

Howard County Racial Equity Task Force  
Education: May 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes  
Chair: Karen Randall

Panelists Present: Natalie Pretzello, Bitia Dayhoff, Ying Matties, Jacky McCoy, Grace Ko, Ashley Alston (D2), Michael Harris (D2), Lauren Marra (Facilitator)

Facilitator, Lauren, opened the meeting and moved into the agenda

Lauren asked about major takeaways from the public hearing:

“What new insights did you hear from the public hearing?”

- Karen stated out of the 18 people that spoke 13 people spoke about education and that a lot of people agree with our recommendations
- Jacky McCoy stated there is a need for equity for African Americans and educating people on equity
- Natalie agreed that equity needs to be taught to the public
- Ying agreed that a definition of equity for the public to understand it and said that there was a count that more people supported our recommendations than the people who was opposed to the recommendation, she also asked if people who didn't sign up can they still share their own testimony
- Karen said that people do need to sign up to share their testimony; Karen further explains the process of the requirements of sharing their testimony; Karen spoke about SRO's in schools and how the hearing talked about that people wanted SRO's removed
- Jacky said there is a need for mental health support for students instead of getting more police into schools
- Erica explained that there are no descions on the removal of SRO's yet

Lauren moved to recommendations and explained what is important for the recommendations and how to make the recommendations as strong as possible

Lauren moved to each smaller work group explaining their proposed recommendations:

Group 1 (School resources officers & restorative justice practices)

- Natalie said that they want to remove SRO's and use the funding for mental health and support programs for the students. She stated they need more supporting information about what those programs are and how they impact students.
- Ying added she pulled the timeline part of the recommendations because they can't approve this recommendation until August. There needs to be more urgency to get this approved
- Erika added that language needs to be changed and that restorative justice means that they are condemning SRO's to replace it with something else

## Additional questions and comments

- Karen reminded the subgroup members about the limited influence the County Council has with the education changes and that these are only recommendations
- Bitia agreed with Jacky but is concerned with combining the recommendations for them not to get too complex
- Lauren asked Ying to email her question to Ashley and Michael. This question is related to the Budget, and County Council

## Group 2 (recruiting hiring, retention, and promotion of people of color)

Recommendation 1: Recommend the Howard County Council issues Council Resolution to Board of Education that accomplishes the following goals:

- Howard County needs to retain educators that are already hired
- Mentors that support minority education

## Questions/comments

- Ying asked about the current percentage of staff is a person of color and how many does Howard County hire each year
- Karen explained that she does not have that information however, she explains that some schools have more teachers of color than other schools
- Ying also asked if a concern could be the firing of Caucasian teachers; and what the hurdles of these recommendation could be
- Everyone asked about the problem with HR and if HR is delaying the process for more teachers of color
- Erika said that another problem is that black educators are not getting a fair chance for promotion despite of being qualified
- Natalie explained that interns within Howard County bypass first round of interviews and they have few interns from HBCU's; she also says that an average of 80% of the teachers are white
- Ying said that accountability is a strong factor for these recommendations and who will be accountable

Lauren moved on to Early childhood development:

Recommendation 1-Through funding and support to relevant county community partners, strengthen initiatives to close the kindergarten readiness gap

Recommendation 2- Ensure equal access to early childhood education for all families by issuing resolution to the Board of Education requesting that it provides transportation services to children enrolled in the Head Start Program

- Lauren added that it should be strengthened by saying that this should relate to racial equity

Lauren moved to Educator Cultural Responsiveness/competency & inclusive curriculum

Recommendation 1- Howard County Council issues a Council Resolution to the Board of Education that recommends it provides funding for high quality mandatory cultural sensitivity training

Recommendation 2- Board of Education collects qualitative and quantitative data from students and teachers about inclusiveness in the curriculum

Recommendation 3- create better language assistance services

Questions/concerns

- Erika- stated to think about destroying racist curriculum and to use language that is anti-racist. She also states that better cultural curriculums need to be taught and that teachers are also learning cultural competency to teach history correctly
- Natalie- agreed with Erika and adds that these curriculums should be started in Kindergarten

Lauren reviewed next steps

- Revise recommendations by early June
- Office of Law will review recommendations that were used during public hearing from a legal standpoint

Reminder: next meeting is June 14<sup>th</sup>

Meeting adjourned.