oak Schools’ teams to participate in future Social Justice Project cohorts.</td>
<td>January – March 2017 Group consisting of 10 persons, seven from ROMS, one district, one Elem, and one ROHS, registered. Dates of workshop are January 18, February 3, February 17 (hosted by Royal Oak), and March 3. Ten person group includes teacher, support personnel, and paraprofessionals. Representatives from team reported to Board on February 9, 2017. At final meeting, social justice team identified student capacity building through ROMS LEAP program as focal point for project. The team’s goal is to create safe spaces within LEAP format so that courageous conversations with and among students can occur. Next steps planning meeting for team occurred on March 24, 2017. Additional planning on going around steps for September to establish positive inclusive school culture with and for all students.</td>
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<td>Culturally Proficient Leadership Training</td>
<td>Culturally Proficient Leadership training aims to equip educational leaders with the necessary knowledge, skills, and tools to engage in effective interactions among students, staff and the community they serve. At the organizational level, culturally proficient leaders address policies, practices, and issues that arise to ensure that cultural differences are valued in schools. Research basis for work is Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders: Lindsey, Nur-Robbins, and Terrell, editors.</td>
<td>January – June 2017 First Session held on January 23, 2017. Additional sessions scheduled for March 20, May 22, and June 27. In addition to all district administrative personnel, three members of the Board of Education are participating. Following first session on January 23, 2017, Dr. Marks facilitated planning for parent/community forum. All participants have a copy of book and read chapters 1-4 in advance of March 20, 2017 meeting. Chapter five was focus of May 22, 2017, meeting. June 27 will be fourth and final session in series.</td>
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| Community Forum | Purpose:  
- Listen to, and share experiences relative to Royal Oak Schools. | Date: Tuesday, March 14, 2017. Location: Board Room of
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| **Make recommendations for moving forward toward a more unified school community.**  
**Share what Royal Oak Schools is already doing around diversity, equity and inclusion.**  
Facilitated community review of recommendations from March 14 forum occurred on Tuesday, May 9.  
Initial goals were generation.  
Decision to pause action plan development to refocus on community engagement.  
Strategy for inviting more voices into process to be developed, intentionally looking at barriers to participation and how to remove them.  
Working to identify Fall 2017 Date for a Second District-Wide Forum. |
| **Update communications regarding non-discrimination policies and reporting process**  
*Need identified in parent conversations in December 2016.*  
• Updated postings in all school handbooks: August 2016  
• Updated posting on district website: January 2017  
Input at March community forum suggested holding on this so that affinity group recommendations might be considered. |
| **Facilitate Formation of an Affinity Group/Organization for Parents of Children of Color**  
*Updated Name: Royal Oak Multicultural Parent Association*  
• District worked with Oakland Schools beginning in March 2013 to establish an African American Family Network in Royal Oak. Such networks exist in many surrounding districts (e.g. Birmingham, Berkley and Troy).  
• While efforts at establishing a group continued through 2014-2015 school year, we were not successful in the effort.  
• The opportunity to work with parents interested in providing leadership for a new effort is welcomed. |
| **Explore stickers for inside of lockers at secondary schools.**  
• Stickers could have this information as well as personal protection (abuse/suicide prevention information) information.  
• Installation summer 2017  
• Discussed at February 15, 2017, communications committee meeting; action tabled to May meeting of committee. |
| **Contact established with parents interested in leading effort.**  
• Two district liaison(s) for effort have been identified.  
• Role of district liaisons is to facilitate scheduling and communication.  
• Inaugural meeting set for Tuesday, April 18, 2017, 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. at Upton Elementary. Childcare provided.  
• Publicity about the inaugural meeting is being shared across multiple digital platforms as well as hard copy.  
• Second meeting occurred Friday, May 19, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. at Addams Elementary School. |
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<td>Continue to Develop Cultural Competence of Staff</td>
<td>• Develop a team to attend 2017 National Summit for Courageous Conversation, which is being hosted in Detroit.</td>
<td>Seeking program specifics for planning.</td>
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<td>Culturally Competent Strategic Plan Development</td>
<td>This work will involve developing a district and community steering committee, as well as looking to examples of such plans currently in place in other communities and districts.</td>
<td>Identified priority is on community engagement so that plan is developed with inclusion of all voices. Recommendation of Board Action Item: Cultural Awareness Trust and Respect Proclamation for adoption at June 8, 2017, Board of Education Meeting.</td>
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