

Howard County Racial Equity Task Force

Education Meeting Minutes

Chair: Karen Randall

December 14, 2020

APPROVED

Panelists Present – Karen Randall, Mavis Ellis, Jacky McCoy, Meina Liu, Grace Ko, Ying Mattice, Patricia Silva, Ying Matties, Bita Dayhoff, Erika Chavarria, and Natalie Pretzello, Ashley Alston (D2), Michael Harris (D2), Lauren Marra (Facilitator).

Present after 6 PM: Grace Ko and Sabina Taj

Opening:

Karen Randall completed roll call and introduced the meeting.
Erika provided information about meeting and respecting the indigenous land.

Discussion Points:

Karen started with the approval of last meetings' minutes

- Moved to approve the meeting minutes from November 18th
 - Second by Meina Liu
 - Approved by everyone

Karen facilitated check-in question: What is one value that guides your life and why?

Jacky- values honesty

Bita-fairness; keeps fairness at the front of her thoughts

Meina- compassion; mindful of living in an interconnected world; understanding others

Lauren- inclusivity; makes sure others feel seen and heard

Natalie-empathy; understand where others are coming from; listening

Mavis-commitment; being committed to being fair, compassionate, and kind

Ying-perspective; mindful of other's perspectives

Erika- justice; tries to help liberation in others

Karen- acceptance; acceptance of all no matter where they are

Lauren began the discussion by reviewing the kickoff

- The purpose: Must recommend legislative actions to the County Council that remedies racial disparities and equities in the community by indicating disparate incomes, applicable studies, best practices and local data to ascertain pertinent information on issues related to racial equity and identifying metrics for measuring progress and improvement of racial equity. #2 identifying new county policies that will help racial equity. #3 recommending legislation. #4 recommending action for other county entities that use county funds can implement to improve upon racial equity.
- Data is interpreted in a broader sense, including qualitative, quantitative, and people's experiences
 - Erica wants to ensure that this group still pays close attention to the voices that do not make up the majority; do not ignore voices
 - Mavis Ellis agrees and brings up the point of entitlement and courage
 - Ying- there is a privilege, but it does not cut cross cleanly across all demographics; the more you're involved, the more you are heard; whose

interpretation is it (regarding the resolutions), and why are we only able to suggest resolutions as opposed to bills?

- Ashley answered- Board of Education (BOE) can act, but the County Council can make suggestions/recommendations which is the purpose of this group
- Patricia asked- Is it correct that the County Council approves the allocation of the financial resources of the BOE?
 - Mavis answered- Yes
 - Bitu- put focus on public policy and decide on priorities; allows them to work on advocacy
 - Ying- Does Resolution 142 allow this group to work and implement change in the school system?
 - Lauren answered- Primary audience is the County Council, so the focus is to identify ordinances and legislation within Council control (and provide recommendations). Influence other County entities but cannot directly recommend.
 - Jacky- Wants to make sure that the work put into this group is not a mirage. More than just resolutions, they must change people's values systems
 - Mavis- the BOE does meet with the County Council, where they request certain data; county is a funding system; agrees with Jacky that many people are ignorant to some issues; there's a difference between Howard County in Columbia & Howard County outside of Columbia compared to the County (in terms of services provided)
 - Ying-agrees with Jacky; do not beat around the bush; use the budgetary route to make change (i.e SRO in school)
 - Bitu- wants to ensure that term "students" includes children from low income families
- Racial Equity/Racial Theory
 - Lauren offered the amendment(for BIPOC) that they use self-identification and be specific with who we are talking about rather than coding
 - Jacky-Blacks tend to get the short end of the stick and get overlooked and forgotten in the term people of color; not lumping them together
 - Erika-BIPOC was meant to counteract the term people of color
 - Meina-addressed her mixed feelings of how Asian Americans often aren't considered people of color; be careful of discussing related issues; shift away minorities
 - Social construction

Sub Group Work Style/Agreements led by Karen

- Respect each other's time, identities, experiences, and expertise
 - Mavis- does not think 2 hours once a month will be enough
 - Bitu-suggested focusing and targeting conversations more in hopes of keeping up with time
 - Jacky-doesn't want to fit into a European mold; feels as though no time was wasted
 - Karen-wants to combine both Bitu and Jacky's suggestions; agrees with Mavis

- Lauren-meetings are used as touch points and a lot of work is done behind the scenes; more meetings are possible; meet in smaller sub-groups
- Sabina- Do we have people self-monitor how much space people or taking or having succinct ideas made quickly?; also agrees with the format of smaller groups
 - Bitu- Yes, agrees with having individuals express themselves, but wants to be respectful of the agenda and timeline moving forward
- Mavis-Will this group be able to communicate with one another beyond the meeting?
 - Lauren-Due to the Open Meetings Act (OMA), it is harder to communicate beyond quorum, and the Council is trying to figure out a way to store documents that is in accordance to the OMA
- Put technology on silent; stay “checked-in”
- Connect to core values
- Speak from your heart
- Be accountable about commitment and honest about your limitations
- Give each other and yourself grace
- Keep task force purposes and specific goals in mind

Sabrina arrived and was introduced

- Roles and responsibilities
 - Vice Chair: Jacky McCoy
 - If Karen is not available, Jacky will take over
 - Question asked by Mavis- What is a quorum for our committee and is staff included?
 - Lauren answered-6 members is quorum (only refers to named members of the committee)
 - OMA Training
 - Karen, Lauren, and Jacky will do the training
 - Mavis and Sabina have already done the training
 - Question asked by Sabina- Will they be sent county emails, and how will we ensure sharing of documents?
 - Ashley answered- You can always set up a secondary email dedicated to the Task Force and they can update the contact list.
 - Ask for volunteers to think on the topics
 - Look in to bringing other resources
 - Use email to “repeat back”

Exploring Subgroup Policy and Issues

- Karen- Recruitment and retention of minority educators in the schools
- Bitu- Headstart students receive transportation from Howard County Public School System
- Ying- inclusive curriculum; people need to see themselves in the curriculum; school climate; think about what existing policies are already there and what can be done differently to make these things actually happen
- Mavis-we can make the request can be made directly because the council staff is a part of this group
- Patricia-bring solutions and concrete suggestions; what is the scope we can present; is some of the data desegregated from the BOE?; the need of translation in the school system; parent-student engagement; more bilingual staff
 - Mavis- Some of the data lags but they can get the data through a request.
 - Sabina- Looking at data but seeing what’s also happening in the building

- Erika- removing Police/SRO from schools; looking at the budget to make tangible change; resources from restorative justice implementation within the schools (and the money supporting it)
- Ying-Where do they start their steps for recruiters? What is the hiring breakdown by racial groups? Can the County Council propel the school system in a timely fashion?
 - Karen- The staffing is decided by the staff based administrator; they get the final say
- Jacky- work with the existing teachers to better the cultural training; work with infants before Headstart. How do we help our parents raise our children as a village?
- Natalie-SRO; ensure safe school environment for all students; outside funding that is creating inequities in the school system and making it impossible for schools to be on an equitable playing field
- Sabina- get historical resources; “The History of Blacks in our County” book; SRO data
 - Erika- making sure the data isn’t one-sided. Ask outside groups as well; teachers of color aren’t being elevated or promoted

Closing remarks from Lauren and Karen

Meeting adjourned 7:22pm by Karen with no further questions.