



MASON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Diversity Committee
Tuesday, October 1, 2024
5:30 p.m. -7:00 p.m.
Location: Maple Room at City Hall

Minutes

Present: Courtney Miller, Gary Kinzer, Kim Clark, Randy Barton, Rick Brooks, Mary Hilker-Loch, Krista Sherman, Ethan McCallum, Jan Alleman, Angie Moore, Michele Sanders, Emma Howland, Summer Issawi, Julie Grech-Kramer, Melissa Netzel, Amy Lark, Cortney Ford and Rachel Foster

Not Available: Shana Barnum, Erinn Toodzio-Hook, Ethan Felsing, Riley and Myriah Lillie

Welcome

Randy Barton welcomed the committee members to the meeting.

“Diversity Committee” vs. “DEI Committee”

Julie Grech-Kramer shared that our district website lists this committee as both Diversity Committee and DEI. For consistency and clarity, it is suggested that the committee choose one name. The committee was asked the questions: How do you feel about it? Who are we? What work are we doing? The committee discussed the history of the group and its progression. It was explained that the committee began as Diversity Committee and grew to include work with equity and inclusion. Discussion on the topic followed. The group decided to call the committee “DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging) Committee” moving forward.

Balancing Fun Activities and Being Inclusive: Addressing Barriers

There was discussion on the importance of overcoming barriers. Do not avoid them, figure out how to overcome them. Rather than say “no” to an idea because it is not equitable, find ways to say “yes” while overcoming predicted barriers. How can we make it possible for all? Be creative in problem solving. Some barriers were noted, and solutions were discussed.

Barrier: Not all students are able to participate in all of the dress up days last year.

The committee discussed some themes that were not equitable and brainstormed solutions.

- PJ Day could be changed to Cozy Clothes Day
- Jersey Day could be changed to a color themed days

Inclusion Everyday at MHS

Cortney Ford and Krista Sherman shared the work that Mason High School did so far and their plans for the next few months. The High School is doing one theme per month.

September's Theme: Respect

They provided NHS students an opportunity to earn leadership hours by presenting the lessons to their peers. Students did the presentations in pairs and were trained during the teacher's prep hour.

October's Theme: Belonging

They shared a video that encouraged everyone to learn and use each other's names. They added signs with names outside of staff working spaces. They took pictures of groups of staff members at the high school and challenged students to name everyone in the picture.

November's Theme: Self-Acceptance

Challenges and Ideas

One challenge the high school team has is to find the most ideal time and way to carry out the committee's lessons/activities. They are problem solving this to make it work. October's activities are being done during fourth hour. The rest of the themes will be presented in TIES. They can use WIN time to train student presenters so they will be prepared but will not miss their regular classes. It was suggested to include other groups/clubs to present, as well.

It was suggested that next year the committee brainstorm a way to have older students reading or doing activities with younger students. In consideration of winter driving conditions, this idea may be postponed until Inclusion Week is moved to the fall.

Sub-Committee Work

The committee started diving into sub-committee work. Julie Grech-Kramer commented that the committee member's completion of the survey of preferences was helpful in placing everyone on sub-committees. The Diversity Committee will not meet again until December, unless a sub-committee decides to meet beforehand. There will not be a November meeting, due to the election.

Each Sub-Committee was provided a Brainstorming Guideline Packet. Julie Grech-Kramer asked each sub-committee to complete and return the last page of the packet. This page requests feedback (questions, support needed, etc). The rest of the packet can be done in any order and does not need to be completed in its entirety.

Regroup and Share-Out

Julie Grech Kramer asked everyone to start wrapping up their thoughts. We will use the last 10 minutes to do a share-out.

Inclusion Week Secondary

They shared the need to emphasize the "why". Why are we doing this? Several ideas were shared including:

Having students make videos and push them out to the community in some way.

Attending Virtual field trips and/or virtual presenters

Watching pre-recorded presentations

Inclusion Everyday Elementary

This sub-committee decided on plan and is working on the implementation. They plan to have weekly activities/lessons rather than monthly. They will provide teachers with a menu of lessons/activities along with an opportunity to organically incorporate the themes throughout lessons/activities that they are already doing. Principals will add inclusion everyday reminders in their communication to staff. All elementary principals will use the same language in family communications.

Inclusion Everyday Secondary

They discussed making the initiative more student driven. They would like students to help with planning the activities.

The Meeting adjourned at 7: 00pm. The next meeting is Tuesday, December 3, 2024.

Committee Groups

Inclusion Week Elementary (6 people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Courtney Miller (Teacher)● Gary Kinzer (Admin)● Shana Barnum (Admin)
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Inclusion Week Secondary (6 people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gary Kinzer (Admin) ● Mary Hilker-Loch (Admin) ● Erinn Toodzio-Hook (SSW) ● Krista Sherman (Teacher) ● Ethan McCallum (Parent/G) ● Jan Alleman (Coach)
Inclusion Everyday Elementary (6 people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Angie Moore (Library) ● Michele Sanders (Teacher) ● Emma Howland (Teacher) ● Summer Issawi (Parent/G) ● Julie GK (Coach) ● Melissa Netzel (Admin)
Inclusion Everyday Secondary (7 people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Riley (Student) ● Myriah Lillie (Admin) ● Amy Lark (Board Member, Parent/G) ● Cortney Ford (Teacher) ● Julie GK (Coach) ● Ethan Felsing (Teacher) ● Rachel Foster (Parent/G)